

Korea

## 1. Agriculture

Thank you, Madame Chair.

I would also like to thank the speakers for their comprehensive explanation of the issue related to the agenda.

Madame Chair

In addressing food security and agricultural development, my delegation joins others in emphasizing the importance of increasing agricultural productivity. As the Secretary-General's report rightly points out, increasing needs for food and agriculture in developing countries will have to be met through more productive systems based on higher yields and multiple cropping.

Regarding agricultural productivity, my delegation would like to share Korea's experience in developing a higher-yielding rice variety called "Tongil Rice" which contributed greatly to poverty eradication in Korea during the 1970s.

According to FAO, the average rice yield in Korea was about three tons per hectare in the late 1960's, 13~34% lower than that of then-developed countries. Chronic food shortages and the ensuing need for rice imports posed a severe threat to national economic development.

To address this problem, through collaborative efforts, Tongil Rice saw the light in 1971 with great success. This high-yielding variety boosted Korea's average rice productivity to five tons per hectare, and by 1977, Korea was able to eventually attain rice self-sufficiency. Furthermore, Tongil Rice contributed to the significant increase of farming households' income, providing an impetus for the modernization of the Korean economy.

Madam Chair

Our experience of hunger and poverty in the past allows us to sympathize deeply with those countries suffering from the recent food crisis. We understand that the basic subsistence must be met before any foundation can be laid for the economic and social development.

In light of this, the Korean government announced that it would contribute 100 million US dollars over the three years from 2009 to 2011 to the efforts to improve food security in the world. About 75% of this contribution will be allocated to bilateral projects with developing countries that aim to help alleviate poverty and food shortages by improving agricultural productivity and rural living conditions.

Madame Chair

My delegation would like to raise our concerns for export restrictions that have been placed by some export countries. Although export barriers may ensure domestic food security in the short-term, they are known to lead to price instability in the long run by negatively impacting the world food market and decreasing domestic productivity due to relatively low domestic prices. As the Secretary-General's report describes, removing export bans could have dramatic, positive effects on international food markets, lowering prices and easing volatility.

Thank you.