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Chair: Mr. Amorín (Uruguay)
later: Mr. Cimino (Vice-Chair) (Italy)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 21: Eradication of poverty and other development issues

(a) Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) (A/78/239)

(b) Eradicating rural poverty to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/78/238)

Agenda item 23: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

(a) Agriculture development, food security and nutrition (A/78/218, A/78/233, A/78/74-E/2023/67)

(b) Natural plant fibres and sustainable development (A/78/218)

1. **Mr. Wilmoth** (Officer-in-Charge of the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) (A/78/239), said that the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had led to an increase in extreme poverty. Subsequently, progress towards poverty eradication had been further stalled by a cost-of-living crisis and related inflationary shocks, triggered by the war in Ukraine. The poorest countries had spent billions of dollars on debt payments, thereby limiting their capacity to invest in sustainable development. If left unaddressed, the great divide between developed and developing countries would translate into a lasting sustainable development divide.

2. The report outlined the progress made by the United Nations system in implementing the inter-agency plan of action for the Third Decade, and made recommendations for achieving rapid and sustainable recovery and eradicating poverty. It encouraged Member States to increase public and private investment in agriculture and food systems transformation, and to prioritize the development of human capital by investing in universal health care, social protection and quality education and training. It also underscored the need to identify gaps in public data and improve data governance, while recommending greater investment in clean energy, ecosystem restoration and the adoption of inclusive climate actions to meet climate finance commitments. Furthermore, the report emphasized the importance of adopting tools to prevent and combat illicit financial flows and enhancing tax administration to improve domestic resource mobilization. It urged the

United Nations system to reform the international financial architecture and strengthen support to governments at all levels.

3. **Mr. Davis** (Director of the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), speaking via video link, said that he wished to introduce two reports of the Secretary-General. First, in his report on eradicating rural poverty to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/78/238), the Secretary-General had recognized that most of the world's extreme poor lived in rural areas, where poverty rates were nearly three times higher than in urban areas. Progress in reducing rural poverty, which had slowed even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, was being further hampered by slow and uneven recovery from the pandemic, and the combined impact of overlapping crises. While rural populations living in poverty had contributed the least to climate change, they were most at risk of welfare losses and had the lowest capacity to adapt. Reversing that scenario would require the implementation of inclusive, environmentally sustainable rural development strategies that were focused on poverty eradication.

4. The report offered policy recommendations for consideration by Member States, for transforming agrifood systems, increasing agricultural productivity, facilitating transitions in non-agricultural employment, promoting inclusive climate action and improving rural livelihoods. It called not only for immediate measures to mitigate the negative impacts of concurrent shocks and address the deprivations faced by people living in rural areas, but also for greater investment in key social services and social protection systems. The report emphasized the need to expand access to financial services and digital solutions, and address persistent inequalities. It recognized the importance of strengthening the rights and voices of Indigenous Peoples, as well as rural stakeholders' access to resources and participation in decision-making processes

5. Second, in his report entitled "The future of food and agriculture: drivers and triggers for achieving sustainable agrifood systems" (A/78/218), the Secretary-General had recalled that rising food, agricultural input and energy prices, which had been worsened by the impact of the war in Ukraine, had undermined efforts to reduce hunger. Moderate and severe food insecurity had risen in recent years, and had affected women and people in rural areas in particular. Inequalities and discrimination had created a gender gap in agricultural productivity, agricultural wage

employment and land ownership. The lack of progress on environmental sustainability was a cause for concern, together with the high debt exposure of middle- and low-income countries. The socioeconomic and environmental drivers that threatened the transformation of agrifood systems required multilevel and multi-stakeholder systems-based approaches to action. Among the key levers and triggers that could boost transformation were the economy and finance; science and innovation; consumer awareness; income and wealth distribution, institutions and governance; and capacity-building.

6. The report called for the adoption of a long-term, holistic approach to address structural problems. It recognized the importance of strengthening the science-policy-society interface to better balance the economic, environmental and social dimensions of the agrifood systems transformation. It also provided a brief review of the role played by natural fibres and their contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation, reduced biodiversity loss and strengthened resilience to global market shocks.

7. **Ms. Villarreal** (Director of the Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), speaking via video link on behalf of the FAO-International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) joint secretariat for the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, introduced the note of the Secretary-General transmitting the report prepared by FAO and IFAD on the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028) ([A/78/233](#)). She said that the results achieved during the first four years of the Decade had been extremely positive. At least 77 countries had made policy changes and a robust engagement process had been initiated with several different parties to identify and implement concrete policies and measures for supporting family farming worldwide.

8. In implementing the Decade, United Nations agencies encouraged the use of policy dialogues to attain lasting results and underscored the importance of Governments and multilateral and intergovernmental organizations in the development of policy frameworks and guidelines, and the advancement of priority policy areas. While family farmers had been facing increasing challenges owing to interconnected, mutually reinforcing drivers, with the support provided in the context of the Decade, they had developed innovative, tailored and locally adapted solutions, and had built their capacities and resilience to deal with the emerging needs of agrifood systems. A new phase was set to begin in the second half of the Decade, in which the results

already achieved would be consolidated, strengthened and scaled up, to fully leverage the innovative potential of family farmers to meet the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, there was a need for broader involvement and greater recognition of family farmers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia and others in national policy dialogues. In addition, appropriate financing would be required to support family farming and ensure the full implementation of the Decade.

9. **The Chair** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the items.

10. **Mr. Guevara Rodríguez** (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions was the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The Group was determined to free humanity from poverty, end hunger and achieve food security. Achieving those objectives would require the mobilization of adequate means for implementing the 2030 Agenda through revitalized partnerships and a spirit of global solidarity with the most vulnerable, in accordance with the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. The Group recognized that the right to development should be enjoyed in a manner that equitably met the environmental and developmental needs of current and future generations.

11. Unfortunately, the international community was not yet on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1. In 2021, the number of persons living in extreme poverty had been much higher than pre-COVID-19 projections. If current trends continued, by 2030 only one third of countries would have halved their national poverty levels. At the same time, poverty remained overwhelmingly rural, despite the role played by rural communities in food production. The rising cost of food could have a considerable impact by pushing increasing numbers of people into extreme poverty. Developing countries would require greater means of implementation to address that situation. In 2022, increases in official development assistance had mostly been allocated to intensified aid for refugees, and had not targeted developing countries.

