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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 17th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 11 October 2023, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Cimino (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Italy)

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*In the absence of Mr. Amorín (Uruguay), Mr. Cimino (Italy), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 21: Eradication of poverty and other development issues** (*continued*)

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

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

**Agenda item 23: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition** (*continued*)

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

**(b) Natural plan fibres and sustainable development** (*continued*) (A/78/218)

1. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that inequality within countries had nearly doubled, reaching levels not seen in over a century. Any increase in food prices risked pushing millions into extreme poverty, while climate change impacts threatened to impoverish 130 million people in the next decade and cause the displacement of over 200 million by 2050. Furthermore, gender gaps exacerbated global hunger and poverty, hindering gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

2. To respond to those challenges, Costa Rica had been tracking long-term poverty trends since 2015 on gender indicators, Internet access, social protection and employment, facilitating the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, the Government was strengthening social protection measures that were adapted to the needs of specific groups and was eliminating barriers to its access through a greater focus on the basic needs of households in poverty, in particular women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Other steps taken included the addition of feminine hygiene products to the basic basket of goods and the promotion of women's labour market access.

3. The public policy for the agricultural sector for the period 2022–2032 was focused on key areas such as sustainability; resilience, mitigation and adaptation to climate change; the strengthening of family farming; financial inclusion; and the use of technology to boost competitiveness and farmers' well-being. The country

had achieved net-zero deforestation and zero agricultural emissions, and over 700 farms were recognized for sustainable natural resource management. An increasing number of nationally appropriate actions for mitigation were being implemented in the agricultural sector to generate economic, social and environmental benefits.

4. **Ms. Hasanova** (Tajikistan) said that the future of the planet depended on actions to generate food security and nutrition. The rapidly changing global situation and the impacts of climate change were delaying the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had imposed extraordinary pressures, in particular on global food systems. Some 3.2 billion people in agricultural regions faced significant water shortages, predominantly in developing countries, with severe implications for food security.

5. Tajikistan faced environmental challenges and was vulnerable to climate change impacts, which imperilled food security and the livelihoods of vulnerable communities. The Government of Tajikistan had prioritized food security and quality nutrition, aligning its strategy with the country strategic plan to help achieve the Goals. Related targets for 2024 included meeting basic food requirements for food-insecure vulnerable people, reducing malnutrition in children and pregnant or lactating women, increasing the resilience of climate-vulnerable food-insecure communities and strengthening government capacities to target, design and implement food security and nutrition strategies.

6. Global food systems needed to be updated, with science crucial for ensuring the integration of changes that delivered better outcomes. With seven years left to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, more commitments and investments were required. The improvement of food systems with United Nations support should be prioritized by all Member States.

7. **Ms. Vilmenay Joseph** (Haiti) said that ending poverty necessitated technical assistance, targeted capacity-building and global financial architecture reform in favour of the least developed countries. At the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Doha in 2023, the international community had committed to helping that category of States in gaining from the multilateral trading system and the global economy.

8. Integrated and coherent measures must be implemented to support small producers in increasing their productivity sustainably in order connect them to global markets, integrate them into agrifood value

chains and expand opportunities for productive and decent work.

9. The deterioration in the security situation in Haiti had compounded existing challenges with a new humanitarian crisis. Bold measures were needed to promote rapid recovery and guarantee socioeconomic development. The Government of Haiti had initiated a process to translate the commitments of the Doha conference into actions, with a focus on poverty eradication and the structural transformation of food systems. The transfer of information and communications technologies to the least developed countries could help them to make structural transformations to their economies so as to reduce unemployment and better combat poverty.

10. **Mr. Maitafsir** (Nigeria) said that conflicts, climate disasters and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated conditions and increased food prices, in particular in Africa. As focusing solely on increasing crop productivity in sub-Saharan Africa held limited potential for eradicating poverty, agricultural measures must be re-evaluated. Collaborative efforts were critical for agricultural development and poverty alleviation. It was imperative to protect and restore ecosystems and landscape diversity for the efficient use of natural resources.

11. With the population of Africa expected to surge by 2050, expanded poverty eradication and food security initiatives were urgently needed. Nigeria called for an open, non-discriminatory trading system that gave developing countries the latitude to trade and the support to boost local manufacturing. Technological sharing was essential for enhancing mechanized farming, modernizing agricultural infrastructure, reducing production costs and stimulating economic diversification. Nigeria had declared a state of emergency on food security and planned to fund 75 enterprises to boost productivity

12. The mandate and title of the former Federal Ministry of Agriculture had been amended to include food security, and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation had been created to help achieve Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2. Moreover, Nigeria was working on the second phase of the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones to transform rural areas into zones of economic prosperity.

13. **Mr. Nena** (Lesotho) said that his country was heavily dependent on agricultural development and productivity. The Government of Lesotho had incorporated agricultural development, nutrition and food security into its economic and social development programmes. The Government was aligning its

agricultural policy in that regard and was encouraging farmers to adopt specialized, more productive farming methods.

14. Lesotho had allocated the largest portion of its national budget for the 2023/24 financial year to agriculture and food production and had introduced a programme for landowners without production resources whereby landowners without the requisite production resources received 20 per cent of the produce and the Government covered all production costs, which had increased production and been hailed as a step towards eliminating poverty.

15. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the failings of existing food systems and the need to make them more sustainable and resilient. In Lesotho, protected agriculture using shade nets and greenhouses had yielded the expected results, allowing production even in challenging weather conditions. More investment in and support for sustainable agriculture in Africa was needed, primarily in the form of adaptable seeds, irrigation equipment and tractors and implements. Lesotho called for more support for programmes to improve agriculture and increase food production.

16. **Ms. Rodríguez Mancía** (Guatemala) said that global trends indicated an imminent food crisis due to disrupted global food supply systems. In Guatemala, climate change was driving hunger, destroying crops and infrastructure and increasing poverty and migration. Climate change resilience projects were important, and international cooperation was crucial for addressing food security, sharing knowledge and promoting sustainable trade. A solid regulatory framework and sustainable financing were also needed.

