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**Statement by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,
delivered by the Director of the FAO Liaison Office to the UN, Ms. Carla Mucavi**

Madam/Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the floor. FAO would like to align itself to the statement delivered by IOM on behalf of the Global Migration Group (the GMG), that FAO has the honour to co-chair this year with IOM.

Allow me to make additional remarks in FAO's individual capacity as a specialized agency.

Rural out-migration is bound to be part of any process of structural and rural transformation.

People migrate in search of opportunities or seeking to mitigate or cope with adverse conditions. The potential to earn more in town than in the countryside and better access to jobs, education and services prompt people to do so.

But the opportunities that once existed in cities are not always present today. For late transformers, rapid urbanization is often not accompanied by rapid industrialization, the main driver of past transformations. People exiting low-productivity agriculture are moving mostly into low-productivity informal services, usually in urban areas.

Migration is complex. We know what the basic drivers are, but it is not easy to predict who will migrate, and where they will migrate to.

We know that rural-to-urban migration is central once structural transformation gains momentum.

However, rural-rural migration and seasonal and circular migration, both internal and international, also significantly influence the distribution of the global population and reshape livelihoods.

Migration is extremely important in determining the development pathways for many, especially in developing countries. How migration unfolds and what are its impacts will depend to a great extent on national policies and planning, and on resource allocation between rural areas and cities.

When rural-out migration is driven by the attraction of more prosperous conditions in destination regions, a more effective strategy may be to invest in “agglomeration” services in small cities and towns in proximity to rural areas.

Finally, integrated territorial planning and development and a better understanding of the decisions behind migration can help shape national policies and strategies aimed at achieving inclusive growth of the rural farm and non-farm economy and at strengthening rural-urban linkages. This should be a significant element of strategies to generate broad based economic growth, decent jobs and livelihoods opportunities, reduce regional disparities and promote income equality.

This effort should include investment not only in urban areas but also in rural people and in wider rural economies in a way that makes better use of the rural-urban nexus and support sustainable cities.

Thank you for your attention.