12. Poverty imposed massive human suffering, was the most extensive violation of human rights and was the root cause of social, economic and political instability. Apart from attacking it directly, the international community needed to tackle its systemic causes at the national, regional and international levels. Geopolitical conflicts were on the rise and forced displacement exacerbated socioeconomic and

environmental vulnerabilities. Finance, production and trade structures should be fair and equitable, and the exploitation of developing countries' natural resources should be brought to an end. International laws should be enforced and respected, to give poorer countries their fair share of global development, which they had been requesting for many years.

13. The financial resources needed by developing countries should be mobilized through sound debt management, the rechanneling of special drawing rights, and the expansion of grants and concessional finance, particularly to countries facing financial difficulties and suffering from natural and human-made disasters. The achievement of the Goals could be accelerated through major investment in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energies, transport, education, water and sanitation. New technologies should be leveraged and the digital divide should be bridged, to enable the advancement of developing countries. Developed countries should meet their commitments and pledges to provide financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing countries. The Group called for the lifting of unilateral coercive measures, which were a major impediment to achieving the Goals, and remained confident that the Committee's discussions would provide guidance for collectively combating global poverty and fully implementing the 2030 Agenda.

14. **Ms. Adhikari** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that since progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals had been slowed or reversed, there was a risk that the least developed countries would be left behind. Those countries were facing unprecedented levels of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, owing to an exacerbation of their pre-existing structural constraints and vulnerabilities. Furthermore, an additional 30 million people were estimated to have been pushed into extreme poverty in sub-Saharan Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 1.1 billion people living in multidimensional poverty in 2023, 48 per cent lived in sub-Saharan Africa and 35 per cent lived in South Asia. Global projections estimated that approximately 670 million would still be living in hunger in 2030.

15. Rising food inflation had further threatened social stability in the least developed countries, which were net food importers, despite the importance of their agricultural sectors. Geopolitical conflicts and tensions had driven up the cost of agricultural inputs and had led to shortages of food and fertilizers. Consequently, farming families and farm workers accounted for approximately two thirds of those facing extreme

poverty in the world. Climate change had presented an additional challenge to the least developed countries, given its devastating impact on agricultural productivity and food insecurity. The increased frequency and severity of climate-induced disasters had resulted in significant damage to food crops, grains and farmlands in those countries, which were already spending close to 40 per cent of their national revenues to service external debt. Accordingly, greater investment in climate action was critical for minimizing climate impact in the agricultural sector.

16. Multidimensional poverty had not only disproportionately affected low-income countries, but it had also widened the existing global inequality gap, owing to those countries' dependence on vulnerable agricultural sectors, their lack of decent work opportunities and their high rates of informal employment, underemployment and working poverty. The very weak social protection systems in the least developed countries had exacerbated hunger and malnutrition levels. While developed countries had been able to support their populations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the poorest countries had been unable to invest in the lives and livelihoods of their people, or in sustainable development. A collective commitment was needed to bring hope to those being left behind.

17. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions was one of the focus areas of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. Development partners and the United Nations system should meet their commitments to provide enhanced funding for innovative solutions to the specific problems of the least developed countries, including in the areas of agriculture and food production. The creation of more equitable, sustainable and resilient agrifood systems was key to ending food volatility in those countries, together with the modernization and industrialization of agricultural practices. There was a need to scale up investment in early warning systems and targeted social protection measures, in order to transform food systems, adapt to climate change and build resilience. The implementation and full operationalization of a food stockholding mechanism would help to minimize food insecurity and instability in the least developed countries. To help build resilience and increase productivity, smallholder farmers should have access to technology, renewable energies, markets, crop diversification strategies and resilient infrastructure. Cash transfers and investment should be facilitated for the most vulnerable communities to make adequate financing available for addressing the challenges of rural poverty.

18. **Mr. Wallace** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that no progress had been made on reducing global food insecurity in 2022. While the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated the situation, even prior to its onset, there had been a reversal of the gains made. Moderate food insecurity in the English-speaking Caribbean had risen to 46 per cent in 2022, bringing the total population facing food insecurity to 57 per cent. The situation in Haiti was particularly concerning, as over half of the Haitian population was living in a state of chronic food insecurity. Adequate funding was needed for the humanitarian response plan for that country, and for investment in agriculture, to address both immediate and longer-term food security needs. The rising costs of food, energy and other commodities, the impact of the war in Ukraine and slow recovery from the pandemic had all contributed to the deteriorating state of affairs. The worsening impact of the climate crisis was further compounding the situation in the Caribbean and seriously restricting regional ambitions. Temperatures were predicted to continue rising, rainfall patterns would be increasingly disrupted and many parts of Latin America and the Caribbean were expected to become drier. Such developments would undermine progress towards achieving target 2.4 of Sustainable Development Goal 2.

19. It was constructive to harmonize discussions on the two agenda items under consideration, as poverty and food security were inextricably linked. Many of the world's poorest, including in CARICOM States, were concentrated in rural areas, where agriculture was the main source of livelihood. Extreme poverty could not be eradicated without major global investment in the mitigation of the challenges faced by the agricultural sector in the developing world. Those challenges ranged from market access, price fluctuations and subsidies to the debilitating impacts of environmental degradation. Notwithstanding the enormity of the challenges, CARICOM was accelerating its agriculture and food security agenda. Its common agricultural policy included initiatives to modernize rural areas and involve young people, including in the development of climate-smart agriculture. It was important to improve the quality of life of rural communities by increasing and supporting agribusiness opportunities, strengthening institutions, facilitating community development and building social capital.