17. Sustainable agriculture should be promoted to increase food production by investing in innovative agricultural technologies and promoting productivity and open trade. Agrifood system resilience must be strengthened through social protection, early warning systems, agricultural insurance and livelihood diversification. Children under the age of 5, women in extreme poverty and rural populations suffered the most from malnutrition. Guatemala had improved the health and nutrition of the population, notably through the school feeding programme benefiting children and their families as well as the local economy.

18. The Strategic Plan for Food and Nutritional Security was aligned with the National Food Security Policy and targeted prioritized population groups and territories. The Plan and Policy should serve to guide international cooperation, but it was also important to work on administrative expenses, which often exceeded

the amount actually benefiting the population. It was necessary to build on the United Nations Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment to allow for more robust and innovative financing. It was also necessary to make room for scientific solutions and traditional knowledge.

19. **Mr. Girmay** (Ethiopia) said that extreme poverty in rural areas made it imperative to allocate resources for rural development and sustainable agriculture. Supporting smallholder farmers was crucial for poverty eradication in Ethiopia. Poverty continued to rise, exacerbated by the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions and climate change-induced disasters, with developing countries most affected. In Africa, poverty was compounded by challenges such as droughts that further threatened food security and essential needs.

20. Ethiopia had incorporated the 2030 Agenda into its national development plans, focusing on the vast majority of the population living in rural areas. The Government of Ethiopia had enacted policies to reduce poverty and enhance well-being, prioritizing sectors crucial to poverty alleviation. In the past two decades, Ethiopia had reduced poverty from over 40 per cent in 2000 to below 20 per cent in 2020 while increasing per capita income and improving human development.

21. Since 2005, Ethiopia had been implementing social protection systems and other emergency relief measures to protect the most vulnerable in society. Renewed emphasis on agricultural development and food security had accelerated efforts towards achieving food self-sufficiency. However, challenges such as locust infestations and persistent droughts and floods remained. The successful realization of the 2030 Agenda depended on the transformation of rural areas. Investment in education, health care and agriculture was vital to eradicate rural poverty.

22. **Ms. Barba Bustos** (Ecuador) said that poverty was a multidimensional issue that transcended a lack of monetary resources and encompassed the deprivation of the enjoyment of human rights. Ecuador encouraged the use of multidimensional poverty indicators, the provision of disaggregated data and the consideration of those metrics by financial institutions to increase resource availability and capacity development in developing countries.

23. Food security in Ecuador was imperilled by exogenous crises and climate change effects, notably the imminent El Niño phenomenon. The country worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to achieve sustainable, efficient, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems with low

environmental impact, together with climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. To make progress on food system transformation, the Government of Ecuador had conducted inclusive dialogues that highlighted the contribution of women to the production, access and consumption of food.

24. Chronic child malnutrition had been reduced in Ecuador through a comprehensive approach to improving nutrition conditions and must remain a global priority, in particular in rural and poorer areas. Ecuador encouraged action for access to safe, sufficient, affordable, nutritious and diverse food for all and highlighted the role of family and small-scale farming in achieving food security and well-being.

25. **Mr. Alkins** (Guyana) said that poverty still hindered the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Although progress on global poverty reduction had been slowing since 2015, the COVID-19 pandemic had reversed three decades of progress and increased the number of people in extreme poverty for the first time in a generation. Only about one third of countries would meet the target to halve national poverty levels, and the world was at hunger levels not seen since 2005, with food prices remaining high. The climate crisis and ongoing conflicts were compounding the situation.

26. Guyana called for an end to geopolitical conflicts and for the halting and reversal of climate change effects, including delivering on climate finance. The country had vast natural resources instrumental in servicing its agriculture and food needs. However, more must be done to achieve food security at the national and regional levels. Guyana had embarked on a policy initiative to make its agrifood systems more resilient and lower the cost of healthy food. Incentivizing youth involvement was paramount.

27. Guyana was spearheading the Agriculture and Food Security Agenda of the Caribbean Community to reduce the regional food import bill by 25 per cent by 2025 and enhance food and nutrition security in the region. The Government had designated October as Agriculture Month, rolling out activities under the theme “Accelerating vision 25 by 25: investing in business and food security”, and had participated in the Food Systems Stocktaking Moment, in 2023, at which it had reaffirmed its commitment to continue to transform agrifood systems.

28. **Ms. Almezyad** (Kuwait) said that her country had an effective social welfare system and had made great strides in eradicating poverty within its borders. Assistance provided by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Social Affairs focused on those most in need, including

children, youth, older persons, women and persons with special needs and disabilities.

29. Kuwait also provided international assistance to developing and least developed countries through both governmental and non-governmental institutions. In its six decades of existence, the Kuwait Fund for Development had dispensed grants and concessional loans in over 100 countries. Given the many challenges facing the world, progress on poverty eradication would require strengthened partnerships and a redoubling of efforts.

30. **Ms. Leonard** (United States of America) said that the ongoing global food crisis had left 700 million people undernourished, stunted the growth of more than 30 per cent of children under the age of 5 in sub-Saharan Africa and driven staple crop prices to a 15-year high. Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, on ending hunger, was critical for advancing on other Goals. Committed to improving global food and nutrition security, the United States of America had provided more than \$17.5 billion since January 2021 to address global food insecurity and had contributed more than \$7.2 billion to the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2022.

31. With the global population projected to reach 10 billion by 2050 and food demand to increase by 50 per cent, the United States was working to build more resilient and sustainable food systems. In 2023, it had launched the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils, in partnership with the African Union and FAO, to foster more resilient food systems. Together with the United Arab Emirates, the United States had also launched the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate to accelerate global agricultural innovation.

32. The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation was among the biggest threats to global food security, with attacks on Ukrainian ports and grain exports aimed at weaponizing food. The Russian Federation had suspended its participation in the Initiative on the Safe Transport of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports, which had been facilitating the export of grain primarily to the most vulnerable in the developing world. The United States urged the resumption of the Black Sea Initiative. Lasting global food security could not be achieved without the Russian Federation ending its war against Ukraine.

