

UN Secretary-General António Guterres,
Prime Minister Mario Draghi,
Heads of State, Ministers, Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global mission,
to build sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems,
In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda,
is not just an environmental or economic issue.

It is an issue of social justice,
public health,
national security,
and international peace.

In Israel,
a small, arid and densely-populated country,
developing an effective food systems transformation pathway
is absolutely critical for our continued ability
to grow and thrive as a nation.

A central element of our approach,
is realizing the potential of science and innovation.

This includes the promotion of pioneering technologies such as

vertical agriculture,
~~precision-dripping~~ irrigation,
and alternative proteins.

At the same time
we must address significant gaps in our current capabilities,
such as the need to move to a smarter, data-based approach
to the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

Along with support for innovation,
an integrated and holistic approach to managing our resources is key.

The limited natural water supply constituted a major challenge for our nation.

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Out of necessity,

we used innovation to develop new artificial water sources,
such as advanced wastewater treatment and reuse.

Israel has become a world leader in integrated water resources management.

~~Yet while we~~ We reuse approximately 87% of our wastewater,
and about half of agricultural irrigation water is reclaimed effluents.

~~We do not have enough water in our streams and only 1% of our water goes back to~~
~~nature,~~

~~as opposed to agriculture and household needs.~~

Still, we ~~We~~ must further increase the use of treated water in agriculture,
and desalinated water in households,

~~and also release so that~~ more water ~~can be released~~ back into the environment,
where it can revitalize the natural ~~spaces~~ landscape that is
~~that are~~ so crucial for biodiversity and well-being.

We must also face the reality
that certain stakeholders
face a conflict of interest
between their productivity demands
and the need to ensure safe, accessible and healthy food systems.

This conflict of interest can only be overcome through a dual approach.

On the one hand,
we must provide incentives for responsible production.

On the other,
we must ensure that producers shoulder the external environmental, health and social
costs
of non-sustainable production.

Our national dialogue process leading up to this pre-summit,
which included fifteen dialogues
and engagement with thousands of stakeholders,
also highlighted the urgent need to enhance eco-system wide knowledge-sharing,
as well as public education.

We must ensure that regulators systematically collect accurate and reliable information, and share it transparently with all stakeholders.

And we must launch a nationwide education campaign, so that the next generation understands the importance of transforming our food systems.

The State of Israel is committed to regional and international cooperation on these vital issues, which is why we recently joined the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

I strongly believe that cooperation on food sustainability and stability can be a force for regional peace.

Just this month, the UAE's Minister of State for Food and Water Security visited Israel and signed collaboration agreements with her counterparts.

[I also met with her, and we signed MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and Climate change.](#)

I intend to continue to promote such cooperation, both with the countries of the wider Middle East, and with our Palestinian neighbors as well.

Together,
we can build a more resilient, sustainable and secure future,
for our peoples,
our countries,
and all the children of the region.

Thank you very much.