20. Since CARICOM countries imported more than 75 per cent of their food, they had adopted an initiative aimed at reducing the regional food bill by at least 25 per cent by 2025. They were also developing a cross-border agrifood investment strategy to bolster

production corridors. CARICOM was continuing to work with partners to increase its population's resilience to shocks through stronger disaster management, scaled up social protection programmes and more effective, sustainable and responsive food systems. In addition to persistent efforts to eradicate poverty and food insecurity, structural and geopolitical challenges should also be addressed to achieve real and accelerated progress. Conflicts should be prevented or ended, access to finance and technology should be enhanced and the debilitating debt burdens of developing countries should be alleviated. Furthermore, the international community should look beyond gross domestic product (GDP), in measuring countries' economic, social and environmental well-being.

21. In that regard, CARICOM called for the reform of the international financial architecture, the implementation of the Bridgetown Initiative, the early completion and adoption of the multidimensional vulnerability index, and the rapid operationalization of the loss and damage fund. It also called for the fulfilment of commitments, including those relating to the provision of \$100 billion annually for climate finance and the allocation of 0.7 per cent of gross national income by developed countries towards official development assistance.

22. **Mr. Dang Hoang Giang** (Viet Nam), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that agriculture was a key sector in South-East Asia, as it accounted for a substantial share of economic activity, up to 32 per cent of employment and 22 per cent of GDP. The sector contributed significantly to regional poverty alleviation, malnutrition reduction, hunger eradication and sustainable development efforts. Sustainable agriculture and food systems helped to ensure the availability, accessibility, utilization, affordability and sustainability of food products for all, and to achieve long-term resilience to current and future crises and economic uncertainties, in keeping with the goal of making ASEAN an epicentrum of growth.

23. ASEAN remained committed to increasing regional food security by strengthening agricultural productivity and food supply chains through the improvement of food system efficiency, the promotion of good and sustainable agricultural practices and the adoption of innovative technologies. It also recognized the importance of early warning systems and rapid responses for ensuring food availability in times of crisis. Accordingly, it would enhance collaboration with the private sector, international organizations and think tanks to promote public-private partnerships and

provide technical knowledge and capacity-building for the transformation of agrifood systems.

24. Reducing poverty and promoting rural development remained high on the ASEAN agenda. The Association had made important progress and commitments to that end by pursuing strategic regional cooperation initiatives aimed at accelerating inclusive development in rural and urban settings. Among those initiatives were the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2021–2025, the ASEAN Development Outlook and the research and development platform of the ASEAN Socio Cultural Community. The Association was also leveraging new drivers of growth by promoting global supply chains, trade and investment; accelerating digital transformation; enhancing efforts to build a green economy; recognizing the great value and potential of the blue economy; bolstering the creative economy; and empowering small and medium-sized enterprises.

25. Given the region's high exposure and vulnerability to climate change, ASEAN was deeply concerned by the impact of that phenomenon on its poverty alleviation and food security efforts. It remained committed to implementing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The Association would continue to cooperate with the international community to realize the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

26. **Ms. Marin Sevilla** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, said that the world was currently off track and moving even further away from achieving its poverty alleviation and hunger eradication objectives. Over 8 per cent of the world population was still living in extreme poverty and more than 9 per cent of humankind was experiencing hunger.

27. Those challenges had been exacerbated and national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda had been undermined by the continued promulgation and application of unilateral coercive measures, in flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law. Given their wide scope, extraterritorial implications and systemic nature, such measures would continue to negatively affect the global economy and prolong human suffering worldwide. They should be completely and immediately lifted so that all nations could fully pursue their productive potentials and

overcome current challenges, including through the stabilization of basic commodities such as food and fertilizers. The illegal application of unilateral coercive measures targeted civilian populations as part of a widespread policy that impeded the full enjoyment of human rights and hampered the achievement of socioeconomic development, particularly in developing countries. Those measures created and aggravated poverty and inequality in targeted countries, and subjected them to de facto blockades by making it almost impossible to purchase necessary items, including equipment, software, hardware and spare parts for the agricultural and food processing industries.

28. In that context, the Group of Friends wished to recall a joint statement issued in July 2022 by the Heads of FAO, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Food Programme and the World Trade Organization, which affirmed that such restrictive measures contributed to rising food prices. Eliminating them would therefore contribute to ongoing international efforts to address the food security crisis. The Group of Friends also took note of the report of the Secretary-General *Making food systems work for people and planet – United Nations Food Systems Summit +2*, and regretted that it failed to address the impact of illegal unilateral coercive measures on the promotion of sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems. Neither the application of those measures nor the imposition of unjustified arbitrary trade restrictions, such as tariff and non-tariff barriers, would put the world on a path towards overcoming current challenges or achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Instead, there was a need for joint, effective, inclusive and innovative measures that enhanced global solidarity and cooperation, especially with the developing world.

29. **Ms. Mokhawa** (Botswana), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that growing geopolitical tensions, proliferating crises and widening inequalities had considerably curtailed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Owing to their existing vulnerabilities, landlocked developing countries were among the hardest hit by complex demand- and supply-side shocks. Their fragile recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic had been stalled by challenging global macroeconomic conditions, which had also exacerbated their structural and geographical vulnerabilities. Although there had been some improvement, growth in landlocked developing countries had not yet rebounded to pre-pandemic rates. Their progress towards poverty alleviation had been significantly slower than that made by other countries, and rising inflation meant that their oil, gas and food prices remained higher than the global average.

Consequently, those countries faced increasingly difficult trade-offs between fighting inflation, preserving financial stability and supporting inclusive and sustainable economic recoveries, and their populations were being driven further into poverty.

30. Like other developing countries, landlocked developing countries depended heavily on agriculture, which was not only a source of income for their citizens, but also a traditional way of life. The devastating impact of climate change and declining agricultural productivity levels therefore posed a major threat to the food security and economic development of those countries. Recent spikes in global food prices had imposed steep costs on many landlocked developing countries and had made their staple foods unaffordable. Without accelerated and sustained efforts to address poverty and other economic challenges, it would be impossible for those countries to achieve the majority of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

31. In that regard, owing to their specific situation, landlocked developing countries required targeted interventions to realize sustainable development and eradicate extreme poverty. While it agreed with the recommendations made in the reports under consideration, the Group also wished to highlight the need for support to build its members' productive capacities and integrate their economies into global trade, including by investing in transit-related infrastructure. It was also necessary to promote structural transformation, given the dependence of landlocked developing countries on primary commodities. Those countries continued to be left out of discussions and decisions relating to climate change, despite the latter's devastating impact on their economies. It was critical for them to have a voice in the climate debate, support for mitigation and adaptation measures, and greater public and private investment and climate financing. In the lead-up to the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, the Group looked forward to the outcomes of the Conference and to the renewed opportunity to identify policies and measures aimed at mobilizing international support and accelerating progress towards a sustainable recovery for its members.