33. **Mr. Gabi** (Congo) said that the number and duration of violent conflicts had risen in the past decade, leading to unprecedented levels of forced displacement. Climate change and environmental degradation had increased vulnerabilities globally, and extreme poverty remained concentrated in rural areas, where nearly 90

per cent of the poorest resided. Food insecurity disproportionately affected women and people in rural areas.

34. The persistence of poverty hindered sustainable development and was an obstacle to the development and emancipation of populations. Urgent action was needed to reverse the trend of increasing poverty and hunger. The approach taken should leverage connectivity between urban, peri-urban and rural areas through investments in infrastructure, public goods and capacity-building.

35. Since 2016, the country had been working to accelerate poverty reduction, notably through the implementation of national development plans to restructure and industrialize the economy and achieve more inclusive and diversified economic growth. Considerable progress had been made in reducing poverty and improving living conditions since the introduction of the plans in 2018, including expanding access to drinking water in rural and urban areas and increasing electricity access.

36. **Mr. George** (Sierra Leone) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed the socioeconomic fragilities of developing countries, forcing thousands of young people to migrate to Europe. The resulting brain drain and low agricultural output had affected the economies of developing countries. Financial disparities between developed and developing countries, declining trade, uneven levels of private investment, reduced foreign direct investment and remittance flows and disrupted supply chains continued to undermine growth in developing countries and increased urban and rural poverty. To protect livelihoods and eradicate poverty, investment should be channelled into creating jobs and decent work opportunities.

37. To develop its human capital, Sierra Leone had allocated more than 20 per cent of its budget to education and offered scholarships for female students studying science, technology, innovation and engineering, as well as providing free education for pregnant girls and children with disabilities. As efficient, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems were essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the country had engaged in rice production projects to increase output and meet domestic demands.

38. The Government of Sierra Leone had prioritized the Feed Salone initiative to provide food security, job creation, strengthened social protection and opportunities for women to manage small and medium-sized enterprises. Incorporating food systems strategies into national policies would bolster sustainable development and improve livelihoods. Establishing

multi-stakeholder food systems governance and investing in research, data, innovation and technology for sustainable food systems were also needed.

39. **Mr. Alsindi** (Bahrain) said that with hunger and food insecurity at record levels, his country was continuing to implement its 2020–2030 national food security strategy, developed in cooperation with FAO. That strategy featured innovative ways to minimize waste, improve the quality and sustainability of locally produced food and mitigate the effects of import disruptions caused by global fluctuations. It also identified cultivable land and promoted investment in irrigation technology. Over 900 Bahraini farmers had received training in climate adaptation and marketing. The Kingdom also aimed to significantly increase fish production by 2025.

40. In 2022, Bahrain had joined Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates in the Industrial Partnership for Sustainable Economic Growth. That partnership invested in numerous vital sectors, including food and agriculture. Between 2020 and 2022, Bahrain had jumped 11 spots in the Global Food Security Index. His delegation looked forward to progress on food security at the upcoming Summit of the Future to be held in 2024.

41. **Mr. Rosa dos Santos** (Brazil) said that chronic hunger had increased significantly around the world between 2019 and 2022 and that 575 million people would still be in extreme poverty by 2030. While conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic were significant drivers of deterioration, the financial divide left developing countries struggling to recover from recent crises. The situation was aggravated by the return of trade protectionism and unilateral measures by developed countries.

42. Brazil was taking steps to reinvigorate social protection and food security and nutrition policies. It had increased cash transfer amounts and ensured a minimal income, lifting millions out of extreme poverty, and had reinstated its food purchase programme, prioritizing small farmers and women in staple crop procurement. At the regional level, Brazil and its partners aimed to promote coherent food security policies, with the right of every person to food, dignity and a decent standard of living at the core of efforts. Brazil planned to use its presidency of the Group of 20 to launch a global alliance against hunger and poverty.

43. Global food security and poverty eradication depended on the reform of global governance and of the international financial architecture to ensure sustained financing for sustainable development, a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable

multilateral trading system, adequate access to finance for developing countries and measures to address the debt crisis and equitable participation in multilateral institutions. Agricultural trade rules should be removed to unleash the production potential of the global South, curb trade distortions and address the negative impacts of subsidies on health and the environment.

44. **Mr. Mandlaper** (South Africa) said that the global economy was characterized by uncertainty, a situation that was aggravated in Africa, which was experiencing shrinking economies, severe liquidity problems, rising debt burdens, and a reversal of gains in areas such as poverty reduction, education, health, food security and malnutrition. African countries, the least developed countries, landlocked developing States and small island developing States were among the worst affected by the climate crisis, despite having no role in causing it and being the least equipped to mitigate and adapt to its effects.

45. The global crisis had led to significant socioeconomic fallout for developing countries, including widespread employment and income losses and sharp declines in exports, remittances and gross domestic product (GDP) growth, further exacerbating income inequalities. South Africa supported the call to tackle fundamental development challenges that disproportionately burdened developing countries through targeted investment, technology transfer, and capacity-building support.

46. To ensure sustainable development, the means of implementation and predictable and sustained financial support were critical and should include the honouring of official development assistance commitments, supportive trade policies, and skills and technology transfer from the international community. South Africa called for urgent action at the United Nations on illicit financial flows and taxes to enable developing countries to mobilize the resources needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. It condemned unilateral protectionist measures that distorted trade and imposed conditions on support, and it supported the steps taken to address the impact of the global economic crisis on developing countries.

47. **Mr. Napurí Pita** (Peru) said that, globally, more than one in four workers were engaged in agriculture, mostly as self-employed or unpaid family workers, with rural populations twice as likely as urban dwellers to be informally employed. Despite a decline in primary agricultural employment, more than 1.2 billion people were employed in agrifood systems and 3.8 billion lived in households linked to livelihoods based on those

systems, confirming that transforming such systems could promote progress in multiple sustainable areas.

