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Chair: Mr. Logar (Slovenia)

Contents

Agenda item 26: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

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

Agenda item 26: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition (A/70/92-E/2015/82 and A/70/92/Corr.1-E/2015/82/Corr.1, A/70/129, A/70/333 and A/70/410; A/C.2/70/2)

1. **Ms. Barthelemy** (Chief, Intergovernmental Support and Inter-Agency Branch, Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on agriculture development, food security and nutrition (A/70/333), said that the report reviewed progress in eradicating hunger and malnutrition and providing access to food and also discussed agricultural productivity and sustainability. Much progress had been achieved through the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the many related policy efforts; those achievements indicated that sustaining rapid momentum in reducing hunger was feasible. Yet progress remained uneven. Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals renewed the pledge to fight hunger and malnutrition, with a focus on agricultural productivity, sustainable food production systems, investment, trade and the functioning of food commodity markets. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also included at least six goals that addressed the underlying and immediate causes of malnutrition. Its holistic approach fostered the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative means of implementation.

2. The report outlined a number of global initiatives that would support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as it related to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture. For example, the second International Conference on Nutrition had been held in November 2014 and the Secretary-General had launched a Zero Hunger Challenge. Moreover, the Committee on World Food Security had placed the Sustainable Development Goals at the centre of its work. Many countries were seeking to combine actions in the areas of health, agriculture, education, gender equality, nutrition, sanitation, water and energy in order to achieve better and mutually reinforcing results. Other initiatives aimed to reduce land degradation and food waste while increasing investment on behalf of the poor and fostering the social participation and protection of smallholder and women farmers.

3. She highlighted three conclusions of the report. First, given the universal and integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda, investing in sustainable food systems would pay dividends across a range of other goals such as poverty reduction, gender equality and the mitigation of climate change. Second, collaboration among countries, including South-South cooperation, must be further strengthened. Third, the 2030 Agenda required the political commitment and action of all nations in order to succeed.

4. **Ms. Moleko** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that among the items on the Committee's agenda, agriculture development, food security and nutrition played a central role in the eradication of poverty, which was the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. She welcomed the positive elements in the Secretary-General's report, including the fact that 216 million people had been lifted out of hunger since 1990-1992, that 72 of the 129 developing countries monitored by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had reached the MDG target of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015, and several more countries were likely to do so by the end of 2015, and that the global rate of extreme poverty had fallen between 1981 and 2011. Such developments showed that sustaining rapid progress in reducing hunger was achievable.

5. Her delegation was concerned, however, about the very uneven progress in reducing hunger, and the slower decline of undernourishment rates as a result of the global economic and financial crisis and violent conflict within some countries. Regardless of whether the failure to achieve international hunger targets was natural or human-induced, it was undeniable that that failure resulted in protracted crises, increased vulnerability and food insecurity among large segments of the world's population.

6. While economic growth was an important factor for success in the fight against hunger, it was often insufficient by itself to guarantee access to food. Growth needed to be accompanied by special interventions to ensure that the poor benefited, and by strong political will to end hunger. Hunger and undernourishment could also place a high burden on health systems and other social services and have a negative impact on education. Consequently, investing in sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition

could help attain other Sustainable Development Goals. The agriculture sector in developing countries must be continually strengthened, including through technical and financial assistance, access to and transfer of technology, and the empowerment of indigenous peoples, rural communities, small-scale farmers and fishermen.

7. **Mr. Mesali** (Sierra Leone), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that with more than two thirds of the population of Africa being dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, African countries had been making great efforts to enhance agricultural production and productivity by placing the sector at the top of their national development agendas and providing it with increased budgetary support. African countries were continuing to deliver on their commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. At the twenty-third African Union Summit, held in June 2014 in Malabo, African leaders had adopted the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods with the aim of ending hunger and halving poverty in Africa by 2025.

8. In Africa, 80 per cent of farms were cultivated by smallholder farmers, who needed more training, financial services and adequate infrastructure to enhance productivity, including rural roads that improved access to markets. The continent had 60 per cent of the world's uncultivated arable land, but due to various constraints those resources were not fully utilized. The African Group strongly believed that available technologies could help increase agricultural productivity both on farms and along the agrofood value chain. Technology transfer and capacity-building were therefore central to improving sustainable agriculture in Africa, particularly in support of women and youth working as smallholder farmers.

9. Drought and desertification continued to pose a major threat to agriculture; the African Group therefore welcomed the recent launching of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund. Another serious concern was child undernutrition, which placed extremely high social and economic burdens on families in Africa. The Group called for more collaborative efforts to develop strategies geared towards achieving the goals set in the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy as well as in Africa's Renewed Initiative for Stunting Elimination.

10. The African Group recognized that agriculture had become an increasingly market-driven sector, rather than a policy-driven sector. That shift brought significant investment opportunities to many developing countries. Nevertheless, stable and favourable global economic and trading systems, free of distortions, were needed if developing countries were to benefit from their comparative advantage in global markets.

11. Since rural populations constituted the largest percentage of those living in extreme poverty, and investment in agriculture had proven to be twice as effective in reducing poverty as investment in any other sector, in order to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Agenda, sustainable food production — which not only fed people, but also delivered increased incomes and sustainable rural livelihoods — must be seen as crucial.