32. **Mr. Lautasi** (Samoa), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that agricultural development, food security and nutrition were critical requirements for the eradication of poverty and hunger and for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The reversal of poverty alleviation gains was of particular concern to small island developing States, together with the lack of global progress towards reducing food security in 2022. Drastic actions were

needed to correct those disturbing trends, which, although exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, had existed prior to 2020. Small island developing States imported more food than they produced. Altogether, Caribbean and Pacific countries imported over 60 per cent of their food, and more than half of them imported over 80 per cent of their food.

33. While food security issues had generally been addressed in relation to fisheries and agriculture, the food systems approach went beyond those strictures, and emphasized areas where small island developing States faced the greatest difficulties, namely the importance of maintaining a healthy diet, the equitable distribution of costs and revenues, sustainability and the provision of sufficient food for all. Recent crises had underscored the need to address those issues in a holistic manner. Non-communicable diseases continued to plague the populations of those countries, and their limited economies of scale made sustainability even harder to achieve. A new approach to the issue was required, to make it a priority and afford it the urgency it deserved.

34. Solutions existed and AOSIS agreed with several of the recommendations made in *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special edition*, including the call for Governments to "recommit to seven years of accelerated, sustained and transformative action, both nationally and internationally, to deliver on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals". It also believed that Governments should advance concrete, integrated and targeted policies and actions for eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities. While the foregoing solutions were sound, the impediments to their implementation should be addressed. Chief among those, particularly for small island developing States, was the question of finance. Determining access to concessional finance solely on the basis of income was extremely restrictive for many of those countries, and left them with limited fiscal space, growing debt burdens and difficult choices to make. Moreover, the debilitating impacts of climate change further lessened their ability to end poverty and ensure food security and nutrition. For those reasons, AOSIS called for the reform of the international financial architecture and urged development partners to meet their commitments, scale up support and deliver on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development by mobilizing the necessary resources and investments.

35. Paradoxically, public spending on agriculture was declining in all regions except Europe and North America, at a time when the global food crisis was worsening and those that produced most of the world's

food were facing extreme poverty. Yet, target 2.a of Goal 2 called for increased investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular in the least developed countries. While financing, technology transfer and capacity-building were critical for reshaping agrifood systems in small island developing States, transformation prospects were severely dampened by the impact of climate change. In 2022, extreme heatwaves, drought and flooding had affected millions of people, cost billions of dollars and disrupted global food systems, leading to crop failure, food insecurity and the displacement of people. AOSIS would therefore continue to advocate for the delivery of climate finance and early warning systems for all, to build resilience in the agricultural sector.

36. **Mr. Al-Khayareen** (Qatar) said that his country remained committed to helping the most vulnerable societies. Qatar had hosted the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and had announced a \$60 million contribution to support the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, which placed great emphasis on eradicating poverty and malnutrition. His country's national food security strategy focused on sustainable agriculture, best practices in food production and an efficient and transparent supply chain. Qatar was the current chair of the executive board of the Islamic Organization for Food Security. In October 2023, it had hosted the ninth Organization of Islamic Cooperation Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development.

37. In partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Qatar Fund for Development had launched the Nanmo ("growing together") initiative, which had pledged \$200 million to support climate-smart agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa. The Fund had also made a \$90 million contribution to the World Food Programme to address critical needs in Yemen, and an additional flexible contribution of \$10 million. At the halfway mark of the 2030 Agenda, multilateral cooperation was more indispensable than ever to move sustainable development forward.

38. **Ms. Barahona Figueroa** (El Salvador) said that the lack of progress in meeting sustainable development commitments, coupled with widespread inequalities and global governance injustices, had significantly affected developing countries and, in particular, the poorest and most vulnerable populations. In that context, El Salvador had continued to implement policies aimed at promoting social welfare and sustained economic growth, protecting the environment and fostering peace

and harmony. Her Government had prioritized the need to address the structural issues that limited opportunities for its citizens, and had therefore been undertaking various people-centred actions and initiatives to increase public and social investments, expand early childhood development, reform education and health-care systems and create more opportunities for young people.

39. The measurement of progress should be reviewed to allow for a broader approach to development that left no one behind. Continued reliance on economic performance was not sufficient to measure progress towards inclusive, just and sustainable development, and only served to widen gaps in developing countries. Accordingly, measures that went beyond GDP were needed to assess countries' sustainable development and inform both policy decisions and access to concessional and non-concessional finance. El Salvador called for concrete actions in that regard, in keeping with the commitments made during recent intergovernmental processes. The "middle-income trap" was a reality that continued to jeopardize countries' development efforts and threaten global prospects, since middle-income countries accounted for the majority of the world population and the largest percentage of people living in extreme poverty.

40. El Salvador was seeking to achieve food and nutritional security by promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The objective was to improve the quality of life of the population, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, who depended on agriculture for their livelihoods and were exposed to the impacts of climate change, natural disasters, pests and other threats. Her Government was working to increase productivity by providing farmers with training and access to resources and by promoting technological modernization, rural infrastructure and crop diversification, including through the implementation of the El Salvador country strategic plan 2022–2027 in conjunction with the World Food Programme. In addition, an agricultural trade development centre had been established, within the framework of a comprehensive agricultural marketing law, to build productive capacities and promote agricultural production zones and agricultural markets. Her country was actively participating in the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and was focusing on child nutrition through a national policy on maternal and child health and development. Following a process of broad consultation, it had also implemented a sustainable food systems road map to renew and strengthen national policies and institutional frameworks.

41. Her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's call for action, particularly with respect to the mainstreaming of food systems into national policies; investment in research, data, innovation and technological capacities; the full inclusion of women, farmers, young people and Indigenous Peoples; and the allocation of financing and budget support.

