

Pre-recorded statement at the 46th session of the IFAD Governing Council
(14-15 February 2023)

I have to start by conveying my deepest and heartfelt condolences to the people of the Republic of Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic that have recently been hit by a series of severe earthquakes bringing untold sorrow and devastation. The Russian Federation stands back to back to the countries and provides assistance, both in humanitarian aid and through rescue personnel.

It is My pleasure to address the 46th session of the IFAD Governing Council. As we all know, it is called to focus on accelerating action for food security. This main theme of the session is acute as never before given the increasingly soaring global multidimensional crisis that endangers market stability and undermines the prosperity of the mankind, especially gravely hitting those most in need, rural agricultural communities and smallholder farmers of developing and least-developed countries, primarily in Africa and Asia.

Unfortunately, the most recent outlooks are even more dramatic. According to the joint UN and Rome-based agencies' assessments, the number of people facing real famine is on a rise and may exceed 300 mln. The economic recession is also in full swing risking to bring additional millions on the brink of starvation and financial collapse. According to the recent IMF economic outlook dated January 2023, the global growth is forecasted to be lower than expected (2,9%) with inflation peaking (6,6%) and the overall balance of global risks remaining tilted to the downside. As projected, the sharpest decrease is anticipated in the advanced economies that are the major development assistance providers. Under these circumstances the mission of the Fund, that up to 70% depends on replenishment contributions from the world's leading economies, may get more tricky and challenging.

For sure, it is high time to unite our efforts and make decisive collective steps towards restoring global stability, lifting all unilateral coercive measures and channel greater development assistance to beneficiaries suffering the most.

To fulfill its mandate IFAD must work harder to develop partnerships with its traditional donors, including Member States and intergovernmental organizations, as well as to attract additional resources through market borrowings, innovative financial collaborations and to engage with international financial institutions and entities.

We value that IFAD does not stand still only accumulating financial resources. It makes money work in the field for the benefit of the local communities. The Fund is in a constant search for the way to be best placed and fit to achieve greater efficiency. It is clearly and well illustrated by the Fund facilitating its climate adaptation assistance programs and strengthening the network of the regional and country offices. In changing global environment IFAD well justifies its *raison d'être* and lays the solid basis for the future enhancement of its outputs to the benefit of the world's smallholder farmers.

The Russian Federation has long been contributing to the stability of the global agri-food systems through different international fora, including the Rome-based agencies, and bilaterally providing food and agricultural products, fertilizers, livestock vaccines, as well as facilitating school meal programs in a number of developing countries.

As the Member State of IFAD starting from 2014 My country has provided more than 25 mln USD in replenishment contributions and through technical assistance projects.

The Russian Federation reaffirmed in 2022 its position as one of the world leading exporter of agricultural products, including grain, vegetable oil and fertilizers. My country provided in 2022 grain and grain products to about 130 countries. The largest amounts of exports went to the regions of the Middle East (39%), Africa (20%) and Asia (31%).

Out of the recent 5 months statistics, the Russian Federation has exported more than 23 mln metric tones of grain (primarily to Africa and Asia) with the potential to reach by the end of the current agricultural year (June 2023) the total volume of 50 mln metric tons. The amount of fertilizers that the Russian Federation exported in 2022 is 20 mln metric tons. We could have done more but for unilateral illegal sanctions affecting agricultural and financial sectors.

To facilitate the agricultural production in Africa, My country pledged to provide 262 000 metric tons of fertilizers on a no-charge basis as a humanitarian gesture, which should not be under any restrictions neither from legal nor from moral perspectives. 20 000 metric tones out of this volume are now on the way to Malawi. Russia volunteered to bear all expenses to transport and deliver the cargo and paid 200 000 USD to UN WFP for mediation services. It has already taken five long months to send a small part of the free fertilizers and the cargo still has yet to reach the final consumers. We can only guess how much time it will take to unblock and deliver the remaining 242 000 metric tones of products.

I have no doubt that to achieve results and revert the crises, we need to act collectively and respectfully vis-à-vis the priorities of Member States and in the interests of beneficiaries. My country have always been standing ready to cooperate with and assist those most in need and make no politics, especially where and when it concerns providing development assistance.

I would like to thank IFAD's President Mr Alvaro Lario for the work that He and His team have been carrying out steering the Fund through the crises. The 46th session of the Governing Council shall be the first under His presidency and My delegation wishes Him the best of luck in bringing it to a successful conclusion and generally in making the Fund more efficient and effective. It is our collective responsibility to transform agri-food systems and bring smallholder farmers to more prosperity and resilience.

Thank You for attention.