12. **Mr. Elias** (Bangladesh), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that a significant percentage of the 1 billion people around the world who were classified as extremely poor lived in least developed countries (LDCs). One of the key priority areas for action in the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 was agriculture and food security; the Programme of Action set forth a number of actions to assist LDCs in strengthening their agriculture sector to promote rural development and food and nutrition security. Enhanced financial and technical support was needed for the agriculture sector, including assistance to increase the productivity of land and workers. The international community must support the LDCs in establishing and strengthening access to agricultural finance and related risk-mitigation tools. The official development assistance (ODA) that had been pledged by development partners must be made available; predictable and incremental ODA was necessary to support the LDCs and was a key component for development plans, including agriculture development plans.

13. Food and nutrition security were contingent upon the building of a strong agricultural sector. In order to ensure that populations were not malnourished, it was vital to have appropriate and sufficient agricultural production along with advanced agricultural research facilities, another area where LDCs needed support. In addition, developed countries should fulfil their commitment of importing all products from LDCs duty-free and quota-free, and the non-tariff barriers

that the latter faced when exporting agricultural products must be removed quickly. Developing countries in a position to do so should provide duty-free and quota-free market access to LDC products, including agricultural products. In that connection, as agreed under the Istanbul Programme of Action, LDCs needed support to establish and upgrade their own national testing and certification institutions, which could then be recognized by the global institutions that monitored compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

14. United Nations agencies and other international organizations must also provide food assistance to the LDCs, when required. The United Nations system should also help LDCs strengthen their capacity in the areas of agriculture, rural development and food and nutrition security. Those countries would also benefit if more detailed data on their agriculture sectors and the international trade in their agricultural products was provided in United Nations documents and reports.

15. **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that agriculture development, food security and nutrition would be of crucial importance to CARICOM member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Several of those States had met the MDG target of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015; however, they now faced a greater challenge posed by the impact of climate change. The agriculture sector had historically been an important contributor to economic development in the Caribbean. Agriculture remained one of the primary sources of livelihood for households, particularly for women and youth in low- and middle-income countries. However, persistent challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, the difficulties of exploiting economies of scale and an unfavourable external economic environment hindered the full potential that could be realized from agricultural development in the region.

16. The CARICOM countries were making concerted efforts to increase productivity and enhance competitiveness in the agricultural sector. The 59th special meeting of the Council on Trade and Economic Development, held in Georgetown, Guyana in October 2015, had focused on promoting food self-sufficiency and food security, strengthening agribusiness and advancing the regional agenda on agricultural health and food safety. The CARICOM countries recognized that social protection and agricultural development must go hand in hand in the

quest to end hunger and ensure sustainable and inclusive development. They were therefore coordinating their efforts to promote the CARICOM regional food security and nutrition policy through a multidimensional and multisectoral approach that incorporated food production, processing and distribution, trade, health and nutrition, social welfare, education and infrastructure. Strong political commitment, durable partnerships and adequate resources remained critical to those efforts.

17. The CARICOM countries welcomed the Ministerial Meeting on Food Security and Climate Adaptation in Small Island Developing States held in Milan in October 2015 and looked forward to following up on the implementation of its outcome in the context of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. Investment and partnerships would be needed to achieve the goal of ending hunger globally. The CARICOM countries reaffirmed the importance of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which underlined the importance of investment in agriculture, rural development and food and nutrition security.

18. The CARICOM countries needed greater support to ensure sustainable livelihoods and development through access to concessionary financing, investment, transferring of innovative tools and technological know-how. Sustained investment was needed not only at the national level but also at the regional and global levels in order to promote positive synergy across all the Sustainable Development Goals, especially with respect to poverty eradication, gender empowerment and combating climate change. Increased investment in favour of the poor and a combination of production support and social protection were crucial for promoting food security and nutrition; continued emphasis was needed on the exchange of experiences through South-South cooperation. Such efforts must transcend national, regional and international boundaries to ensure food security not only for the current generation, but also for future generations.

19. **Mr. Tin** (Myanmar), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the ASEAN region generated food surpluses, but faced seasonal food scarcity in certain areas due to weather conditions. Moreover, climate change and the sharp increase in international food prices had had adverse impacts on food security in the region. Consequently, ASEAN member States recognized the need to enhance cooperation in order to ensure food

security through food production, post-harvest management, marketing and trade. The updated ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework for 2015-2020 addressed food security and emergency/shortage relief, sustainable food trade development, integrated food security information systems, agricultural innovation and nutrition-enhancing agricultural development. In its efforts to promote food security, ASEAN took into full consideration such factors as population growth, food prices, climate change and the degradation of natural resources.

20. ASEAN was concerned about the uneven progress made in reducing hunger around the world. Agriculture development, food security and nutrition were the most essential elements in efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, particularly for poor and disadvantaged populations in developing countries. Small-scale and family farmers, especially in developing countries, had an important role to play in that regard. The achievement of the objectives of Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals would require policies that were coordinated through the inputs and collaboration of multiple sectors and government departments, as well as international cooperation with a range of stakeholders, including the United Nations, the private sector and civil society. The Zero Hunger Challenge was an important commitment in that regard. Trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets posed a threat to sustainable agricultural development and food security for developing countries; it was therefore essential to eliminate all trade restrictions and agricultural subsidies in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round of trade negotiations.

