
Opening statement by President-elect Alvaro Lario

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President Houngbo,

Thank you for your words.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We have a full agenda, and you will have plenty of time to hear from me in the coming days and months.

I just wanted to take a minute to express my appreciation to IFAD's Member States for having supported my candidacy. It is an honour to have been elected IFAD President, and to serve not only Member States, but also the millions of rural women and men that benefit from our projects.

I look forward to working with all of you; together, we can really build on the achievements of the past five years and capitalize on the strengths that President Houngbo mentioned, both as a UN development agency and as an international financial institution. Together, we can really deepen the impact on our four main themes: climate, gender, youth and nutrition.

Together, as I have mentioned during my campaign, we can really put IFAD at the centre of food systems, the climate adaptation agenda and the agriculture agenda.

And to you, our Board, I would like to continue working with you and listening to you as you provide us with the guidance to make sure that food systems are sustainable, and that no rural women or men are left behind.

To President Houngbo, I would like to express my sincerest thanks for your support and friendship, and for your leadership and vision.