

**Statement delivered by**  
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**Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries of the**  
**Kingdom of Denmark**  
**on the occasion of the**  
**42nd Session of the FAO Conference (14-18 June 2021)**  
**15 June 2021**

*Thank you Madam Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Director-General, Dr. Qu Dongyu,*

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries of Denmark, His Excellency Rasmus Prehnat, at this important 42nd session of the FAO Conference.

Global food systems are crucial for progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Unfortunately, we are lagging behind leaving hundreds of millions of people behind. In 2030, nobody must be left behind.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragility of our food systems. But our food systems are also threatened by climate change and loss of biodiversity. This is a daily reminder of the planetary boundaries and the need for reflection on the true cost of food systems.

Reducing food losses and waste is of tremendous importance. This must be part of our response to the challenge of feeding a growing global population and eliminating hunger and malnutrition. Denmark is in the lead fighting food loss and waste. We need to use all tools in our toolbox. From innovation, digitalisation and legislation to consumer and producer behaviour.

We are also challenged by an ineffective use of energy, water, soil, fertilizers and pesticides. Residues from food production must be put to use in the context of circular, bio-economy. Climate change mitigation and the conservation of fertile soils and biodiversity are crucial issues. The insufficient level of investments and innovation is an obstacle for improving the food chain.

The threat from Anti-Microbial Resistance is one of the biggest health challenges we are facing. Here we have to strengthen the prevention, namely:

- act on early warning,
- reduce the use of antibiotics, and
- introduce measures concerning the practices of prescription without any economic incentives.

The most crucial and effective antibiotics should be used for human beings only. Adequate resources for combating misuse of antibiotics – especially as growth promoters – is a core issue for us.

Our policies need to support deforestation-free value chains in line with UN and internationally agreed policy objectives. This includes conservation of critical ecosystems, sustainable energy usage and the protection of human rights. Solutions should focus on raising awareness and creating a demand for responsible and deforestation-free value chains.

Food insecurity prevents sustainable development. We must accelerate our collective efforts to reach Development Goal 2 on Zero Hunger. Right now, we are not on track. 155 million people were acute food insecure in 2020 and now it's more unfortunately. We need to combine humanitarian short-term food assistance with longer-term sustainable solutions. In addition, we must build resilient food systems that can cope with external shocks.

We look forward to the development of the new FAO Strategy on Climate Action. Climate mitigation and adaptation of food systems to become more sustainable have a huge potential.

Denmark has joined the coalition on school feeding together with many other states. We know school feeding works on the ground. It keeps hunger and malnutrition at bay. And it provides a social security network for vulnerable children.

Denmark has engaged with enthusiasm in the preparation of the UN Food Systems Summit. We need concrete and scalable solutions.

Denmark has submitted ideas for game-changing solutions. These include:

- climate-friendly dietary guidelines,
- prevention and reduction of food loss and waste,
- fight of deforestation,
- antimicrobial resistance,
- action to prevent famines, and
- school feeding programs.

Denmark is committed to contribute actively to the Summit in order to reach progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals and climate goals in the Paris Agreement.

Dr. Qu Dongyu, FAO can rely on Denmark as a member of the European Union to do our part to transform food systems in order to achieve sustainability. In its three dimensions:

Economically, environmentally and socially. FAO's contribution to the Summit achieving the Agenda 2030 is on the right track, but we invite all to do more together.

Wishing you all a successful Conference, thank you for your attention.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.