21. In September 2015, the ASEAN ministers of agriculture and forestry had endorsed the Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry for 2016-2025. The Ministers had further reiterated their commitment to ensure a sufficient supply of safe and nutritious food for the region through the implementation of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN region 2015-2020, which would address emerging threats to food security and promote a common and unified position to ensure sustainable food security and nutrition in the region. ASEAN had also established an emergency rice reserve, the first such mechanism in the world.

22. ASEAN emphasized the need for technology support for pre- and post-harvest management in the agricultural sector in order to reduce waste, and also recognized the importance of efforts to raise public awareness of food loss and waste. To address the challenge of providing sufficient food for a growing population, ASEAN was encouraging greater investment in food and agro-based industry. He reiterated the strong commitment of ASEAN to the collective efforts of the international community towards hunger reduction, sustainable agriculture and global food security for all.

23. **Mr. O'Sullivan** (Australia), speaking on behalf of the Cairns Group, said that the Group had long advocated agricultural trade reform. It reiterated the importance of agriculture for development, especially in developing countries where a significant proportion of the population was largely dependent on agriculture as a source of income; and underlined the need to address the global imbalances and distortions in world agricultural trade, whether in the areas of market access, domestic support or export competition. It was important to address those distortions not only in terms of creating further market efficiencies and more effective price signals for farmers and investors, but also as a means of contributing to greater food security. Against that backdrop, the Cairns Group was very disappointed with the point reached in the agriculture negotiations of the Doha Development Round.

24. It was evident that there were serious questions about the political will of some World Trade Organization (WTO) members to pursue reforms to agricultural trade, particularly with respect to substantial reductions in trade-distorting types of domestic support and significant improvements in market access, which would benefit everyone. Nevertheless, the Cairns Group remained committed to negotiating an ambitious outcome on export competition at the tenth Ministerial Conference of WTO, which would be a critical step forward in the achievement of Goal 2b of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group insisted that, whatever outcomes were achieved at the Conference, WTO members must continue their efforts to reform global agricultural trade in 2016 and beyond.

25. **Mr. Sela** (Israel) said that climate change, drought and desertification were among the formidable challenges to the productivity of farms and the maintenance of food sources. It was particularly

important to improve the productivity levels and the adaptability and resilience of smallholder farmers. Although such farmers were responsible for the largest share of global agricultural production, most of them never increased their output beyond subsistence level, largely because they lacked access to credit, technical support and training and relied on traditional labour-intensive, low productivity agricultural methods.

26. Over the past six decades, Israel had transformed its food system from a small-scale, subsistence agricultural sector characterized by food insecurity and scarcity into a strong and sustainable agricultural infrastructure which was a leader in technology and innovation. Since 1990, his country's agricultural output had increased sevenfold with very little increase in water consumption despite its dry climate and arid lands. It now grew more than 40 per cent of its vegetables and field crops in the desert.

27. His country had shared its experience and expertise in farming, climate change mitigation, water management and desalination with partners in a wide variety of countries and climates. Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation had sent scientists, engineers and teachers all over the world to impart their know-how and help local participants become agents of change in their own countries. One such programme had a special focus on developing support systems for women entrepreneurs. In Ecuador, Israeli desalination technology was generating fresh water to be channelled to arid regions and farmers were growing a new variety of disease-resistant banana developed in Israel. Those achievements were being replicated in countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America. In order to end hunger, enhanced coordination and effective cooperation between all stakeholders were needed.

28. **Ms. Bajiña** (Nicaragua) said that improving food security and nutrition, tackling land degradation and drought, and increasing food production in developing countries were crucial elements of the Sustainable Development Goals. Those objectives could be achieved only through the integration of developing countries into international markets in a fair, transparent and sustainable manner. The international community must adopt multidimensional measures and promote a holistic approach. Food security could be achieved only through equitable economic growth, jobs creation, income-generation and technological progress.

29. Her Government accorded priority to ensuring that all Nicaraguan families had access to sufficient, nutritious and healthy food. Its efforts were being supported by Parliament and by a group of 16 universities. Between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of Nicaragua's population that was undernourished had been reduced from 54 per cent to 16 per cent. Nicaragua had therefore fulfilled Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals.

30. The solutions existed for transforming food systems; however, their implementation required greater political will. The means of implementation were of fundamental importance, in accordance with the differing historic responsibilities and capacities of developed and developing countries.

31. **Mr. Mishkorudny** (Belarus) said that the international community must continue to respond effectively to the global food crisis; the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 2, was of key importance in that regard. High-yield agriculture was an important factor in creating jobs, improving competitiveness, developing entrepreneurship and expanding technological and export capacities. His country was steadily improving its agricultural productivity, developing food export opportunities and promoting global efforts to eradicate hunger and stabilize the global system of trade in food products. As much as 15 per cent of the volume of its exports consisted of food and agricultural products.

32. Belarus was actively sharing its experience with countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and was expanding its network of joint enterprises and service centres to produce and modernize Belarusian agricultural technology that was in demand among farmers. In conjunction with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), it was implementing a project to create an agro-industrial park within which a closed agricultural production and processing cycle was being developed.

