

Milan Declaration on Enhancing Food Security and Climate Adaptation in Small Island Developing States, in the framework of the SAMOA Pathway

1. We, Ministers and representatives of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have met in Milan, Italy, 14-16 October 2015, for a Ministerial Meeting on Enhancing Food Security and Climate Adaptation in SIDS, in the context of the EXPO Milano 2015 on the theme “Feeding the Planet – Energy for Life”;
2. We commend the Government of Italy, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for jointly organizing the Ministerial Meeting;
3. We recognize this Ministerial Meeting as an important opportunity to exchange experiences in the areas of food security and nutrition, especially in light of the challenges facing SIDS with the adverse impacts of climate change. The Meeting addressed food security and nutrition from multiple angles: the importance of promoting sustainable approaches to agriculture and fisheries and building resilience to climate change and disasters; the benefits of improving rural livelihoods of smallholders and family farmers, especially women and youth; the interface between food security and nutrition and health challenges, with a special focus on non-communicable diseases; the dependence on international trade and the need to ensure access to food; and the crucial role of partnerships to advance food security and nutrition.
4. We affirm that progress in SIDS food security, health and nutrition will be essential to achieve the goal of overall wellness for SIDS people and communities;
5. The meeting has brought to bear valuable insights from SIDS governments as well as from partners in non-SIDS governments, the UN system, regional organizations, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. The outcome summary of the meeting, which will be issued as an annex to this declaration, will thus help to elaborate specific actions needed to advance implementation of the SAMOA Pathway of the Third International Conference on SIDS;
6. The Ministerial participation and the breadth of issues discussed responded to the call made to FAO by the SAMOA Pathway to facilitate a biennial forum on food security and nutrition in SIDS. As such, we recognize that this Meeting is the first step towards fulfilling the mandate given to FAO in paragraph 61 of the SAMOA Pathway to facilitate the development of an action programme to address food security and nutrition challenges in SIDS;
7. This Ministerial Meeting provides high-level political impetus for action. We call on FAO, in close collaboration with DESA and OHRLLS, to build on the momentum generated by the current Meeting and undertake a consultative process to develop the action program, engaging governments, SIDS technical experts, other relevant stakeholders and pre-existing mechanisms and arrangements at the national, regional and inter-regional levels to ensure that the valuable work already being undertaken at these levels is fully incorporated into the action program;
8. We emphasize that the action program must acknowledge the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environment) recognising the integrated nature of food security and noting that progress in food security needs to also address other areas of development. In this context we reiterate that the action program should address food security priorities of SIDS as we take concrete and concerted actions to implement the SAMOA Pathway, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
9. We affirm the dangerous impact of climate change on food security and call for the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris to adopt an ambitious, legally binding and comprehensive international agreement on climate change;

10. We emphasize that the multilateral trading system must play a role in addressing food security in a meaningful way. The successful and timely conclusion of the Doha Round including in the areas of agriculture, fisheries and trade and environment should make a contribution in this regard. We underscore that the designations of “small, vulnerable economies” and “net food-importing developing countries” should continue beyond the conclusion of the Doha Round;
11. We further emphasize the importance of effective trade policies that do not have a negative impact on local food production, and of policies and measures that promote domestic trade and that those take into account the vulnerability and resilience of SIDS;
12. We underscore that it is essential to promote healthy living in SIDS through more nutritious and sustainable food systems, sustainably strengthening agriculture and fisheries to increase local production and availability of safe and nutritious food, improving the management and use of natural resources, and building our resilience to the effects of climate change and extreme events;
13. We further underscore that the oceans reflect vast potential for development and as a mechanism to realize sustainable growth based around an ocean economy. In this regard we call for actions to address ocean acidification through scientific cooperation; combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds; sustainably manage and protect coastal ecosystems and achieve healthy and productive oceans. We further call for enhancing the capacity of SIDS to sustainably use their fisheries and other marine living resources and develop fisheries and other marine-related industries, enabling them to maximize benefits from the oceans and seas;
14. We call for increased efforts to support SIDS in improving the management and use of natural resources, promote integrated rural development, adapt to climate change and build resilience to extreme weather and climatic events;
15. We affirm the value of regional integration to maximize synergies within and across SIDS regions;
16. We assert the importance of research and development and capacity development in SIDS, including in the areas of nutrition, promotion of locally produced foods, marketing and branding, climate resilient agricultural technology and practices, and marine science and technology.
17. We reaffirm the importance of means of implementation including partnerships, the technology facilitation mechanism, and financing to address and support these issues and others related to the sustainable development priorities of SIDS. In this regard we welcome the announcement by Italy of the possible establishment of a Trust Fund to finance development projects in eligible CARICOM SIDS through loans on favourable terms, and of a contribution to the FAO Climate Change Trust Fund for SIDS;
18. We call on SIDS and their partners, including FAO, to explicitly link their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other programming related to food security at the national, regional and global levels to the SAMOA Pathway, to enhance the impact of the useful food security work being carried out in SIDS around the world;
19. We express our profound gratitude to the Government of Italy for providing financial support and hosting this meeting and for the generous hospitality extended during our stay in Milan. We also thank the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy for attending the meeting and announcing a renewed and strengthened commitment to SIDS sustainable development and food security.

Milan, 15 October 2015