48. Farmers played a crucial role in the use and conservation of plant genetic resources, and therefore in food, nutritional and economic security and in preserving food species varieties. The potato exemplified that point. Originally from the South American Andes and now grown globally, the potato was one of the five main basic foods and fundamental to agriculture, the economy, and global food and nutritional security. Small-scale producers had contributed to the conservation of its biodiversity. As the sustainable cultivation of the potato could contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 8, 12 and 15, Peru had been promoting the observance of 30 May as International Potato Day to raise global awareness of the importance of the potato for agricultural development, food security and nutrition, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem functions.

49. **Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh) said that 2.4 billion people had been moderately or severely food insecure in 2022, that relatively more women and people in rural areas lacked access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year long and that 1.3 billion people could not afford food and other necessities despite their key role in global food production. Food insecurity affected poverty alleviation, health and well-being and the attainment of education, as well as gender equality, since women and girls suffered disproportionately from poverty, chronic hunger and malnutrition.

50. Despite its small landmass and large population, Bangladesh had achieved self-sufficiency in food production through agricultural transformations and climate adaptation. However, there was a need for increased investment in agriculture, access to fertilizer and collaboration on climate-resilient crop research. Agriculture scientists in Bangladesh were working on salinity-tolerant crop varieties, and the country stood ready to share its good practices.

51. Factors exacerbating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition included supply chain disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, climate impacts on food production, rising commodity prices, resource constraints, economic difficulties and social and political instability. Tackling the challenges required prioritizing food security in countries with special situations, operationalizing the food stockholding mechanism, addressing factors affecting food prices and access, taking collective action on global food insecurity and transforming global food systems.

52. **Ms. Javaid** (Pakistan) said that geopolitical conflicts and the devastating impacts of climate change were threatening food security and food systems. In 2022, Pakistan had faced a food-related emergency in the wake of unprecedented flooding that had resulted in damages amounting to \$30 million, the loss of 1,700 lives and the destruction of over 3.6 million acres of crops. The floods had left as many as 9.1 million people in poverty. The international community needed to act swiftly to end poverty, hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, and protect the right to adequate food.

53. To that end, there was a need to make finance, production and trade structures fairer and more equitable by resolving the debt crisis and reforming the international financial architecture and the agricultural policies of the World Trade Organization. The natural resources of poorer countries should no longer be exploited. Developing countries should be provided with the support they needed to recover from current crises, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and withstand the impacts of climate change. Accordingly, developed countries should fulfil their commitments to provide financial, technological and capacity-building assistance to developing countries. Food producers, and smallholders in developing countries in particular, should have adequate access to seeds, fertilizers and finance in order to enhance food production. There should be greater investment in agricultural infrastructure in developing countries. The agricultural policies of industrialized countries should be reformed and their massive subsidies should be eliminated. There was a need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the agrifood sector, which accounted for 28 per cent of global emissions, and to promote organic farming and the cultivation of green manure crops by building the capacities of farmers.

54. **Ms. Demir** (Türkiye) said that it was unacceptable that more people were chronically hungry in 2022 than in 2015, and that food security was a cause for concern in every single country. Recent earthquakes in Türkiye had severely affected 11 provinces that were critical for agricultural production, agricultural livelihoods and the food industry. In the light of that experience, her delegation wished to underscore the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction in the implementation of agricultural, food security and nutritional policies, and to develop resilience-based policies, legal frameworks and investment programmes that focused on food security and nutrition. The agricultural capabilities of vulnerable countries should be strengthened through science, technology and innovation, in order to transform food systems into more sustainable pathways

towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which required greater support from development partners, should be used by beneficiary States to accelerate their transformations.

55. Türkiye was committed to keeping trade channels and markets open for the movement of food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs and outputs. In collaboration with the United Nations, it had brokered the Black Sea Initiative to enhance low-income countries' access to food products. Since August 2022, the Initiative had allowed millions of tons of various grain products to reach world markets, helped to stabilize global food prices and averted a major food shortage. The fertilizer market should also be stabilized to avoid further crises in the long term. Türkiye had kept the Joint Coordination Centre open and had maintained its efforts to resume the Initiative, while taking into account the concerns of all stakeholders.

56. In addition to its involvement in the Food Systems Stocktaking Moment, her Government was actively participating in multilateral food security initiatives within the United Nations, the Group of 20 and other international forums, including the Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia platform, also known as the MIKTA Group. Türkiye underscored the need for a predictable, sustainable and functional global market to address the current food crisis, and would continue to actively contribute to global food security efforts.

57. **Mr. Rosdi** (Malaysia) said that his Government was implementing policies geared towards generating inclusive economic growth, active investment in basic social services, and an integrated and comprehensive social protection system. To eradicate extreme poverty, it had allocated 1.1 billion Malaysian ringgit to projects aimed at creating income opportunities for specific demographic groups. In 2023, Malaysia had spent over \$215 million to accelerate national poverty eradication programmes, which had increased the income of more than 50,000 extremely poor households by providing training, start-up capital and incentives for agricultural, marketing and digitalization projects.

58. Malaysia had effectively reshaped its economy, elevated living standards and transitioned from a low-income to an upper-middle-income economy in a single generation. Its gross national income had risen from \$346 in 1970 to \$13,382 in 2023, and the incidence of absolute poverty had fallen from 7.6 per cent in 2016 to 6.2 per cent in 2022. As part of its continued effort to tackle food security issues, his Government had elaborated the National Food Security Policy Action

Plan 2021–2025 and the National Agrofood Policy 2021–2030, which were in line with the four pillars outlined by FAO, namely, availability, access, utilization and stability. His Government recognized the need to increase self-sufficiency with respect to staple food commodities, whose prices had risen and become more volatile as a result of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and rising input costs. The members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations had recently agreed to prioritize collective efforts to address rice supply shortages and other food-related issues in order to ensure regional food security.

59. Malaysia was implementing the National Agricommodity Policy 2021–2030 to propel growth in a manner that was environmentally responsible and economically competitive. The Policy was aligned with evolving global standards and embraced the adoption of digital technology, with a view not only to empowering small-scale farmers to engage in modern, technology-driven agricultural practices but also to making food production more sustainable and efficient. Malaysia welcomed collaboration with other Member States and stakeholders to eradicate poverty and enhance the resilience of global food systems.