33. Food security was a central topic on the agenda of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), of which Belarus was the current chair. Efforts were focusing on enhancing the transparency of agricultural markets, developing rural areas and increasing the productivity of the agro-industrial sector. There was full support for the development of working ties between EEU and FAO and, in particular, for the agreed list of priorities for bilateral cooperation.

34. **Ms. Eu** (Singapore) said that global agricultural productivity was in decline due to years of underinvestment in agriculture, while global food demand was steadily increasing due to a growing population. Climate change and extreme weather events compounded the problem. The underlying supply and demand factors which had led to rising food prices and periods of price volatility had existed for some time. Singapore was therefore heartened that food security was prominently on the agenda of key regional and multilateral forums that had not traditionally focused on the issue, and welcomed recent initiatives such as the revised ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework and the new Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN region, the Beijing Declaration on Food Security issued by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation ministers, and the Action Plan on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems of the Group of 20.

35. Recognizing the importance of regional and international cooperation in ensuring global food security was a step in the right direction, but countries now needed to work on putting plans into action. She called for an open, rules-based multilateral trading system under WTO, the full implementation of the Bali Package, adopted at the Ninth Ministerial Conference of WTO, and for substantive outcomes at the Tenth Ministerial Conference of WTO.

36. The fact that Singapore ranked second, behind the United States, in the 2015 Global Food Security Index was a major achievement. However, as a small city-State with no hinterland that imported over 90 per cent of its food, Singapore remained vulnerable to fluctuations in food supply and prices, as well as food safety problems overseas. Diversification of food sources was therefore a core strategy of its food security plan and could be enhanced by securing food at source, including through contract farming, as well as by obtaining the first right of purchase in times of supply shortages. Optimizing local production was another core strategy; her Government had established an Agriculture Productivity Fund to help local farms increase their yields and to support research and development in new farming technologies that could help them become more self-sustainable in food production. Stockpiling foodstuffs such as rice and reducing food waste were other strategies it employed to enhance its food security, along with greater

engagement with social agencies to ensure that the poor were able to access food.

37. In June 2015, Singapore had signed its first memorandum of understanding with FAO to jointly enhance food security and nutrition in South-East Asia, focusing on food safety and fisheries. Although Singapore was not an agricultural country, it could contribute to improving the food chain through research and development in collaboration with FAO and other relevant organizations, and by exchanging knowledge with other countries. Her country was also committed to sharing its experience in urban agriculture innovation, including vertical farms and rooftop gardens. Food security issues transcended national boundaries; consequently, close partnerships must be forged. It was crucial to ensure that food, whether imported, locally produced, in fresh or processed forms, was safe to eat and affordable for all.

38. **Mr. Fondukov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation agreed that the approach to solving the problems of food supply must be changed by focusing efforts not on further increasing crop yields and livestock herds but on reducing losses at all stages of food production and ensuring access to safe food. It was important to ensure the successful implementation of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which not only provided a comprehensive, cross-sectoral vision of nutritional issues but also took into account the characteristics of food systems of different countries and regions and all links in the food chain. His delegation was pleased that those documents were reflected in the 2030 Agenda and in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. It was convinced that without due attention to ensuring healthy nutrition for all, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets on combating hunger, non-communicable diseases, and maternal and child mortality.

39. In the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, his Government would accord priority attention to food safety. It was unacceptable to increase risks to the health of the population in order to liberalize trade in food products and reduce production losses. In that regard, his Government opposed the concept of so-called acceptable risk.

40. As an international development assistance donor, the Russian Federation would continue to provide

developing countries with assistance in resolving food security problems. In 2010-2014, Russian voluntary contributions had enabled the World Food Programme to provide food aid to some 20 countries amounting to over \$210 million, including \$47 million for school nutrition programmes in countries of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. His Government intended to expand that assistance.

41. **Mr. Rodrigues dos Santos** (Brazil) said that, as a direct result of increased spending on food security and social protection programmes, the percentage of Brazilians living in extreme poverty had diminished from 14 per cent to 3.5 per cent between 2001 and 2012. Brazil's experience demonstrated that social protection measures could help break the cycle of rural poverty and vulnerability, when combined with broader agricultural and rural development measures.

42. While global indicators relating to chronic hunger had improved, at the same time modern lifestyles and access to low-cost, non-nutritious food were causing obesity and related diseases to skyrocket in many countries, both developed and developing. In that regard, his Government welcomed the recent World Health Organization guidelines recommending a reduction in the daily intake of free sugars to less than 10 per cent of calories consumed.

43. The international community needed to prepare for a new development paradigm that would radically transform the ways in which food was produced, traded, distributed, consumed and disposed of. Considerable productivity gains were needed, and achieving them would require an outcome to the Doha Development Round that would enable developing countries to increase their access to world agricultural markets, though liberalization commitments in the protected agricultural markets of the North as well as reduction or elimination of agricultural subsidies, particularly export subsidies. Agricultural subsidies in rich countries led to distortions in world food markets and were one of the main factors impeding the development of robust agricultural sectors in the developing world. It was unfortunate that the Secretary-General's report did not provide an accurate picture of the way in which those subsidies impacted agricultural and rural development in developing countries.

