UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

STATEMENT
by
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VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN

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Only the speech as made may be considered authentic.

Speaking time: 3 mn
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;
Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations;
Distinguished participants;

On behalf of President Patrice Talon, I would like to express my warmest congratulations to the Secretary General of the United Nations and his team for organizing this Summit.

Like other countries, Benin has continued its efforts in the area of nutrition.

The most illustrative experience of Benin, which I would like to share with the Assembly, relates to school feeding, considered as a lever to boost the march towards 2030.

Through the National Integrated School Feeding Program (PNASI) deployed in its 77 communes, Benin has been contributing since 2017, to the strengthening of food and nutritional security. **Financed by the national budget, the Program benefits from the complementary support of technical and financial partners and technical assistance from the World Food Program (WFP).** It guarantees more than 650,000 schoolchildren and students a healthy and balanced lunch at break time and covers 3,152 schools.

This school feeding model not only supports the education of schoolchildren, but also increases the schooling rate of girls and is indeed a supportive mechanism for households. It also provides training and experience for community members who are integrated into the management units, and boosts local production.

The program has been a great success and is being emulated in the sub-region and in Africa, as illustrated by the recent visit to Benin by the First Lady of Burundi, to learn from the Beninese experience.

It is on the strength of this rich experience that Benin has committed itself to playing a leading role in the Global Coalition for School Feeding under the aegis of the World Food Program.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Food systems have an impact on several of the SDGs and are therefore an important lever, a catalyst for accelerating their achievement. There is an urgent need to undertake profound transformations so that these systems truly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

To this end, a strong mobilization of resources would be necessary to ensure the financing of these systems which, for almost two years, have been under the diktat of the COVID-19 global health crisis.

That is why I would like to appeal to the entire international community to pool our efforts so that the transformation of food systems can stem poverty and famine.

Thank you for your kind attention.