**Statement**

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

**2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Geneva, Switzerland, 13-17 May 2019**

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

FAO is grateful for the opportunity to make this statement.

**Hunger is on the rise!** The number of undernourished people has increased to nearly 821 million in 2017, from around 804 million in 2016. The latest State of Food Security in the World report confirmed that **climate variability and extremes are among the key drivers for this increase.**

Agriculture is particularly vulnerable to natural hazards and climate change, **absorbing about 23 percent of the economic impacts of natural hazard-induced disasters** – this rises to 26 percent when just climate-related disasters are considered. In addition, we are also seeing an alarming surge in outbreaks of transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases that exacerbate damage by overlaying and/or occurring alongside shocks arising from natural hazards, conflict and/or displacement.

Pro-active disaster prevention, reduction and preparedness measures are not only key to sustainable development, but can significantly reduce the cost of post facto emergency responses. However, too little investment goes into Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). A recent FAO analysis indicated that between 2004 and 2016, about 92 percent of the total agriculture-related official assistance for DRM (spell out?) (including humanitarian) in developing and in-transition countries was spent on emergency response. Only 2 percent was dedicated to prevention.

In the last four years, substantive efforts have been made to assist countries in making progress in the Sendai Framework Monitor and in meeting Sendai Target E by 2020. However, more should be done to transform the other key Sendai Commitments into action, particularly to enhance local level DRR delivery with a view to leaving no one behind.

Efforts to anticipate and reduce risks need to be accelerated and further build capacities of nations, including of local communities in order to better prepare for and absorb shocks or mitigate their impacts. In this regard, sectors and sector-specific engagements in DRR, including agriculture and food security, have a crucial role and responsibility.

FAO and our partners must continue to work hand-in-hand and multiply joint efforts to provide advice and assistance to developing countries to ensure that agriculture and food systems are risk-informed and productive; are resilient enough to feed present and future generations; and provide the basis for safe livelihoods for the billions of people dependent on agriculture.

Since the last GPDRR in Cancun, substantive progress in DRR work in agricultural sectors has been made in many countries and regions. Recent FAO contributions include:

* Support to 22 countries and 3 regional institutions for the formulation of agriculture sector-specific DRR strategies and plans in line with SFDRR target E; including coordination mechanisms and delivery at local level, and enhanced coherence with climate change adaptation and climate smart agriculture approaches.
* Support to 15 countries in institutionalizing the global SFDRR indicator C2 to monitor and report on damages and losses in agriculture.
* Conclusion of an interregional cost-benefit analysis of farm level DRR technologies indicating that farm level DRR good practices perform on average 2.2 times better under hazard conditions than previously used practices.
* Continued roll out of Early Warning Early Action systems in 15 disaster-prone countries. FAO’s Early Warning Early Action systems translate warnings into anticipatory actions to reduce the impact of specific forecast hazard on agricultural livelihoods and food security. Impact analyses indicate that for every USD $1 invested in early action, returns for beneficiary households range from 2.5 to 7.1 times.

To shape the way ahead and particularly deliver at local levels, FAO believes that:

* The agriculture sectors provide ample, yet largely untapped opportunities to promote the resilience of the most vulnerable. Greater evidence on the returns of investment in resilient practices in agriculture must be further promoted to facilitate decision making and investment.
* Substantive technical know-how for the transformation needed is already available, however too often we remain stuck in project driven pilot testing. Substantive headway could be made by integrating DRR into the developmental flagship programmes of sectoral agencies, and by systematically enhancing access to and upscaling of DRR technologies in favour of the most vulnerable at local level.
* Investments in enhanced data, analysis, and information and early warning systems, to risk-inform decision-making and early action need to be increased. DRR funding should be allocated more widely among DRR actors, taking note that the best possible outreach will be achieved when national disaster management agencies provide tailor-made DRR intervention in close partnership with sectoral agencies, which correspond to the needs of diverse target groups.
* Agriculture is one of the Resilience Solutions! Investments in DRR in agriculture, food security and nutrition can contribute to social stability, conflict mitigation, prevention and recovery.

FAO is fully committed to continue supporting countries to implement the global frameworks on DRR and climate change for achieving the SDGs as part of our efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty, improve food and nutrition security by promoting risk sensitive, resilient and sustainable agricultural development**.**