44. There was a growing consensus on the crucial role played by small scale farmers in alleviating hunger

and poverty and achieving sustainable development; fostering smallholder agriculture created positive externalities for the development of local economies and for food security. For example, Brazil's school meal programme, which sourced food from local producers to provide meals at public schools, offered triple benefits as it created a demand for local produce, generated economic activity and promoted better nutrition and food security among schoolchildren.

45. The Centre of Excellence against Hunger, established by his Government and the World Food Programme as a global forum for South-South policy dialogue and learning, helped other developing countries develop their own programmes to combat hunger and poverty by providing demand-driven advice on policies and technical assistance. The lessons learned from such programmes must be increasingly shared through South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms, the potential of which had yet to be fully explored.

46. **Mr. Al-Khayarin** (Qatar) said that while progress on poverty eradication remained uneven, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had affirmed that everyone had the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food. Poverty and hunger eradication were central components of his country's sustainable development strategy, which sought to ensure that poor people, particularly in rural areas, reaped the benefits of increased economic growth and agricultural productivity. Addressing food and nutrition insecurity meant paying attention to the needs of women, children, older persons, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of marginalized groups and victims of armed conflicts.

47. His Government placed special emphasis on sustainable agriculture as a means of ending hunger and poverty. Qatar had established the Global Dryland Alliance to build on the political momentum for global cooperation to address desertification, drought and other negative impacts of climate change. International cooperation was essential to helping developing countries meet agricultural development challenges.

48. **Mr. Kadurugamuwa** (Sri Lanka) said that it was disheartening that 795 million people across the globe remained chronically hungry, and unacceptable that more than 90 million children under age 5 were undernourished and underweight. In order to achieve

Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, it was imperative to promote cooperation among nations in order to increase agricultural yields, ensure food security and enhance nutrition levels.

49. Agriculture was the foundation of Sri Lanka's economy, as 70 per cent of its population lived in rural areas. In order to address the impact of soaring food prices, his Government had implemented a national campaign to enhance domestic food production which had included the establishment of 700,000 home gardens all over the country. Sri Lanka also had a high-level committee on food and nutrition security that regularly reviewed the cost of living and market prices in order to formulate necessary policy directives. As a result of those directives, Sri Lanka had achieved self-sufficiency in rice, its staple food, and near self-sufficiency in maize. His Government also placed a strong emphasis on nutrition; a national nutrition surveillance system was in operation throughout the country, as well as a food supplement programme for mothers and infants.

50. To address the challenge of global food security, investment in agriculture was essential to foster agricultural productivity and reduce the wastage of food. All stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels should work closely with professionals in the fields of science, technology and industry to ensure that investment in the agriculture sector was given a high profile in investment strategies for sustainable development.

51. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that halving the proportion of people who suffered from hunger had been one of the MDG targets, and the recently adopted 2030 Agenda had pledged to end poverty and hunger. African leaders had stressed food security and nutrition in the 2003 Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa and the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa. The 2063 Agenda adopted by the African Union contained a commitment to end hunger in Africa by 2025. That would require coordinated efforts across various sectors of the economy.

52. In his country, agriculture accounted for over one third of the gross domestic product (GDP). The Sudan had an abundance of land and water resources, and varied regional climates that offered potential for crop diversification. His Government had developed a plan

to support both crop cultivation and livestock raising that included investments in rural energy and water infrastructure, tax exemptions to encourage sustainable agricultural practices and small farming, and measures to attract foreign direct investment to the agriculture sector. However, as a least developed country, the Sudan faced great difficulties in overcoming infrastructure and climate change challenges. Moreover, unilateral sanctions and coercive measures had had a negative impact on the Sudan's ability to conduct trade, obtain loans and import technology.

53. A majority of people suffering from poverty and hunger lived in developing countries. The joint FAO, IFAD and WFP report issued in June 2015 had estimated that investments of US\$ 267 billion per year were needed to end hunger. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda would require financing, capacity-building, technology transfer, a global environment conducive to economic growth, increased international cooperation, the opening of markets to developing country products and a transparent and fair global trading system that included facilitated membership for developing and least developed countries in WTO.

54. In October 2015, the Sudan had been elected chair of the Committee on World Food Security. That Committee intended to play a major role in advancing the 2030 Agenda's food security-related items, and its High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition had recently issued reports on losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition, and water for food security and nutrition. The Sudan had also recently joined the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers.

55. **Ms. Barker-Murphy** (Jamaica) said that her Government looked forward to the implementation of the software system developed by FAO and the World Bank that was expected to address current deficiencies in data collection and facilitate improved monitoring of food security achievements, thereby providing the necessary statistics for the development and updating of food security programmes.

56. The uneven progress in reducing hunger among and within countries was disheartening. Lack of access to food and its improper use had led to the emergence of a double burden of malnutrition, when both under- and overnutrition coexisted and a shift in consumer preferences towards nutritionally poor diets had led to

an increasing prevalence of obesity and nutritionally related non-communicable chronic diseases.