42. **Ms. Concepción Jaramillo** (Panama) said that, in 2022, the number of people living in extreme poverty had largely surpassed pre-COVID-19 pandemic projections, and two thirds of the world's countries were likely to miss the target of halving their national poverty rates by 2030. Most of the world's extremely poor lived in rural areas and worked in the agricultural sector. As in other Latin American and Caribbean countries, in Panama, poverty and extreme poverty rates were much higher in rural areas than in urban zones. In her country, rural territories contributed to economic growth, export development and job creation, and produced most of the food consumed locally. However, rural areas and Indigenous regions had the lowest school enrolment rates and reduced access to basic water, sanitation and health services.

43. Women in rural areas participated less in the labour market, compared to men and women in the rest of the country. The fight against extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition could not be won if societies did not ensure gender equality and empower rural women, who were invaluable workers and responsible for feeding their families and nations. The International Day of Rural Women, which would be celebrated on 15 October, should serve to highlight the vital contribution of rural women to development and their important role in agriculture, rural development and the preservation of cultural traditions. At the same time, the commitment to empower women and create opportunities should not be limited to one day of celebration. In that vein, her Government was promoting a family network programme, under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Development, to enable rural women to produce their own food by providing them with knowledge, tools, resources and plots of land. The ministry responsible for women's affairs had begun the process of preparing an economic agenda for rural women, as part of a project to strengthen institutional gender equality. Women leaders from rural areas and Indigenous regions had participated in the elaboration of that agenda, as key protagonists and spokespersons who were capable of identifying the needs and challenges of their communities. On 5 September 2023, in celebration of the International Day of Indigenous Women, her Government had approved a plan for the empowerment of Indigenous women in Panama,

marking the first time that a specific public policy had been established for the comprehensive development of Indigenous women countrywide.

44. Global poverty and migration had been seriously exacerbated in recent months. In Panama, unemployment and insecurity had fuelled an unprecedented irregular migration crisis, forcing thousands of people to leave their countries in search of better opportunities. Her Government remained committed to joining international efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, reduce hunger and achieve sustainable development and food security for all.

45. **Ms. Beriana** (Philippines) said that the Philippines remained committed to the 2030 Agenda and called for urgent and strengthened multilateral cooperation to significantly reduce poverty and inequality, eradicate hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. It also remained committed to the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028) and to the outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

46. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda would be more effective if countries adopted integrated policies to combat poverty at all levels. In that regard, her delegation wished to highlight the adoption of the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028, which was aimed at creating jobs and reducing poverty to 9 per cent by 2028, for a more prosperous, inclusive and resilient society. Because poverty was a multifaceted challenge that required a multifaceted solution, the Philippines had expanded its national definition of poverty and had enacted pivotal laws and measures, including a conditional cash transfer programme, the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act and the Universal Health Care Act. Furthermore, since poverty was also overwhelmingly rural and primarily concentrated in the agricultural sector, several projects and programmes had been established to promote rural development and modernize agriculture and agribusiness by providing technical, capacity-building and financial support to farmers and fishers. The Philippine Rural Development Project was seeking to increase rural incomes and enhance farm and fishery productivity in targeted areas by supporting smallholders and fishers. The Special Area for Agricultural Development Program was working to develop marginalized communities by improving their economic conditions through the creation of work opportunities in the agriculture and fishery sectors.

47. By employing a whole-of-nation approach, the Philippines was accelerating efforts to enhance access

to safer and more nutritious food and promote more sustainable consumption patterns. Its national food systems transformation pathway included the National Food Policy, the National Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization and Industrialization Plan 2021–2030 and the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028. The international community should urgently prioritize the eradication of poverty and hunger, since addressing those challenges would contribute to progress in other areas of human well-being and sustainable development.

48. **Ms. Jalili** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that poverty was a complex issue, influenced by measures including unemployment, inflation, inequality and unilateral coercive measures. Her country had committed to reducing poverty through diverse policies aimed at promoting inclusive growth and reducing inequality. For example, the Government had implemented a targeted subsidiary system for low-income citizens, social welfare programmes, job creation initiatives and economic diversification measures to reduce oil export dependency.

49. To improve rural livelihoods and reduce rural poverty, the Government had carried out infrastructure projects such as building roads, schools and health-care facilities and providing clean water. It had established a nationwide health-care system to provide basic medical services for all citizens, with a focus on disease prevention, maternal and child health and vaccination. Policies to promote women's participation in education, employment and politics had also been implemented.

50. The Islamic Republic of Iran called for the immediate lifting of unilateral coercive measures, which were a major obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthened global solidarity and cooperation, led by the United Nations, were needed to eliminate poverty. The provision of means of implementation was vital, and developed countries should fulfil their commitments regarding financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building. As the realization of the right to development served the best interests of the international community and paved the way for promoting human rights and eradicating poverty, it was important for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to pursue inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

51. **Mr. Vásquez Solano** (Mexico), speaking as a youth delegate, said that the meagre progress made on eradicating poverty was worrying. More than halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda, there was stagnation and regression resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, and climate and other crises. The post-

pandemic recovery was characterized by increasing inequalities, with millions still impoverished and rises in hunger and malnutrition.

52. In the past three years, the number of people in poverty had risen by 165 million. There was a clear need for a shift in development to redistribute power and wealth in order to bridge the gap between developing and advanced nations. Mexico had demonstrated the possibility of such a change by lifting more than 5 million people out of poverty between 2018 and 2022.

53. The global crisis in agriculture, food security and malnutrition was alarming, with chronic hunger affecting more than 9 per cent of the global population in 2022. Without concrete measures that trend would worsen. Achieving the nutrition targets by 2030 was essential and required coordinated action, effective regulations, food system reform and the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Mexico had implemented policies to promote access to basic foods and advocated food security as a factor contributing to peace. It condemned disruptions to food supplies as a form of coercion.

54. **Mr. Etoundi Ayissi** (Cameroon) said that poverty eradication should be at the centre of efforts to achieve the development programme, for consistency with Sustainable Development Goal 1. Cameroon called for policies promoting sustainable, inclusive, sustained and equitable economic growth, social integration, reduced inequality and increased productivity in a conducive international environment.