60. **Ms. Chivundu** (Malawi) said that agriculture was one of the main economic sectors in Malawi and accounted for approximately 25 per cent of its GDP. Although agriculture contributed significantly to employment, economic growth, export earnings, poverty reduction, food security and nutrition in Malawi, it was not yet fully mechanized. Many farmers used traditional cultivation methods and depended on rain for their crops. There were many opportunities for investment in irrigation so that horticultural products could be grown using surface, gravity, pump, river diversion or sprinkler irrigation systems.

61. Malawi was currently combating poverty and hunger by implementing targeted policies and programmes, including the Affordable Inputs Programme, which provided affordable inputs such as fertilizers and seeds in an effort to address food insecurity, poverty, inequality and vulnerability. The Ministry of Agriculture was working with the private sector to increase agricultural productivity, achieve sustainable food security and boost export revenues.

62. Each Member State had a moral duty to prioritize and adopt comprehensive strategies to empower their vulnerable populations to escape the cycle of poverty. To that end, there was a need to invest in education, health care and social safety nets, while fostering economic growth and job creation. The international community should devise a multifaceted approach that



combined short-term relief with long-term sustainability, in order to bolster the resilience of agricultural systems to the impacts of climate change and ensure that the benefits of agricultural growth reached the most vulnerable. More attention should be paid to nutrition, which played an indispensable role in overall health and development. Ambitious collective goals should be set in that regard, together with effective accountability measures, to make substantial progress in eradicating poverty, ensuring food security and improving nutrition.

63. **Mr. Mart** (Serbia) said that his Government had incorporated the principle of leaving no one behind into the national legal framework and had provided clear guidelines for the creation of public policies in that regard. It would continue to fully integrate that principle into future legal acts and strategic documents, with a view to implementing the 2030 Agenda. The establishment of sustainable food systems was a key priority for Serbia in its quest to achieve sustainable development, and the domestic food system played a fundamental role in the country's economic, social and cultural development. His Government had adopted the National Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy, which sought to bolster production and stabilize producer income; increase competitiveness on domestic and foreign markets by adopting new agricultural technologies and techniques; sustainably manage resources and protect the environment; and improve the quality of life in rural areas.

64. In Serbia, the agricultural and food industry sectors accounted for 15 per cent of total employment and 7 per cent of total gross value added. Over 50 per cent of agricultural enterprises in Serbia were incorporating innovations into their practices, in keeping with a recent growing trend. His Government would continue to increase allocations for agricultural research and development in order to close the gap with the 27 States members of the European Union. Improving the competitiveness and efficiency of the food production system and accelerating economic growth through the use of innovative and digital agricultural technologies was a sure way to drive the sector forward. Serbia was encouraging the association of small producers and the development of short food supply chains and local markets. The goal was to strengthen the sustainability of the agricultural sector and make it more resilient to the impacts of climate change by building irrigation systems, hail protection systems, storage facilities and refrigerated collection centres. To further those efforts, Serbia required financing for climate adaptation and mitigation, as well as greater efforts to implement environmentally friendly

technologies that could reduce the impact of agriculture on natural ecosystems.

65. **Mr. Prabowo** (Indonesia) said that, despite remarkable advancements in technology and infrastructure, millions of people continued to struggle on a daily basis to secure basic necessities. The transformative potential of global food systems and agricultural practices had emerged as a beacon of hope. Agriculture was not simply a sector of the economy, but also the backbone of many communities, especially in the developing world. Transforming the way in which food was produced, distributed and consumed, and increasing the sustainability and resilience of the sector could help to address various challenges simultaneously. Sustainable agricultural practices could increase yields and food security, even in the face of climate unpredictability. Such transformations required concerted national, regional and international efforts, as well as investment in research and development for the adoption of innovative, sustainable and resilient farming techniques, technologies and digitalization. They also called for policies that supported small-scale farmers and ensured their access to markets and fair prices for their produce.

66. Indonesia had developed a strategic national pathway for food systems transformation and had launched programmes aimed at transforming food systems in urban and rural areas to meet the needs of the growing population. His Government was encouraging the development of additional multi-stakeholder platforms, with the support of civil society organizations, in order to translate food systems transformation pathways into concrete collaborative actions. The fight against extreme poverty was not just a moral imperative, but also a practical one. Accelerating the transformation to more resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems should become a priority for ensuring food affordability and accessibility, developing abilities to withstand shocks and stresses, and supporting efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

67. **Mr. Bakhsh** (Saudi Arabia) said that the Secretary-General's report on the future of food and agriculture had made clear the enormity of the challenges facing agricultural sustainability and food security in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. His country would work side by side with international partners to overcome geopolitical obstacles. Its contributions to food security and agriculture around the world came to some \$3 billion, and it was active in regional efforts to promote and consolidate development financing.

68. Saudi Arabia had set forth a national strategy to boost food production, meet climate challenges and overcome water scarcity. The Kingdom's food security indicators had shown improvement. His country had also taken measures to conserve resources, including national programmes to curb food waste, promote recycling and raise awareness of proper waste disposal. United Nations agencies had a major role to play in poverty eradication and food security, and Saudi Arabia would continue its support of international efforts.

69. **Mr. Mungandi** (Zambia) said that rural areas accounted for a disproportionate share of people living in multidimensional poverty, 534 million of whom lived in sub-Saharan Africa. The current state of global poverty required people-centred international development programmes and mechanisms that focused on the most vulnerable. Policy decisions should focus on more equitable income distribution, the reduction of inequalities, job creation, the empowerment of women and the enhancement of social protection measures. Such concrete actions were the only way to ensure inclusive development and lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty by providing them with basic necessities such as food, medical care and education.

