

Mr. Wu Hongbo Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Remarks

**Ministerial Meeting on Food Security and Climate Adaptation in SIDS
High Level Forum-SIDS Vision for a Food Secure Future**

14 October 2015, Milan, Italy

Your Excellency, Minister Aveau,
Excellency Minister Hamilton,
Excellency Minister Ortet,
Excellency Minister Da Silva,
Ms. Deputy-Director-General Semedo,
Ladies and gentlemen.

I am honored to participate in this High Level Forum on food and nutrition challenges. It arises from the outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. In that document, the SAMOA Pathway, SIDS and their partners laid out a clear roadmap for the sustainable development of SIDS. This Forum also comes on the heels of the historic UN Sustainable Development Summit which adopted the universal and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which charts a path to achieve a better world by 2030.

The SAMOA Pathway made a number of specific calls to the United Nations system and to the international community at large. This Forum answers the mandate laid out in paragraph 61, inviting the Food and Agriculture Organization to facilitate a forum on the food and nutrition challenges faced by SIDS. Paragraph 61 calls also for an action program to emerge from this Forum addressing these challenges. Our dialogue here today is thus not an end but rather a beginning, the first step toward elaborating a concrete action program, and I look forward to working in partnership with FAO, other UN entities and with SIDS and non-SIDS alike.

An action program addressing food security challenges—what would this look like? To start, we have clearly enumerated priorities on food security and nutrition in the SAMOA Pathway. We will be exploring each of these priorities in the substantive sessions of this meeting over the next two days. From sustainable agriculture and fisheries to livelihoods to trade and partnerships, the panel discussions will shine a light on the critical issues and challenges and help identify solutions.

The SAMOA Pathway approaches each priority area not in a vacuum but as part of a unified whole, a system whose many parts will have to work in concert in order to succeed. We cannot address food security without simultaneously addressing climate change, the health of the oceans, land degradation, social inclusion, education, gender equality, economic growth, and others. We will need progress in every area in order to make progress in any area.

This integrated approach is a hallmark of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well. The SAMOA Pathway predated the 2030 Agenda by more than a year, but the two documents are very much in harmony. Within the 2030 Agenda, SDG 2 aims to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.” Targets for the goal address (a) hunger; (b) malnutrition, stunting and wasting; (c) agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale producers; (d) resilience; and genetic diversity and benefit sharing. Targets related to the means of implementation call for increased investment, an end to trade restrictions and distortions, and reform of food commodity markets.

Again, these targets cannot be achieved in isolation but are inextricably tied to other SDGs—one could argue, to every single SDG!

- End poverty
- End hunger
- Ensure healthy lives
- Ensure quality education
- Achieve gender equality
- Water and sanitation for all
- Sustainable energy for all
- Sustainable economic growth
- Resilient infrastructure
- Reduce inequality
- Sustainable cities
- Sustainable consumption and production
- Combat climate change
- Conserve and sustainably use the oceans
- Sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems
- Peaceful and inclusive societies
- Strengthen the means of implementation.

These are the 17 SDGs, and I challenge you to find one of these goals not integrally related to food security!

This integrated set of goals is the product of work led by Member States , with input from a broad range of stakeholders through a truly inclusive process. We in the UN system must rise to the challenge to support Member States. This is a new era in development, and we need to listen to the wisdom of the Member States in order to shape effective actions to carry the goals forward.

Work has already begun. Last month, for instance, my department hosted an expert meeting on oceans, climate change and SIDS focused on innovative ways to advance the SAMOA Pathway

and 2030 Agenda in tandem, with a holistic view of the issues. A key conclusion was that it is in the links between these issues—and many others—that we can find innovative solutions to intransigent problems.

So our action programme on food security challenges must likewise look to these links, resist silos and break down institutional barriers to collaboration. Just as in a government, a health ministry, an agriculture ministry, and an environment ministry must work in close cooperation to face and overcome difficult challenges, so must the UN system move beyond silos. DESA, FAO and many other UN organizations must come together, and we must reach out to myriad other stakeholders as well, including the regional organizations that are so important to SIDS development. Partner governments like Italy will be absolutely critical.

As I said before, this Forum, and this meeting as a whole, are not ends in themselves. They are a call to further action.

With such an impressive and knowledgeable array of people gathered here, I am confident that many seeds for action will be planted. I look forward to the discussion, and wish you all the best.

Thank you.