55. The Government of Cameroon was fully engaged in promoting employment and ensuring gender equality, quality education and health care, social protection, agricultural modernization, rural development, and an efficient framework for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Although sustained, progress in those areas was hampered by security challenges, notably terrorism and an international environment marked by crises and in which individual interests could eclipse the general interest.

56. Addressing poverty eradication must include lasting solutions to problems such as the burden of debt service, illicit financial flows, protectionism, the worsening of trade terms and the lack of affordable capital market access. No single country could address such complex challenges alone. Collective action marked by strong political will and ambition was necessary, together with international solidarity. The necessary human, technical, technological and financial resources were available.

57. **Mr. Luemba** (Angola) said that Angola was experiencing significant impacts from climate change, including a severe drought that had placed nearly 2 million people in food insecurity. The Government of Angola had been developing programmes to make rural communities more resilient and constructing water infrastructure to mitigate the effects of drought. In addition, it provided cash transfers to vulnerable populations and had created a food reserve for disaster relief.

58. Angola aimed to achieve food self-sufficiency and boost economic growth by consolidating agro-industry value chains, reducing reliance on imports and increasing exports. Becoming a key exporting nation in Africa could bring benefits such as attracting investment and promoting regional integration.

59. Fulfilling the appeal by the Secretary-General for leaders to transform food systems to meet the Sustainable Development Goals would help Member States to implement healthier, more sustainable and more equitable systems. Angola had engaged in a national dialogue on food systems and had conducted a public consultation to align its second national strategy for food and nutritional security with its national development plan, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The Government would implement a new food and nutrition security strategy and establish a national food and nutrition security system for more effective monitoring and evaluation of programmes across ministerial departments.

60. **Mr. Sangkhaopreecha** (Thailand) said that Thailand had implemented a national multidimensional poverty index and a corresponding data management system to inform and enhance policy implementation and that no one had been living below the international poverty line in the country since 2016. The “sufficiency economy philosophy” had been applied in Thailand to empower local communities to raise living standards. In addition, Thailand had been working to improve the quality of life of vulnerable and low-income members of society, including through universal health coverage and quality education.

61. As food insecurity in developing countries had often been an impediment to poverty eradication, Thailand called upon the international community to further assist developing countries in enhancing their agricultural production. Multilateralism was a platform and force multiplier for overcoming food insecurity and ensuring the efficient movement of food and agricultural commodities.

62. Intensifying research and development could contribute significantly to improving food security by

increasing agricultural productivity. Global food security could be strengthened through multilateral cooperation on technological development, including through technology transfer, technical assistance and the sharing of best practices. As one of the world’s largest food producers and exporters, Thailand had adopted a bio-circular green economy model to boost innovative agricultural production and enhance food sustainability and security.

63. *Mr. Cimino (Italy), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

64. **Mr. Leschenko** (Ukraine) expressed the solidarity of Ukraine with the victims of the terrorist attack in Israel on 7 October 2023, the images of which were yet another reminder of the need to stop terror and hold perpetrators to account.

65. Progress towards sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition had been hindered by global challenges, including the war in Ukraine. Ukraine remained committed to its role as a guarantor of global food security and was ready to continue food exports. The Russian Federation had blocked the Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, had exited the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports and had attacked Ukrainian grain storage ports, severely limiting the potential of the Black Sea Initiative. The continued attacks on Ukrainian ports on the Danube River were a clear attempt to weaponize food shortages for the recognition of captured Ukrainian territories and were a danger to neighbouring countries.

66. The Secretary-General had condemned attacks by the Russian Federation on Ukrainian port infrastructure, noting the potential violation of international humanitarian law and the worldwide impact on food prices. The Group of Seven had subsequently condemned the escalated attacks on Ukrainian ports and infrastructure and had called upon the Russian Federation to stop threatening global food security and re-engage with the United Nations in order to restart grain exports from Ukraine. The country was working to ensure food stability by establishing temporary sea routes for civilian vessels while maintaining land routes for grain export. The war was among the causes of the global food crisis, which could have serious global socioeconomic and political consequences.

67. **Mr. Jo Tong Hyon** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) said that hundreds of millions of people globally suffered from extreme hunger due to food shortages that were exacerbated by population growth, destructive abnormal weather, armed conflicts and regional disputes. The effective renovation of agricultural production systems and the stabilization of

food security were possible with the participation and cooperation of all countries. It was important to direct cooperation on agricultural development and food security towards improving the production capacity of developing countries.

68. The international community should strengthen cooperation on financial investment, agricultural technology transfer, the establishment of irrigation systems, and capacity-building for agricultural production in developing countries. It was essential to end the misuse of international cooperation for political coercion or ulterior motives. Artificial factors exacerbating the global food crisis, such as imposing sanctions, stockpiling food and extracting biofuel from agricultural products, hindered agricultural development and the resolution of food problems.

69. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was implementing a rural development strategy to increase agricultural production and transform the livelihoods of agricultural workers. Successful measures included high-yield grain seed production, the introduction of scientific agricultural systems, the construction of modern stock-breeding bases and large vegetable greenhouse farms, improved irrigation and increased State investment. The Government had made progress in rural development by constructing modern houses nationwide and providing them to farmers free of charge.

70. **Mr. Zambrana Flores** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the Secretary-General had confirmed in his reports that inclusive and comprehensive rights-based policies prioritizing the most vulnerable sectors were needed to combat rising poverty and hunger. However, the omission of the principles of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, such as the concept of equity, was a significant oversight that must be corrected.

71. The Plurinational State of Bolivia had made substantial advances in distributing and redistributing the means of production and was committed to supporting smallholder farmers and rural communities through financing, technical assistance and access to markets. Import substitution policies had allowed the country to maintain low inflation and reduce unemployment, providing post-pandemic stability. Food security and sovereignty were essential to the right to development, necessitating immediate and medium-term measures to address price volatility and transform the material conditions of agricultural communities. Indigenous Peoples, with their traditional knowledge, were crucial to creating sustainable production systems.