57. In the Caribbean region, progress towards Goal 1c of the MDGs had been less than anticipated, as nearly 20 per cent of the population still suffered from undernourishment. Several external factors, such as the global economic meltdown and the energy and food crises, had stymied efforts to eradicate hunger, and served to highlight the region's vulnerabilities occasioned by geographical location, structural challenges and the mode of insertion into the global economy. In recent years, natural hazards such as hurricanes and droughts had become more frequent and intense in the Caribbean, resulting in crop losses, lower production yields and increased livestock deaths. Low food production and a high dependency on food imports were causing increasingly heavy costs for Jamaica. Mindful of the negative impact of persistent hunger and poor nutrition on labour productivity, health and education, her Government remained committed to eradicating poverty and improving access to food and proper nutrition. In that context, it had implemented a programme with the help of FAO and the Brazilian Government to provide balanced meals to schoolchildren. Furthermore, efforts continued to improve financing and technology use in the agricultural sector. Her Government was also mainstreaming climate change adaptation into its agricultural programmes, policies and production methods.

58. An enabling environment was required globally for attaining food security and sustainable agricultural development. Guided by the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and taking into account the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the international community must continue to cooperate in building the resilience of agricultural systems worldwide and harnessing science and technology for sustainable development. In that context, her Government reiterated its call for the adoption of an ambitious, legally binding and comprehensive international agreement on climate change.

59. **Ms. Ngyema Ndong** (Gabon) said that eradicating hunger, improving food security and nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture were crucial aspects of the 2030 Agenda. In view of the uneven progress made in combating hunger and malnutrition in the world, sustained political commitment at the highest level was crucial in order to

step up those efforts. Agriculture development, food security and nutrition must be placed at the centre of development policies; the support of partners was essential in order to achieve those objectives.

60. Gabon had achieved Goal 1 of the MDGs ahead of schedule. Her Government's agriculture strategy was focusing on the promotion of rural and peri-urban agriculture, the creation of a sustainable export industry, and research and training. It had established agricultural investment and industrialization programmes that took into account the vital role of smallholder farms in developing a dynamic and competitive agricultural sector.

61. **Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique) said that progress in achieving food security was still asymmetric as 800 million people continued to suffer from chronic hunger, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The effective implementation of Agenda 2030, and in particular Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, implied a strategic and integrated approach to agriculture. Special attention should be given to vulnerable countries, least developed countries, developing countries, including African countries, and other countries with inadequate capabilities and resources. Most of those countries were also vulnerable to economic, environmental and social factors which aggravated the problem of malnutrition. Synergies around the 2030 Agenda, complemented by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, could contribute to promoting sustainable agriculture as a major driver of development. Political will was needed to strengthen partnerships, such as South-South cooperation and technology transfers, which would facilitate the formulation of coherent national policies.

62. In Mozambique, the agriculture sector employed over 75 per cent of the working population and in 2014 it had represented about 25 per cent of the country's GDP. His Government's strategic plan for the development of the agricultural sector between 2011 and 2020 included measures aimed at modernizing the sector and making agriculture a tool for fighting poverty, increasing productivity and competitiveness and promoting integrated rural development and nutrition education programmes. His Government was also implementing action plans to reduce chronic malnutrition among children under the age of 5 and to ensure sustainable access to adequate food, particularly for vulnerable groups; those plans included monitoring and evaluation indicators and relied to a great extent on

the support of development partners. Food and nutrition security had been incorporated into the five-year government programme for 2015-2019 as a strategic goal. He emphasized the need to mobilize regional and international efforts to improve nutrition standards and eradicate hunger, thereby contributing to the success of the 2030 Agenda.

63. **Ms. Xie Zhangwei** (China) called for the proactive formulation of a programme for the implementation of the agricultural goals that were key to achieving the 2030 Agenda. Increasing agricultural output and raising productivity were essential to striking the right balance in food supply and demand. Further, building a sustainable agricultural system was impossible without improving resilience to climate change.

64. In order to create an equitable and stable order governing agricultural trade, all forms of protectionism and agricultural subsidies must be eliminated, and the regulation of food markets must be strengthened so as to discourage speculation and prevent excessive fluctuations in prices. As a complement to North-South cooperation, developing countries should help one another by sharing their experience and knowledge. As the most populous State with the highest food consumption in the world, China had made it a priority to feed its 1.3 billion people and had met the relevant MDG targets ahead of schedule. It had also helped developing countries, particularly in Africa, to develop their agriculture sectors by sharing technology and organizing training programmes. Her Government had recently announced that over the next five years it would implement 100 agriculture projects in developing countries.

65. **Mr. Buchwald** (Vanuatu) said that food security was crucial to the achievement of Goals 1 and 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and was inseparably linked to the other Goals. The small island developing States had reiterated that food security should be accorded priority in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda. The biggest threat to the sustainable development of small island developing States was climate change. The twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change therefore needed to result in a comprehensive international legally binding agreement to address climate change.

66. The increase in extreme weather events threatened food security by destroying crops and harming many people's livelihoods. Food shortages could lead to sharp increases in prices, leading to humanitarian crises, as had been demonstrated in March 2015 when his country and others in the region had been hit by Cyclone Pam. Recently, the vulnerable population had been suffering under an extreme drought caused by a particularly strong El Niño phenomenon, which had already resulted in fatalities, including among children. Rising ocean temperatures would have a significant impact on fisheries, thereby threatening the most important food source for many small islands. Other impacts of climate change, which were already being experienced, included sea-level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. Those effects further threatened food security and efforts to eradicate poverty, and posed a risk to tourism, which for many small island developing States was the most significant sector of their economy.