70. Like most African countries, Zambia had been grappling with high poverty levels, which had been compounded by the impacts of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. National poverty rates had risen from 54.4 per cent in 2015 to 60 per cent in 2022, while rural poverty had risen from 76.6 per cent to 78.8 per cent and urban poverty had risen from 23 per cent to 31.9 per cent over the same period. Poverty levels in urban areas were increasing at a faster rate than in rural areas. Poverty reduction was therefore at the core of his country's national development agenda and was one of the key priorities of the Eighth National Development Plan 2022–2026. Important initiatives were being undertaken to alleviate rural poverty, including a cash transfer programme, public welfare assistance scheme, food security pack programme, school feeding programme and other programmes aimed at empowering vulnerable women and girls.

71. To enhance agricultural productivity and development, his Government was revising current farming input programmes and had begun implementing the Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme. Other food security measures included the prioritization of sustainable agricultural practices, investment in modern agricultural techniques, the promotion of smallholder farmers' access to resources and the conservation of biodiversity. Zambia was also seeking to raise productivity in the agricultural sector through value addition and the promotion of research,

mechanization, tax incentives, agricultural extension services and farm block development.

72. **Mr. Tun** (Myanmar) said that agriculture was the backbone of Myanmar's economy and the main source of employment in rural areas. Since rural poverty, agricultural systems and food security were inextricably linked, shocks to one system would invariably lead to disruptions and vulnerabilities in others. The illegal attempted military coup in Myanmar and its atrocities, including the implementation of a scorched earth policy, had significantly aggravated existing challenges to the strengthening of agrifood systems and had reversed hard-earned poverty eradication and food security gains. The population was being subjected to increasing airstrikes, brutal mass killings and the systemic burning of civilian homes and properties. The military junta had recently conducted aerial attacks on camps for internally displaced persons, killing 30 civilians, including 13 children, and injuring many more. In addition, it was creating and imposing arbitrary laws, such as a new national registration law, which prohibited the country's largest provider of microfinance from offering financial assistance to the most vulnerable.

73. Another concerning consequence of the military coup was the reversal of progress made in the area of malnutrition. A recent assessment by FAO and WFP had shown that nearly 30 per cent of households in Myanmar were moderately or severely food insecure. Nearly 1 million children were not receiving routine immunizations and close to 5 million children were lacking sufficient vitamin A and access to supplements. Approximately one in three children under the age of 5 was malnourished. The National Unity Government, ethnic resistance organizations and other partners were trying to assist those in need, including by providing humanitarian, education and health-care services.

74. The military dictatorship was the root cause of the crisis in Myanmar. The international community should help to alleviate the population's suffering by backing efforts to end the dictatorship, restore democracy and build a federal democratic union. Together with the United Nations, it should bolster efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals so that the people of Myanmar were not left behind.

75. **Ms. Gutiérrez Tórrez** (Nicaragua) said that debt relief was critical, given that many developing countries continued to face significant indebtedness. The multilateral financial system should therefore promote fair monetary policies to provide adequate assistance to those countries and avoid a protracted public debt default crisis. Financing was crucial for meeting development targets, and international financial systems

should provide greater access to finance in an equitable and inclusive manner. Furthermore, developed countries should fulfil their official development assistance commitments.

76. The implementation of development and poverty eradication policies was being hindered in over 30 countries by the imposition of illegal and terrorist unilateral coercive measures by imperialist and neo-colonialist countries. More than 2 billion people were suffering from the impacts of such harmful measures on a daily basis. Nicaragua continued to reject and condemn those illegal measures and demanded their immediate lifting. In that connection, his delegation wished to highlight the Global Development Initiative: building on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for stronger, greener and healthier global development, which was being promoted by the Government of China. The Global Development Initiative had led to significant progress in the building of cooperation networks for the eradication of poverty.

77. The Government of National Reconciliation and Unity of Nicaragua had adopted a national poverty eradication and human development plan 2022–2026, which served as a guideline for public management and contained policies, strategies and transformative actions for economic growth and the defence of the rights of the population. Her Government was also promoting social, economic and cultural development through the Creative Economy Commission. Nicaragua remained committed to its development model, which sought to reduce poverty and inequality, uphold multilateralism and international law, and defend national sovereignty on the basis on equality, friendship, mutual respect, cooperation and solidarity.

78. **Mr. Kattanga** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the economy of the United Republic of Tanzania formed part of the integrated global economy. Consequently, recent international shocks had had a significant negative impact on national agriculture, food security and malnutrition. As in many developing economies, agriculture was one of the main drivers of economic growth, employment and food security in his country. According to the Ministry of Finance's Economic Survey 2022, the agricultural sector accounted for approximately 26 per cent of GDP and employed more than half of the population.

79. His Government intended to transform the United Republic of Tanzania into a regional hub and food basket. It was committed to addressing food security issues by developing a clear land ownership policy; increasing the budget for agriculture; providing fertilizer and seed subsidies; taking advantage of

demographic trends and making agriculture and agribusiness more attractive to young people; constructing major roads and bridges to connect regions, districts and villages; and implementing marketing and post-harvest loss management programmes. Thus far, interventions had resulted in relatively stable food prices and, over the three preceding years, his country had maintained the lowest inflationary rate in the region.

80. The United Republic of Tanzania had hosted the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023, which had brought together more than 5,400 participants, including five Heads of State, different stakeholder groups, experts, policymakers and representatives of the various food industry sectors from 70 countries. The Forum had provided a platform for reflection on coordinated large-scale actions to explore the latest advancements.

81. Food security was a global need that could not be addressed in isolation. Country strategies, global efforts, financial and technological support, and capacity-building initiatives were all critical for bolstering the agricultural sector.

82. **Mr. Latrous** (Algeria) said that developing countries, particularly those in Africa, were severely affected by rising food prices and inflation, which were compounded by soaring agricultural input and energy prices, climate change and geopolitical tensions. There was a need for urgent and collaborative efforts to support the populations most affected by famine, in areas such as food production, storage and transport. In that regard, Algeria looked forward to the implementation of the recommendations of the Food Systems Stocktaking Moment, especially in Africa, where the opportunities created by the African Continental Free Trade Area should be leveraged to accelerate growth, resilience and regional cooperation in the agricultural sector.

