

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the United Nations Foods Systems Summit**
23 September, 09.00-18.00 (EDT), New York, virtual format

Time limit: 3 min

**Mr. Secretary General,
Dear Summit participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for convening this Summit.

The world faces many new global challenges such as climate change, the **COVID-19** pandemic, political and economic instability.

But creating conditions for sustainable food systems is – literally – a life-giving priority. Food systems touch every aspect of human existence: our bodies, our environment, our economies and our cultures.

The World Food Program estimates that **270 million people** will face food shortages this year as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and climate change. The global water deficit may reach **40% by 2030**.

Kazakhstan is an active participant in the global food supply chain. We are committed to green and sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

Our country is one of the **ten largest producers of food wheat and flour**, exporting **up to seven million tons** of wheat per year. Despite constraints, we have also increased the export of oilseeds to more than one million tons per year.

Yet, a food system must be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Kazakhstan is located in a risky agricultural zone. It is subject to arid climate changes. **40%** of the country's water comes from neighboring countries.

To achieve more efficient use of land and water resources, we are increasing land fertility, introducing water-saving technologies and digitalizing water supply systems.

It has become very clear that when it comes to sustainable food systems, issues related to **water diplomacy** are relevant, even critical, for many countries.

Food systems and water management systems – including the use of transboundary rivers – are inextricably linked. Food systems frameworks and agreements must reflect this.

Kazakhstan initiated the establishment of the **Islamic Organization for Food Security**, which today includes 36 countries with 1.4 billion people.

Through it, Kazakhstan systematically provides humanitarian assistance in the form of wheat and flour to countries in need, including **Afghanistan**.

**Mr. Secretary General,
Summit participants!**

There is much work ahead. We must strengthen agro-technological, scientific and innovative interactions between all countries. We must also improve finance, investment, transport and logistics.

The **Food and Agriculture Organization** will need to play an increasing role in ensuring global food security and a sustainable ecological system to support it.

I hope this Summit will help us progress toward **SDG #2** – ending hunger – and ensuring food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agricultural development.

Thank you!