

**ISTATEMENT
BY
THE MOST HONOURABLE ANDREW HOLNESS, ON, MP, PC,
PRIME MINISTER OF JAMAICA
AT THE
UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT 2021
23RD SEPTEMBER 2021**

Your Excellency, Mr. António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

Your Excellency, Mr. Abdullah Shahid, President of the General Assembly

Fellow Heads of State and Government

Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. President,

For structurally vulnerable Small Island Developing States like Jamaica, which have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, this year's **Food Systems Summit** takes on special significance. Its staging underscores the international community's strong conviction that despite the pandemic, no one should be left behind, and that every citizen across the world has an equal and legitimate right to food and nutritional security.

Jamaica remains committed to continuing our constructive work to advance the global foods systems agenda. We also commit to exploring synergies within the various workstreams of the *Financing for Development in the Era of Covid-19 and Beyond Initiative (FfDI)*, which I co-chair with the UN Secretary General and the Prime Minister of Canada, to achieve the Goal of Zero Hunger (SDG2).

In the Caribbean, food and nutrition insecurity are primarily the result of our small size, increasing exposure to climate change and related natural hazards. To compound our challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated the worst economic recession in the region in the last half century.

Mr. President,

There is universal acceptance that there is no single model for food systems transformation, and the trade-offs vary by country and region. Multilateral assistance to developing countries to transform food systems should, therefore, be delivered in line with the national priorities and realities, ensuring that the processes of transition are just, equitable and fair.

The transformation of global food systems should strike a balance among the following objectives:

- The capacity to increase food production levels and variety;
- Agricultural health and food safety;
- Nutritional diversity and quality; and;
- Equitable food standards that govern trade, and environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Let me reiterate that responding to these challenges requires an inclusive, multidimensional, systems-based approach that addresses the range and complexities of our challenges in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Our collective participation and contributions in this forum must move us closer to securing a joint commitment and united response to addressing this urgent matter.

I thank you.