83. Global food supply chains should be reconfigured and barriers to investment should be removed by increasing public and private investment in the agricultural sector. To that end, global supply chains should remain open and free, in particular for essential raw materials. Member States should refrain from banning the export of foodstuffs and ensure that all trade measures were transparent and targeted, in accordance with existing World Trade Organization rules and agreements. Scientific innovation and the use of new technologies should be encouraged to help farmers build their capacities, promote sustainable agriculture and mitigate potential future crises.

84. Algeria had made significant progress by integrating Sustainable Development Goal 2 into national development programmes, establishing

institutional mechanisms and tools for its implementation and developing an effective, comprehensive and sustainable agriculture policy. His Government had adopted several measures to facilitate access to agricultural lands, including by strengthening incentives and public and private partnerships, committing to renewable energies, increasing national food stocks and providing financial and technical support to smallholder farmers. In recent years, Algeria had increased its food security and had been ranked first in the region, with respect to its achievement of Goal 2. That accomplishment was a clear demonstration of the commitment of Algeria to ensuring food security for its population and sharing its expertise with developing countries.

85. **Mr. Maura** (Mozambique) said that Mozambique recognized the important role that South-South cooperation played in supporting developing countries' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Such cooperation could help those countries to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate shocks, address global health emergencies and tackle other cross-cutting development objectives. South-South cooperation had been crucial in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it had enabled developing countries to access vaccines, medication and personal protective equipment. At a meeting held in Cuba the previous month, leaders from the global South had underscored the importance of strengthening global solidarity and international cooperation, in order to accelerate progress towards achieving the Goals.

86. His Government had prioritized the promotion of South-South cooperation, which had made it possible to advance important agendas and implement concrete actions in key areas that could bolster economic growth and sustainable development. One such area was agriculture, which accounted for approximately 24 per cent of the country's GDP and employed over 70 per cent of its population. Mozambique had been the first African country to build an agricultural technology demonstration centre, with funding provided by China. The centre would support local farmers in the adaptation of local farming techniques, the enhancement of seeds and the boosting of productivity. That initiative would help his country to accelerate its efforts towards achieving Goals 2 and 8. Other similar examples could be found in various sectors, including science and technology, education and public health. South-South cooperation was an important development tool and complement to North-South and triangular cooperation. In that regard, Mozambique urged the United Nations and, in particular, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Inter-Agency

Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, to support Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

87. The international community should work collectively to scale up action and meet the objectives of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Mozambique looked forward to the deliberations of leaders from the global South at the upcoming Third South Summit, which was scheduled to be held in Kampala in 2024.

88. **Mr. Al-barati** (Yemen) said that over 80 per cent of his country's population lived below the poverty line. Over 24 million Yemenis were in need of humanitarian assistance, and some 1.2 million pregnant or nursing women and 2.3 million children under 5 years of age were in need of treatment for malnutrition. That dark picture was the result of the war launched against the Yemeni people in 2014 by the Houthi militias with support from the Iranian regime. That war had shrunk the national economy by half. In just the past year, Houthi terrorist attacks on oil facilities and ports had cost the country over \$1 billion that would otherwise have gone to public services and salaries.

89. The international community should take steps to avert disruptions in the food supply brought about by conflict and climate change. The Security Council, Member States, international organizations, the private sector and civil society should all work together to provide early warning and proactive prevention. He called on friendly States to support the humanitarian response plan for Yemen. Long-term investment was needed to build resilience in the most vulnerable communities. FAO and other international agencies could play a vital role in supporting smallholder farmers who made up 60 per cent of the Yemeni population. Increased job opportunities and diversified livelihoods would reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance. Women should play a greater role in production, and the restrictions placed on women in areas controlled by the Houthis should be lifted.

90. **Mr. Coulibaly** (Mali) said that, in addition to the challenges of being landlocked, his country had also been grappling with instability, terrorism and the consequences of climate change and food insecurity. The crisis had been further exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and by the unjust, illegal and inhumane economic and financial sanctions imposed on Mali in January 2022 by the Economic Community of West African States and the West African Economic and Monetary Union. His Government had taken robust

action to address those challenges and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

91. Mali recognized the need to adopt sustainable strategies for bolstering economic growth and meeting the basic needs of the population. Accordingly, his Government was implementing rapid impact development projects and programmes in the most vulnerable areas of the country and creating income-generating activities that targeted young people and women in particular. In accordance with the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, local authorities had been working to provide peace dividends to the population through the development and implementation of a strategic framework for economic recovery and sustainable development. The strategic framework was aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable development, in order to reduce poverty and inequalities in a united and peaceful Mali, through various national and sectoral development policies and strategies. In addition, his Government had implemented a national strategy for the stabilization of the country's central regions for the period 2022–2024, which was seeking to re-establish unity among different communities and substantially reduce inequalities in access to water, health and energy services.

92. External resources were required to supplement national development efforts. In that regard, his delegation commended those partners that had honoured their financial commitments to Mali and called on technical and financial partners to release the resources promised within the context of post-COVID-19 recovery.

93. **Mr. Moussa** (Niger) said that the agricultural sector employed almost 80 per cent of the working population of his country and accounted for approximately 40 per cent of GDP. The Niger possessed significant agricultural assets, including 19 million hectares of agricultural land and approximately 32 billion cubic metres of annual water resources; substantial groundwater reserves; 1,168 permanent and semi-permanent ponds; a rapidly growing young rural population; and a relatively young general population. To capitalize on those assets, his Government had adopted a national strategy for food security and sustainable agricultural development. The strategy was focused on providing quality agricultural inputs and suitable equipment; constructing and rehabilitating hydro-agricultural facilities and irrigated perimeters; adopting appropriate policies to strengthen land tenure security, in particular for women producers; rehabilitating degraded land; and installing irrigation systems for the benefit of small-scale producers.

94. The objectives of the Niger's rural modernization and transformation policies were to bolster productivity and increase the added value of agricultural production; create a rural economy based on the development of small- and medium-sized agricultural and food businesses, particularly for women and young people; and improve supply chains, in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 12. However, the Niger continued to face several agricultural challenges, including a lack of access to technology, an underdeveloped agricultural produce transport sector, climate shocks and insecurity linked to terrorist actions in some regions of the country.

