

Speech by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation at the UN Food Systems Summit

Your Excellencies,

One in ten people suffer from hunger, and this figure is rising.

We have reached the limits of what our planet can take.

Our food system is in crisis, and this has fundamental implications. Not just for Zero Hunger, but for all SDGs.

I would like to thank the organizers of this summit for bringing us together.

We know the causes of the crisis: poverty, exclusion, conflict, COVID-19, climate change, water scarcity and biodiversity loss.

Now we must move towards solutions.

The Dutch experience may be helpful to find these.

Although we are not a large nation, our food and agriculture sector is a powerhouse, with strong international links.

This is the result of constantly innovating, changing, and adapting.

We are currently transitioning towards a more healthy, sustainable, and resilient system.

To speed up similar innovation around the world, we urgently need better policies and broader cooperation.

To achieve that, policy- and decision-making need to be based on the best knowledge and latest insights.

Science is essential to any effective action.

Next, we need UN agencies, donors, civil society, knowledge institutions and the private sector to respond effectively to countries' needs and local demands.

The Netherlands acknowledges the central role of the Rome-based agencies, but other actors need to get involved too.

We are an active member of the Zero Hunger Coalition, and we are ready to support other initiatives aimed at innovation, climate action and impact at scale.

Finally, the international community needs to ensure that no one is left behind.

Women, youth, and indigenous peoples: not only do they all have the right to food, they're also a key part of our food systems.

This summit rightly puts people first.

If we talk together today, we must also act together tomorrow. That is the only way to create a stronger food system – and a better future – for all.

Thank you.