

Statement by the representative of the Republic of Yemen

Mr Chairperson,
Mr President

His Excellency Mr Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Excellencies, heads of delegations, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you virtually on behalf of the Republic of Yemen at this distinguished meeting of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Governing Council at its forty-sixth session, the main topic of which is Accelerating Action for Food Security. We should have liked to attend the meeting in person but unfortunately the intricacies of granting us an entry visa to Italy are among the main reasons why we are not present with you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You are doubtless aware of the appalling circumstances that the people of Yemen are experiencing as a result of the tragic war provoked by the Houthi militia since 2015; in which the infrastructure has been destroyed, especially in the agriculture and fisheries sectors, resulting in internal displacement, migration abroad and loss of livelihoods. The results of the integrated food security phase classification for the period October to December 2022 showed that approximately 17 million people were suffering from food insecurity, representing 54 per cent of Yemen's population of 31.8 million people, in addition to an increase in the incidence of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age: 2.2 million children of whom 538,000 are severely malnourished. Approximately 1.3 million pregnant and breastfeeding women are suffering from acute malnutrition.

The various successive shocks that our people have faced over the past 10 years together constitute the main drivers of food insecurity in our country, namely, war, the economic crisis, the impact of climate change, in particular the floods and repeated storms, principally cyclones Chapala, Megh and Luban, which caused substantial damage in the eastern provinces (Hadhramawt, Al-Mahrah and the island of Socotra), the COVID-19 pandemic and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which has had a negative impact on our country's food supply since some 46 per cent of its total wheat imports come from Russia and Ukraine.

In order to address the challenges facing our people, the Government, with the help of brothers, friends and international organizations, has taken a number of measures of which the most important are support to livelihoods and the strengthening of resilience in the face of food insecurity by supporting small farmers with the means of production and providing humanitarian food and nutritional assistance. Furthermore, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Fisheries has developed a plan to strengthen the role of the agriculture and fisheries sector in improving food security for the period 2023–28, through which we aim to bring about the gradual recovery of this sector, which is one of the basic sectors of the national economy. The agriculture and fisheries sector contributes 2.19 per cent of the gross domestic product, more than 68 per cent of the population relies on it and it ranks as the prime sector, accounting for 60 per cent of the country's total workforce. In addition, a number of procedural steps have been taken to improve food systems. A series of dialogues were held during 2022 that concluded with the development of recovery strategies through enhancing local production and quality, optimizing the use of available agricultural and fishery resources and heeding early warnings; the Ministry's plan incorporates these trends.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the Fund plays an active role in accelerating action to achieve food security and increase resilience in the face of crises and shocks, our country calls on the Fund to support its rehabilitation of the agricultural and fisheries sectors in all governorates and strengthen their role in improving food security, consistent with the theme of the

forty-sixth session of the Governing Council, "Accelerating Action for Food Security". I therefore call on IFAD to expedite the resumption of its activities in our country.

It only remains for me to extend my profuse thanks and appreciation to the Fund and the Member States for their support of Yemen through the decision to resume the Fund's projects in Yemen, which contributes to providing the necessary assistance and support for the development of the agriculture and fisheries sectors, and to underscore the importance of the Rural Growth Project being implemented by the Fund through the Food and Agriculture Organization, which mainly contributes to poverty alleviation, facilitates investment in food systems and contributes to reducing food insecurity.

In conclusion, we commend the topics and interactive sessions on the agenda and wish the meeting every success.

May the peace and blessings of God be upon you.