95. His delegation regretted and condemned the fact that regional organizations, which should be working for the good of the people, were becoming instruments of existential threat and economic gangsterism through the imposition of inhumane, illegitimate and cruel sanctions on the population of the Niger. The situation raised doubts about the selectivity with which the principles of neutrality and impartiality were being applied, given that an entire nation was being deprived of pharmaceutical products and basic necessities, which were authorized and transported even in times of war. All parties should remain reasonable and collectively negotiate solutions. The Niger sincerely thanked the people and Governments of Burkina Faso and Mali for their fraternal, frank and unconditional support.

96. **Ms. Romualdo** (Cabo Verde) said that her country had made significant progress towards implementing the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) and had reduced poverty levels, from 23.7 per cent in 2015 to 13.1 per cent in 2020, through increased economic growth. However, Cabo Verde continued to grapple with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, severe cyclical droughts and high vulnerability to external shocks. In 2020, there had been a 14.8 per cent drop in growth and a 9 per cent decrease in employment, which had led to widespread income losses among households. Those issues, coupled with declining revenues and reduced investment in social protection, had contributed to an increased debt-to-GDP ratio and had limited fiscal space for crucial investments.

97. Structural constraints had given rise to significant inequalities and regional disparities in poverty and human development. Vulnerable groups, such as women in precarious situations, at-risk children and isolated communities were being left behind, and the predominantly young population was faced with inadequate job opportunities. Gender inequalities persisted and poverty disproportionately affected female-headed households. Women continued to be

extremely dependent on remittances and social welfare, and the incidence of gender-based violence had risen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited access to justice and protection remained a critical concern in that regard.

98. Cabo Verde was experiencing the impacts of climate change and urgently needed to invest in nature-based solutions and green energy to mitigate those impacts. Its food systems were proving to be insufficient and previously made gains were being reversed, leading to growing rates of malnutrition, micronutrient deficiency and obesity. Recent global challenges had presented an opportunity for a paradigm shift in food policies, whereby local development models could enhance the resilience of small-scale farmers, fishers and consumers and, in so doing, ensure access to locally produced, affordable and nutritious food. As a leader in South-South cooperation, Cabo Verde was seeking resilient solutions through regional integration and trade, especially with other small island developing States. Collaboration with international partners and the continued support of the United Nations agencies were crucial for achieving sustainable development.

99. **Mr. Aristov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation welcomed the recent convening of the Food Systems Stocktaking Moment, which had enabled comprehensive discussions on a wide range of agricultural and other related issues. Member States should follow up on its outcomes with the support of FAO, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

100. Sustainable agricultural development was a priority for the Russian Federation, both domestically and internationally. In improving its national food systems, his Government took into account the interests and needs of its developing country partners. In collaboration with WFP, it had been implementing school feeding programmes, worldwide, for many years, and had allocated over \$120 million to such programmes. Through FAO, the Russian Federation was providing assistance in the areas of soil conservation and combating antimicrobial resistance, animal and plant diseases. His delegation looked forward to continued constructive multilateral cooperation on food systems, shared concerns about negative food security trends and the so-called “cost-of-living crisis”, and rejected all accusations against the Russian Federation in that regard. The inconsistency of such accusations had been repeatedly demonstrated with undeniable facts.

101. As the world’s largest producer of fertilizers and a leader in wheat cultivation, the Russian Federation

wished to increase its exports and stabilize food markets. There was no shortage of food in the world in 2023 and recent events in Ukraine were not the root cause of current problems. The ongoing food crisis had been caused by disruptions in international supply chains and other short-sighted actions of Western countries, including the forced energy transition and trade protectionism. Solutions to those issues would be facilitated by measures aimed at eradicating the real causes of the crisis, such as the unilateral sanctions imposed by Western States without regard for the impact on ordinary citizens in the targeted countries. It was extremely disappointing that the United Nations Secretariat had failed to recognize that issue as one of the keys to overcoming socioeconomic regression. The same applied to the consequences of unilateral sanctions on the development of national agricultural systems and the functioning of food and fertilizer supply chains. Global food security issues emanated from the destructive practices of global agricultural trading companies, whose speculative actions were clearly linked to stock market volatility. Over the period 2021–2022, leading Western trading companies had earned billions of dollars from price spikes, raising questions about who stood to benefit from global food tensions.

102. **Ms. Debataba** (Togo) said that agriculture accounted for 40 per cent of GDP in Togo, employed close to 65 per cent of the working population and occupied 60 per cent of the country’s total surface area. The agricultural sector was therefore a priority area of the new national strategic development plan for the period leading up to 2025. Significant efforts were being made to modernize agriculture by improving access to finance for farmers, promoting agroforestry, intensifying agricultural research, increasing mechanization and the use of fertilizers, developing agricultural value chains and fostering agro-entrepreneurship. New initiatives had been launched, including the development of agricultural hubs and the establishment of a mechanism to promote agricultural financing, which had allowed agricultural stakeholders to access over 27 billion CFA francs in 2021.

103. Nonetheless, agriculture continued to lack support from the banking sector, which allotted a mere 0.3 per cent of its annual loan portfolio to agricultural purposes. Her Government was therefore seeking to increase the proportion of bank loans allocated to the agricultural sector by 2027. Furthermore, to support the most vulnerable farmers, it had introduced an annual subsidy of between 1.5 and 2 billion CFA francs for the purchase of fertilizer. In recent years, Togo had been implementing a national programme for investment in

agriculture and food and nutritional security, which had enabled surplus food production, improved the food coverage rate and considerably reduced undernourishment by doubling agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale producers. School feeding projects had also been launched in the most vulnerable areas for the benefit of close to 95,000 students.

104. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Togo was far from achieving the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 2 and overcoming internal and external challenges. There was a persistent lack of funding and the security of the entire country was being jeopardized by terrorist attacks in northern regions. Global challenges such as rising food and fuel prices, geopolitical crises, increased financial constraints, climate change, external debt burdens and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were also hampering the full realization of agricultural development and food and nutritional security.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*