72. Poverty eradication and agricultural development required the international community to prioritize investments in equitable, sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. Developed countries had historical responsibilities and capabilities to address unsustainable production and consumption patterns, and developing countries needed the fiscal and political space to strengthen their productive bases in environmentally sound ways. To eradicate poverty and make agricultural development viable, international cooperation must ensure proper financing, technology transfer and capacity-building.

73. **Ms. Nashwa** (Maldives) said that Maldives faced particular agricultural challenges due to climate change, which threatened its food and water security. Agricultural productivity in the country had been hampered by climate extremes, and coral bleaching and ocean acidification were damaging the marine ecosystems vital for fishing, with illegal fishing and overexploitation also threatening fish stocks. The Government of Maldives remained committed to banning harmful fishing methods and promoting sustainable fishery. As the country imported more than 90 per cent of its food, it had accelerated plans to increase and diversify agriculture diversity and improve food security. As a geographically dispersed nation facing transportation limitations, Maldives had launched transport link ferry services.

74. There was an urgent need to invest in sustainable, equitable, healthy and resilient food systems and resilient agriculture, in alignment with climate action. Maldives was integrating the Early Warnings For All initiative into its disaster management plans, and a national food safety policy had been established to strengthen the food control system. To promote gender equality and women's empowerment, which were critical to addressing the global food security crisis, Maldives was granting councils greater fiscal and legal autonomy and expanding access to financing and entrepreneurship opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises.

75. Maldives called upon the international community to eliminate barriers to technology access, share knowledge on emerging technologies and support financial architecture reform and initiate sustainable debt mechanisms in order to allow developing countries to invest in adequate food systems.

76. **Ms. Nzumbu** (Kenya) said that rising international food prices, fertilizer costs and supply chain disruptions threatened agricultural productivity, which could leave many behind, especially in Africa. Agriculture was pivotal to economic growth in Kenya,

which was pursuing the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda with goals including agricultural transformation, job creation and the expansion of access to education and to social and health services. The Government of Kenya was supporting land and input access, crop diversification and value addition in agriculture in order to increase food production and farmer incomes. Sustainable agrifood systems were central to eliminating extreme poverty, inequalities and malnutrition.

77. Neglecting the role of women and investment in agriculture deprived economies of growth opportunities and led to higher unemployment, poverty and inequality. Women's land rights and landownership and women-led production should be promoted to enhance global food security and nutrition.

78. Adequate and sustainable means of implementation should be provided to help developing countries in building resilient agrifood systems. Timely, accurate and reliable information was needed for decision-making.

79. Proactive debt restructuring, extended debt tenure and a grace period should be implemented, as developing countries could not achieve Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 while subject to financial distress, climate shocks and debt.

80. **Mr. Massari** (Italy) said that more than 3 billion people could not afford a healthy diet owing to rising costs and falling incomes, and more than 80 per cent of the extreme poor resided in rural areas. Integrated actions aligned with interlinked Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 would ensure multiple benefits across the whole 2030 Agenda and beyond. Global hunger was increasing because of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, conflicts and the global effects of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, with the global South particularly affected. Additional efforts were needed to invert those trends.

81. The Government of Italy had hosted the United Nations Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment in Rome in July 2023 to review progress on food systems transformation and accelerate global action. Italy supported the Secretary General's Call to Action for accelerated Food Systems Transformation as a key outcome of the Summit. Furthermore, Italy had allocated an additional €2 million to the Food Shock Window for the implementation of the goals of the Summit at the country level.

82. As displacement was a driver and outcome of food insecurity, Italy was working with partners in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia to address the root

causes of forced migration. Food security would remain a top priority across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, in particular in Africa. In May 2023, Italy had jointly hosted a humanitarian pledging conference for the Horn of Africa, at which it had committed more than €40 million. Agrifood systems accounted for one third of greenhouse gas emissions and were vulnerable to climate change, necessitating integrated policies and measures.

83. **Mr. Pisarevich** (Belarus) said that solving chronic hunger required transformation of the production, processing, distribution and consumption of agricultural produce. The Russian Federation had demonstrated the necessary leadership by donating tons of grain to the African countries hit hardest by the global food crisis, while China had provided significant support to developing countries through its Global Development Initiative: building on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for stronger, greener and healthier global development.

84. Unilateral coercive measures were a serious barrier to global food security and the transformation proposed by the Secretary-General. Sanctions of Western countries against Belarus and the Russian Federation lacked a United Nations mandate and had caused a significant drop in the supply of fertilizer and grain on international markets in 2022, triggering a crisis in global food security and exacerbating hunger in developing nations.

85. A major potash fertilizer producer, Belarus had seen its share in global trade fall from 20 per cent to 9 per cent since 2021 owing to sanctions, which had contributed to a fertilizer scarcity, making prices unaffordable in some low-income countries and contributing to insufficient crop production and increased hunger, especially in Africa. The current food crisis could not be resolved without the removal of the illegal unilateral restrictive measures limiting the access of Belarus and the Russian Federation to international fertilizer and food export markets.

86. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that it was concerning that one third of the population of sub-Saharan Africa would still be in extreme poverty by 2030. The legacies of colonialism and apartheid were manifested in the socioeconomic challenges in Africa, primarily gaps in income and wealth distribution resulting from systemic exclusion and the marginalization of Indigenous majorities. Skewed global trade and capital flows undermined the development of the global South and exacerbated inequalities.

87. Despite significant progress on poverty reduction in Namibia, developmental disparities and challenges

persisted. The Government of Namibia had therefore introduced food banks for the most vulnerable, as well as a set of social safety nets for additional support. It considered social protection indispensable in a coordinated response to poverty and income inequality. There was a need to redirect investments toward children, who were disproportionately affected by multidimensional poverty.

88. Agriculture was vital for two thirds of Namibians and provided employment for around a quarter of the population, despite Namibia being one of the world's driest countries. Climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic had increased deprivation, food insecurity and malnutrition. With the support of the United Nations, Namibian farmers in five regions had adopted nuclear techniques and water-saving irrigation technology.

89. Namibia underscored the importance of addressing desertification, land degradation and drought, emphasizing that restoring degraded land could achieve climate and biodiversity goals while revitalizing agriculture, boosting food security, reducing poverty, restoring economies and building resilience and adaptability.