67. Another important factor in ending hunger was social protection. In Vanuatu many parts of the population lived in remote areas at the subsistence level and had little protection against extreme weather events. Increased efforts were needed to support small island developing States in improving the management and use of natural resources, promote integrated rural development, and adapt and build resilience to climate change. New approaches were needed to address food security; one such approach had been outlined in the FAO study entitled *School Feeding and Possibilities for Direct Purchases from Family Farming: Case Studies from Eight Countries*. The programmes described therein stimulated local food production, which increased incomes for family farmers while encouraging dietary diversification and education.

68. **Ms. Premabhuti** (Thailand) said that family farmers must be included in the development and implementation of food security, nutrition and agricultural policies. About 80 per cent of the farmers in the Asia Pacific region were smallholder farmers, some of whom were among the poorest and most undernourished people in the world; without adequate support for farmers, it would be impossible to achieve food security, equitable growth and sustainable development. Her Government firmly believed that an integrated approach to social protection and agricultural development would strengthen rural resilience and break the cycle of rural poverty and hunger.

69. Her Government had adopted a dual approach to agricultural development. For large-scale farmers, its agricultural zoning policy had factored in market demand and scientific knowledge on sustainable land and soil management to determine the type of crops, livestock and fish to be raised. To support that policy, capacity-building for farmers was needed to transition from traditional methods to a balanced application of modern technology, science and innovation, in order to increase productivity, ensure greater access to resources and financing and protect them from the adverse impacts of volatile commodity prices and climate change. For small-scale farmers, her Government's policy promoted self-reliance and self-sufficiency through an integrated system in which livestock, fish and crops were farmed concurrently in one agricultural setting. That system fostered food security in rural areas by allowing farmers to first feed themselves and their families and then secure an income from selling the surplus production.

70. Governments alone could not end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Her Government therefore supported increasing public-private investment in agriculture, creating an enabling environment for trade by lifting all trade restrictions and barriers, and promoting seamless connectivity through the development of infrastructure, storage facilities, logistics systems and facilitation of the cross-border movement of goods, services and people. Innovative improvements were required across the food chain to reduce loss and waste and ensure the production and consumption of high-quality, healthy food. Thailand was working to improve its food quality and safety standards and to adhere to good agricultural practices. It was also promoting public awareness, particularly in urban areas, about the importance of a healthy diet and diet diversification. Having successfully achieved Goal 1c of the MDGs, Thailand stood ready to share its best practices and experiences and extend its cooperation to members of the international community.

71. **Mr. Mikami** (Japan) said that the world's population of undernourished people remained troublingly high. The majority of people living in rural areas of many developing countries relied precariously on subsistence farming to sustain themselves. It was therefore crucial to strengthen rural communities, while promoting gender equality, and also to minimize losses from waste or reduced quality. In that regard,

Japan was promoting the development of whole value chains from primary production through distribution, including assistance for the development of water resources and irrigation systems and management of farmlands and distribution systems, including storage, transportation and port management.

72. In order to meet the world's constantly increasing demand for food, agricultural production needed to be increased in terms of both quality and productivity, taking into account the diverse conditions in each country. Although many developing countries had successfully increased their agricultural production, reliance on imports exposed them to vulnerability. In Africa, for example, rice imports had increased by 63 per cent during the past five years. Japan had therefore been supporting an initiative that aimed to double rice production in Africa between 2008 and 2018.

73. Since agriculture was the foundation of the national economy in many developing countries and its development was the prerequisite for economic development, the issue must be tackled not only from the perspective of poverty eradication but also from the perspective of boosting economic growth. The active involvement of the private sector was the key, while preserving and strengthening ownership by developing countries and abiding by the Principles for responsible investment in agriculture and food systems adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in 2014.

74. The improvement of nutrition was also a key issue; malnutrition affected productivity, health and education. Through WFP, Japan provided emergency food assistance as well as support for school feeding programmes to increase school enrolment and regular attendance, and the Japanese private sector was involved in the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative.

75. **Mr. Albannai** (Kuwait) expressed concern that 795 million people still lacked sufficient food, which underscored the efforts required to achieve the primary goals of the 2030 Agenda. There was a need to mobilize agricultural technology, support infrastructure and provide resources to help developing countries eradicate poverty and hunger. Since 1961, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development had supported agricultural production and rural development in developing countries across several continents, and had funded over 860 projects for a total of over \$4 billion, in addition to projects worth \$14 billion that directly or

indirectly supported those objectives. In 2013, Kuwait had hosted the third Africa-Arab Summit, at which it had announced that it would offer soft loans for projects in the African region amounting to \$1 billion over a five year period; and in 2008 it had established the Dignified Life Fund to counter the negative effects for the least developed countries of food and energy price increases by assisting them in improving agricultural production. At the national level, his Government had undertaken efforts to combat desertification and the impact of climate change and had also significantly strengthened food security by increasing the percentage of agricultural goods sourced locally, through the granting of arable land to private-sector partners.

