



**TARGETING HUNGER: SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR
TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE**

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Place: Trusteeship Council Chamber

**REMARKS BY H.E. TIJANI MUHAMMAD-BANDE,
PRESIDENT OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture
Organization of the United Nations,

Mr. Jorge Chediek, Secretary-General's Envoy on South-South
Cooperation,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this
interactive dialogue on *Targeting Hunger: South-South and
Triangular Cooperation for Transforming Agriculture*.

I am grateful to Member States and the UN System, namely the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UN Office on South-South Cooperation, for your support in convening this important conversation.

Today's interactive dialogue provides us with the opportunity to reflect upon the gains made on SDG 2: 'Zero Hunger', and to determine the best pathways towards a world free of inequalities and zero hunger by 2030. Access to adequate food is the fundamental right of every man, woman and child, yet hunger is on the rise for the fourth consecutive year.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises that SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 2: Zero Hunger must be addressed in unison. When we take a rights-based approach, we can work towards the implementation of both Goals.

We must redouble our efforts and identify policy interventions that will not only alleviate the suffering of 820 million people who suffer from hunger today, but banish hunger in our world beyond 2030.

Agricultural policies can be used as a 'force for development', with focus on mitigating hunger sustainably, creating jobs, generating incomes, and contributing to poverty eradication.

These policy interventions must address historical and structural inequalities undermining our efforts to end hunger.

They must pay due consideration to smallholder and family farmers, who produce almost 70% of the world's food. These 500 million food producers are often trapped in poverty, vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition.

We must connect smallholders with buyers, technology providers, and financial institutions. We simply cannot make gains on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development if we leave smallholders behind. It is our collective duty to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to adequate nutritious food which is accessible and affordable.

We must also focus on the female face of farming. Today, 43% of the agricultural labour force in the developing world are women. Yet, women receive only a fraction of the land, credit, agricultural training, information and inputs such as improved seeds and fertilisers. Indeed, only 10% of total aid for agriculture, forestry and fishing reaches women in agriculture.

We all know that women are key to ending hunger and poverty. We must thus create conducive conditions to facilitate their meaningful participation in agriculture.

Excellencies,

As we begin the Decade of Action and Delivery to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, we are focused on making gains on targets related to nature and, in doing so we must address our food systems.

It is encouraging that the 'food systems approach' has been adopted in the international policy framework for sustainable agriculture. This paradigm shift encompasses all the activities involved in bringing food '*from farm to fork*'. This approach increases food security and catalyses economic prosperity for smallholders and rural communities.

Furthermore, the 'food systems approach' is critical to addressing the issue of food waste. In developing countries, one quarter of agricultural produce fails to reach consumers due to poor harvesting and the absence or inadequacy of storage and cooling facilities.

Globally, around one-third of food produced is wasted. Targeted investment in solutions is urgently needed to make our food systems operational for food producers and consumers. It is also critical to use the food systems framework as a vehicle for poverty eradication and inclusive growth more widely.

In agreeing to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, we also know that no one goal stands alone and, that, all the goals are interconnected. It is in this sense that we must ensure that our food systems respect rights; are climate resilient, and sustainable.

Excellencies,

South-South and Triangular Cooperation can be leveraged to share experiences through policy dialogue, site visits and technical aid.

Check against delivery

We each have something to learn and something to teach - facilitating this will inform transformative actions which are necessary to end hunger.

Action must be taken at all levels, and all stakeholders must be engaged, if we are to achieve SDG 2. We must scale-up solutions utilising the framework of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Excellencies,

The future of agriculture depends on youth. Urbanization has resulted in a decline of young people pursuing farming.

If we are to encourage young people to work the land, we must modernise, and promote agriculture as a field for entrepreneurship. If we succeed in engaging the next generation of farmers, we will make progress towards reaching Zero Hunger and eradicating poverty permanently.

It is also important to strengthen agricultural education and training for farmers through agricultural extension services. These initiatives encourage entrepreneurship and have been proven to raise productivity and income.

I urge you to consider including farmers field school initiatives in our international agricultural policy framework and implementation strategies.

Check against delivery

Excellencies,

As we gear up to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, there is no better time to commit to ending hunger and poverty for millions around the world. We must uphold our solemn pledge to *"leave no one behind"*. We must ensure that the most vulnerable among us do not go hungry and have a fair chance to live meaningful, well-informed and dignified lives.

Indeed, hunger is a scourge unbecoming of our era. We have the technical capacity and other resources to end it. Let us muster the political will to do so.

I look forward to hearing your expert and wise views on how to do so.

I thank you.

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