90. **Mr. Bokoum** (Burkina Faso) said that the proportion of people suffering from hunger and malnutrition was highest in Africa. Although Burkina Faso had considered poverty reduction in four national development plans implemented since 2000, 40 per cent of the population remained below the national poverty line. The present security crisis in the country had humanitarian, social and economic repercussions and increased the risk of people falling into poverty.

91. As poverty was marked by disparities according to gender, place of residence and region, the Government of Burkina Faso had implemented development projects and programmes to prevent and reduce poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. The proportion of identified vulnerable children and excluded people whose needs were being addressed had risen considerably since 2016 and 2017, respectively.

92. The country aimed to provide all citizens with basic health coverage by 2027, and free care had been provided since 2016 for pregnant women and children under the age of 5. Interventions for women included subsidizing improved seeds and agricultural equipment and allocating at least 30 per cent of agricultural land to them. For older persons, the Government had begun construction of two nursing homes and adopted a multisectoral elderly care plan.

93. Eradicating poverty required action by regional and international actors and substantial financing.

Burkina Faso and the Sahel countries were seeking the support of the international community to overcome the terrorist hydra in order to achieve inclusive development.

94. **Ms. Cao Liwen** (China) said that extreme poverty was concentrated in rural areas. Development should be at the centre of the global agenda, with a particular focus on rural poverty reduction. The international community should increase investment in poverty reduction, step up international cooperation and development and enhance policy exchange and pragmatic cooperation. Developed nations should increase assistance in capital technology and capacity-building and help developed countries to eradicate poverty. The international community must oppose the decoupling of supply chains, the erection of barriers and unilateral coercive behaviour.

95. Integrated policies with a whole-of-society approach were needed to address the interlinked issues of poverty and hunger. Countries should tailor their policies to national circumstances, target specific poverty- and hunger-related issues, build social protection and other mechanisms and prevent the reversal of progress made. Poverty and hunger should be eradicated by improving agricultural productivity, optimizing industry, building infrastructure, developing public health and education, utilizing e-commerce and promoting urban-rural coordination and sustainable development.

96. The largest developing nation, China had eradicated extreme poverty. Its targeted poverty alleviation measures could serve as a reference for other countries. To consolidate those results and advance rural revitalization, it had established monitoring and support mechanisms. Moreover, China engaged in South-South cooperation to alleviate poverty, partnering on more than 130 projects in nearly 60 countries to help over 30 million people. Poverty reduction and food security were prioritized in the Global Development Initiative, under which more than 200 cooperation projects benefiting many developing countries had been launched since its inception in 2021.

97. **Mr. Ahmed** (United Arab Emirates) said that his country had contributed over \$1.4 billion to food security initiatives and humanitarian aid over the previous five years. In less than two months, the United Arab Emirates would be hosting the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. One focus of that session would be progress towards target 3 of Sustainable Development Goal 12 on reducing food waste. The United Arab Emirates had set forth a national food security strategy that focused on

smart and sustainable local production. It had established a national Food Security Council and had enacted a law to regulate strategic food stocks.

98. In May 2023, it had been announced that funding for the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate initiative spearheaded by the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America had topped \$13 billion. That initiative now included more than 500 governmental and non-governmental partners around the world in its mission to accelerate the transformation to a climate-friendly food system with an enhanced job-creation capacity. Also in May 2023, the United Arab Emirates had joined the Agriculture Breakthrough Initiative led by the United Kingdom, which sought to promote climate-resilient agriculture. In March 2023, his country's One Billion Meals initiative had announced a contribution of 5.5 billion United Arab Emirates dirhams to the UNITLIFE initiative, which combated malnutrition, especially among children, in several African countries. The United Arab Emirates was a major partner of FAO and would continue to provide support for the FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa.

99. **Ms. Gahlot** (India) said that India had lifted some 415 million people out of poverty over 15 years, but at the halfway point of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027), there was an emerging realization of effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts on the gains made. Countries must urgently implement social policies to mitigate the impacts, get back on track and build resilience.

100. The priority-sector lending approach taken by India after the pandemic showed that policy instruments and innovative finance could protect economic sectors from external shocks and propel structural transformation. The country's commitment to achieving universal coverage in the areas of education, health-care and basic amenities was pivotal in driving the positive outcomes. Targeted policy intervention to reduce rural poverty had accelerated the decline in poverty over the past 10 years.

101. Development of the agricultural sector was key in addressing rural poverty, as more than 70 per cent of rural households relied on agriculture. India had succeeded in transitioning from maintaining a food deficit to achieving food self-sufficiency in the past three decades, enabling the country to build resilient food stocks and ensure food security for millions in recent years. A renewed focus on the cultivation of millets provided a climate-resilient and climate-friendly alternative for food security. Programmes aimed at food

security and the provision of school meals had improved nutrition. The anticipated growth of the natural fibre segment in the textile industry would help to increase farmer incomes, provide livelihoods and reduce pressure on the environment.

102. **Mr. Nguyen** Hoang Nguyen (Viet Nam) said that comprehensive measures were needed to address hunger and poverty and achieve meaningful sustainable development. Ensuring food security was crucial to alleviate poverty and eradicate hunger. Investing in agricultural infrastructure and leveraging science and technology were essential to address food insecurity in the long term. It was necessary to strengthen food environments and change consumer behaviour to reduce food loss and waste and promote healthy diets.

103. Making food systems more sustainable and resilient was imperative to withstand and recover from crises including food insecurity, malnutrition, health emergencies, climate change, biodiversity loss, conflicts and market volatility. Financing policy to achieve the transformation must be consistent at the global, national and local levels. Providing decent work and ensuring social protection must be prioritized to increase the economic and social resilience of people in poverty. Viet Nam looked forward to the implementation of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions and the global coalition for social justice, which could contribute to preparations for the World Social Summit in 2025.

104. Agriculture, seafood and forestry were important to the economy of Viet Nam, which had ensured food security for domestic consumption in recent years. In 2022, the Government had achieved increased agricultural exports by almost 10 per cent and had reduced multidimensional poverty to under 4.5 per cent.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.