

## OPENING REMARKS

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### WEBINAR ON “APPLICATIONS OF JUNCAO TECHNOLOGY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN TANZANIA”

4 MARCH 2021

Distinguished Participants from Tanzania, Rwanda, and China,  
Professor Benadette Killian,  
Professor Lin Zhanxi,  
Prof. Godwin Ndossi,  
Mr. Zlatan Milisic,  
My colleagues from the UN Family,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, I am pleased to welcome all of you to this online workshop on the “Applications of Juncao Technology and its Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Agriculture and the Sustainable Development Goals in Tanzania.’

It is 6am here in New York, but I looked forward to getting up more than ever, for this exciting workshop that we have been preparing for months. Thanks to technology for allowing us to communicate unimpeded across time and space.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate to you our appreciation for your dedication and commitment reflected in your hard work that will help Tanzania achieve its national development aspirations, including a sustainable agriculture future.

It is also a great pleasure to have the inventor of the juncao technology, Professor Lin Zhanxi. His invention is helping improve people's lives in more than 100 countries across the world. I have heard so much about Juncao, and I am excited to hear from you and Dr. Dongmei LIN today.

I also look forward to hearing from the other speakers as your perspectives are crucial to ensuring that Tanzania can make maximum use of this technology.

Dear Participants,

Small-scale farmers in developing countries, including Tanzania, encounter constant challenges with respect to growing agricultural products, putting them at risk of not being able to obtain enough harvests to ensure food security and nutrition or to generate sufficient income to support their families’ livelihoods.

I grew up in Zimbabwe and pursued graduate studies in demography. My motivation to study demography was partly driven by the desire to understand the relationship between population

and development issues, including the impact of population growth on food security and the environment.

And this is what we know today.

According to the new World Bank estimates, 689 million people or 9.2% of the global population lived in extreme poverty in 2017. The number of people living in extreme poverty likely increased by between 88 and 115 million people in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, reversing global progress to eradicate poverty.

The United Nations also projects that the world's population would grow from 7.7 billion in 2019 to reach 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050. A big proportion of this increase will largely come from developing countries.

We also know that urbanization will continue at an accelerated pace, with the population living in urban areas making up 70 per cent of the world's population in 2050 compared to 49 per cent today. Income levels and the size of the middle class will also continue to increase, developments that will result in changes not only to consumption patterns, but in increased food demand. To accommodate these megatrends, FAO estimates that the world will need to produce as much as 70 per cent more food by 2050.

Because of these mega trends, Member States continue to deliberate how they can, in partnership with the private sector, civil society organization, and academia and other stakeholders, design and implement policies and strategies covering the three pillars of sustainable development - social, economic and environmental – that can improve the livelihoods of people, in particular the poor and people living in vulnerable situations.

What makes me excited is the hope that is offered by advances in science and technology such as the Juncao technology that is making a difference where it matters the most: at the local and community level, to the lives of smallholder and family farmers, women, children, and persons with disabilities – those most at risk of being left behind. We at the UN see Prof. Lin and the Juncao technology as an example of academic excellence and a real game-changer on the ground.

It is not called “magic grass” for nothing!

By supporting mushroom cultivation, this technology is boosting food security and the transition to a green economy through environmentally friendly technology, more sustainable agriculture, and green jobs. It is also helping to fight land degradation, for example, by producing cattle feed and minimizing soil erosion.

Let me give you one example, a Rwanda national, after the training at the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU), set up an agricultural company in Rwanda, which can produce 10,000-20,000 mushroom substrate packs with a net income of US\$3,000-US\$5,000 per month. And today we are honored to invite some participants from Rwanda to share their Juncao stories with us in the Q&A session.

In 2017, the Juncao Project was established under the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with generous support from the People's Republic of China. As of this year, our events have received participants from Albania, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Cook Islands, Eritrea, Fiji,

Ghana, Laos, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Nepal, Rwanda, Papua New Guinea, and Tonga, and many others.

The Juncao project underscores the essential role of the transfer of technology through north-south, south-south and triangular cooperation – something the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Though Tanzania has recorded sustained strong income growth over the past decade, it still faces challenges that include lack of inclusive growth, high levels of poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity.

The spark lit in Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University has shown the potential of a single innovation – if nurtured and deployed wisely – to change lives and improve livelihoods in Tanzania.

This capacity building workshop aims to enhance knowledge and strengthen national capacities to support sustainable agriculture through the transfer of Juncao technology to eradicate poverty, and promote productive activities, income generation and entrepreneurship along the agricultural value chain and to effectively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

It also provides us with an excellent opportunity to share ideas and knowledge, and I truly expect that we will all benefit greatly from these exchanges. This workshop marks the start of a new journey, I encourage you all to stay engaged, exchange experiences and lessons learned, and support sustainable agriculture in Tanzania.

I trust that that you will find this workshop interesting and fruitful, and we wish you all success.

Thank you.

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