76. His Government supported the international community's efforts to reduce the threats of climate change through the implementation of robust national strategies and adherence to all internationally binding agreements. It looked forward to the adoption of such an agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

77. **Ms. Khyne** (Myanmar) said that agricultural development, particularly the promotion of sustainable agriculture, was the key to eradicating poverty and hunger, creating employment, fostering rural development and promoting food security. The major obstacles included global warming and agricultural labour shortages. At the global level, rural farmers made up 78 per cent of about 1 billion people living under extreme poverty. Concerted efforts must be made to free peasant farmers from the cycle of poverty by improving their socioeconomic standing. Agriculture was the backbone of her country's economy. It generated 23 per cent of GDP and 20 per cent of total export earnings, and employed more than 61 per cent of its labour force. Her Government's priority objective was therefore to enhance agricultural production, productivity and rural livelihoods. It was making efforts to grant farming and land ownership rights to farmers while providing them with new technologies and high-yield seeds and increasing agricultural lending.

78. Given the rapid growth in the world's population, particularly in developing countries, the international community must cooperate to eliminate food shortages and ensure food security. Myanmar, whose population had increased by 10 million since 1990, was

cooperating with other countries in its region and with international partners to fight hunger and was on target to achieve its 2025 target for the Zero Hunger Challenge. It had also adopted long-term plans to eradicate hunger and ensure food security in coordination with the relevant line ministries.

79. One impact of climate change was a worsening of natural disasters. In late July and August 2015, Cyclone Koman had brought unprecedented flooding to her country, affecting 1.5 million people and inundating more than 1.4 million acres of farmland. Her Government expressed its appreciation to the United Nations and the international community for providing emergency and humanitarian assistance and would welcome continued assistance in its efforts to facilitate livelihood rehabilitation and reconstruction in the affected areas.

80. **Mr. Emvula** (Namibia) said that while his country's economy was heavily dependent on the mining sector, roughly half the population relied on subsistence agriculture, which was characterized by low productivity and high variability due to water scarcity, poor soils and low capacity to support intensive agricultural methods. Access to adequate food for marginalized and vulnerable populations remained a constant challenge and contributed to unacceptable levels of malnutrition. His Government was implementing various initiatives, including the Green Scheme, which promoted agricultural production under irrigation for high-value cash crops, and the Dryland Crop Production Programme, which supported crop production in communal areas under rain-fed conditions. It believed that food and nutrition security challenges could be addressed only if production programmes were complemented by agro-industry development programmes.

81. The global challenges of malnutrition accentuated the need for a revitalized approach to food security and nutrition; increasing agricultural production to meet the nutritional needs of a growing world population in a sustainable manner must be at the heart of poverty eradication efforts. Continued land degradation would further imperil food and water security, particularly as climate change reduced water availability in rain-fed agricultural regions, especially in Africa.

82. International trade and macroeconomic policies continued to be biased against the export of agricultural products from the developing world.

Namibia therefore called on the international community to achieve a development-oriented outcome at the final Doha Development Round, recognizing regional integration as a vehicle for globalization based on a multilateral trading system that promoted sustainable development. Namibia also called on the international community to promote and facilitate access to technologies and know-how to farmers in developing countries, as well as increased technical and financial assistance to strengthen national innovation capacity through research and development.

83. His Government noted with great concern the adverse effects of drought, desertification, land degradation and loss of biodiversity caused by climate change in the developing world, particularly in Africa, and called for support for sustainable land management practices, including ecosystem restoration initiatives and the reclamation of dry and degraded land. Governments must play a proactive role in investing and building infrastructure for sustainable agriculture and assisting smallholder producers through policies that encouraged efforts to enhance production and to diversify and increase the added value of agricultural products.

84. **Mr. Zinsou** (Benin) said that agriculture was essential to the achievement of the national and international development goals contained in the 2030 Agenda, particularly poverty eradication. Agriculture development, food security and nutrition were universal concerns, as well as a major challenge for developing countries, Africa and his country in particular. In many developing and least developed countries, post-harvest losses of agricultural products were considerable because of insufficient means to conserve them. In Benin, those losses amounted to 60 per cent of production and conservation capacity must therefore be strengthened.

85. In order to achieve food self-sufficiency, his Government was focusing on agricultural diversification, which involved partnerships between the State, producers, microproducers, the private sector and developed countries in order to promote better governance of agricultural development through modernization and mechanization of agricultural activities as well as processing of products to increase their added value. Those partnerships also involved the strong participation of youth and women, whose empowerment was central to his Government's food self-sufficiency policy.

86. The Songhaï Centre in Porto-Novo had developed sustainable agricultural systems that respected the environment while optimizing output. It was both a training centre and a producer of agricultural, livestock and fisheries products. The experience and know-how developed at the Centre had begun to spread beyond Benin's borders, as many agricultural entrepreneurs from a number of other African countries received training there. It also served as a model that was being duplicated in other African countries and beyond, with the support of United Nations agencies including the United Nations Development Programme.

87. Effective agricultural development also required land and soil management. Sustained efforts were needed to restore or rehabilitate degraded land. However, those efforts and other measures to promote agriculture, food security and nutrition in Africa could not succeed unless the thorny question of agricultural subsidies and other market distortions caused by the agricultural and trade practices of developed countries were resolved. Immediately eliminating such practices, which were contrary to WTO rules, and mobilizing new financial resources for sustainable agricultural development, were key prerequisites for achieving food and nutrition security in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.