

**STATEMENT BY THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON,
HIS EXCELLENCY MIGUEL RUIZ CABAÑAS IZQUIERDO ,
CLOSING THE THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

Mr President,
Distinguished Governors and delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The thirty-sixth session of the Governing Council is now drawing to a close. This year's Council focused on the vital role partnerships play in working towards sustainable smallholder agriculture with a view to meeting the increasing needs of a growing world population.

At the opening ceremony, we had the privilege of listening to Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, who delivered the message from His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. This message highlighted the importance of IFAD's work in fighting hunger and ensuring food security, work opportunities and a future for smallholder farmers worldwide.

We had the distinct honour of welcoming two Special Guests, His Excellency Hui Liangyu, Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China and His Excellency Vittorio Grilli, Minister for Economy and Finance of the Italian Republic.

In his address to the Governing Council, Vice-Premier Hui outlined China's recent experience and progress, illustrating the importance of effective partnerships – as showcased in the collaboration between IFAD and China.

The Governing Council was also honoured with the presence of His Excellency Minister Vittorio Grilli, who reflected on the fragile state in which the global economy finds itself, and called for a stronger international collaboration, including closer cooperation and integrated approaches among all partners, foremost the Rome-based UN agencies.

In his inaugural statement, President Nwanze pledged IFAD's continued intense engagement and advocacy at all levels. In closing, the President called on us to maintain and even increase our efforts - together we can improve the lives of millions of people.

Having appointed President Nwanze to a second term in office, the Governing Council expressed its appreciation of his work over the past four years. It is with confidence that we look forward to the next four years, knowing that President Nwanze will continue in his strong leadership at the helm of this institution, which is so dear to all of us.

Over the past two days we have heard many powerful statements by IFAD's Governors, affirming the importance we place on the Fund's work and renewing our commitment to nourishing strong partnerships for smallholder agriculture.

This theme was also central to our panel discussions, involving international experts and high-level policy makers. Together we discussed the key role played by cooperatives and women in the development of vibrant and sustainable agriculture world-wide. The interventions of our panellists reminded us of the important facilitating role of governments with regard to partnerships, highlighting the power of partnerships as a means to foster opportunities to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

At this year's Council we were also afforded the opportunity to discuss "Partnerships for financing agriculture and rural development" in a more intimate, high-level event. I think it is safe to say that we all seized this opportunity and that we look forward to similar discussions in future.

Distinguished Governors and delegates,
At this Governing Council we had the pleasure to welcome the Republic of Nauru, Tuvalu, and the Republic of Vanuatu into the IFAD fold.

Furthermore, we approved the following:

- The Report of the Emoluments Committee;
 - The Established good practice for the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD;
 - The Revision of Lending Policies and Criteria;
 - The Consolidated financial statements of IFAD as at 31 December 2011;
- and,

The Council reviewed IFAD's 2013 results-based programme of work and regular and capital budgets, the IOE results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015, and the HIPC and PBAS progress reports, approving the budgets of IFAD and its Independent Office of Evaluation and noting the concerns raised with respect to the maintenance of multilingualism at IFAD and Management's commitment to explore and identify solutions in this regard.

We also noted the information provided on the status of the ninth replenishment of IFAD's resources and on the Report on IFAD's Hosting of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

Distinguished delegates,
My thanks go to all of you, and to my colleagues on the Bureau for this successful Governing Council. Our thanks should go as well to all IFAD staff.

We leave behind us a busy schedule, filled with engaged and engaging debates. We have accomplished a lot of work, laying the foundations for IFAD to take on a lot more. As we return to our capitals, I am sure that all of us take with us a plethora of memories of this session, inspiration for our work and anticipation for our return next year.

On this note, I hereby close the thirty-sixth session of the Governing Council.