

Statement delivered by
His Excellency Samuel Vičan
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic
on the occasion of the
United Nations Food Systems Pre-Summit

Mr. Secretary-General,

Honorable Ministers,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor to address you on the occasion of the United Nations Food Systems Pre-Summit.

At the very outset, please allow me to express my appreciation and gratitude for the excellent work and the progress already made on accelerating food systems transformation across all Summit Action Track groups.

Distinguished participants,

the current global crisis clearly shows us that the goal of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition remains an immense challenge. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has, unfortunately, proven to be not only a health crisis, but also a livelihood crisis, turning into a hunger and malnutrition tragedy in many regions of the world. It is obvious that there is a problem with our food systems. Thus, transforming the way the world produces, consumes and thinks about the food and its impact on environment and human health is essential.

We all know that well-functioning and sustainable food systems are central to the goal of reducing poverty, eradicating hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and ensuring that everyone can afford a healthy diet. Moreover, food systems provide the best opportunity we have to make progress towards all 17 Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. In order to succeed in our common mission, we all need to see the food systems transformation as a smart contribution towards the

future we want. And for the transformation to be effective, it needs everyone – all stakeholders in food systems – to take action.

With the United Nations Pre-Summit and the Summit itself, there has never been a better time to bring forward bold and concrete actions to build sustainable food systems that will grow our economies, advance health and drive prosperity while safeguarding our planet. Slovakia as an active member in the Action Track 1 stands firm in the ambition to ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and to accelerate overall progress on the Sustainable Development Goal 2.

Ladies and gentlemen,

allow me to briefly outline the situation in Slovakia. Our attention is primarily focused on achieving sustainable food system that meets dietary and nutritious needs of the citizens, while simultaneously reducing the environmental impact. It is of a great significance to increase access to the supply of safe and nutritious food. Moreover, we aim to localize supply chains and support of sustainable local production and consumption. At the same time, we pay attention to food loss and waste, which we aim to reduce and minimize. Slovakia has joined countries and other stakeholders and decided to organize a National Food System Dialogue. The goal of the Dialogue is to boost nature-positive production and consumption of local and nutritious forest product, such as game meat. With our National Dialogue, we aim to set the tone and high ambition and commit to produce more and better with less input in the future. The Dialogue, which we plan to organize in autumn this year, will build on the existing knowledge and the outcomes of the Pre-Summit and the Summit in September.

In closing, let me commend the significant and unique role of the United Nations agencies and other partner organizations in supporting Member States in the transformation of their food systems in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the COVID-19 pandemic. It is clear that without common efforts to reform and transform food systems, targets of the 2030 Agenda could be missed.

Thank you very much for your attention.