



# Governing Council Report

Forty-fourth Session  
Rome, 17-18 February 2021

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**Governing Council Report  
Forty-fourth Session  
Rome, 17-18 February 2021**

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## Chapter 1 Inauguration and proceedings

1. The forty-fourth session of the IFAD Governing Council was held virtually on 17-18 February 2021. The list of participants is contained in annex IV.
  2. The Council held a total of two meetings. The summary records of these meetings are contained in chapter 3.
  3. The video recordings of the session are available through the following links: [Day One](#) and [Day Two](#).
- A. Opening of the session and inaugural meeting**
4. Dr Suminto, Chairperson of the Governing Council and Governor for Indonesia, opened the session and made a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
- B. Agenda and documentation**
5. The Governing Council adopted the [agenda](#) and [the schedule for the session](#). The documents placed before the Council are listed in annex V. The resolutions adopted by the Governing Council appear in annex II.
- C. Inaugural meeting of the session**
6. Mr Gilbert F. Hougbo, President of IFAD delivered his welcoming statement to the special guests for the inaugural meeting of the session.
  7. His Excellency João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola delivered a statement.
  8. His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan delivered a statement by video message.
  9. His Excellency Luigi Di Maio, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic delivered a statement by video message.
  10. The full text of the statements delivered during the inaugural meeting is reproduced in chapter 4.
- D. Statement by the President of IFAD**
11. The full text of President Hougbo's statement to the Governing Council appears in chapter 4.
- E. Indigenous Peoples' Forum**
12. Ms Rayanne Cristine Máximo França delivered a synthesis of the deliberations of the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD, which took place on 2-4 February in conjunction with the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council. The full text of the synthesis is reproduced in chapter 4.
  13. President Hougbo delivered a statement on the value of indigenous food systems, which is summarized in chapter 3.
- F. IFAD Talk - Responding to global shocks: How public-private partnerships can improve agricultural value chains and build a more resilient rural world**
14. Ms Hélène Papper, Director of the Communications Division of IFAD, moderated a talk with Mr Frank Mars, Chair of the Board of Directors of Mars, Incorporated. The discussion can be viewed through this [link](#).
- G. Interactive session with Governors**
15. Ms Marie Haga, Associate Vice-President for the External Relations and Governance Department of IFAD moderated an interactive session on "Bridging the investment gap in rural development: a prerequisite for global resilience post-COVID-19".

16. The interactive session can be viewed through the links provided below:
- [Keynote addresses](#) by:
    - Ms Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General for International Partnerships, European Commission
    - Dr Agnes Kalibata, Special Envoy for the United Nations Food Systems Summit
    - Ms Sabrina Elba, IFAD Goodwill Ambassador
  - [Centre Stage Event – Interactive Governors’ Dialogue](#) moderated by Mr Dominik Ziller, Vice-President of IFAD with the participation of:
    - Dr Maria Flachsbarth, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany
    - H. E. Ousmane Mamoudou Kane, Minister for Economic Affairs and Promotion of Productive Sectors of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
    - Mr Marwan Al-Ghanem, Deputy Director-General for Operations, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development
  - [Panel: Voices from the field](#) moderated by Ms Meike Van Ginneken, Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department of IFAD with the participation of:
    - Ms Hassania Mehasab Moussa, Project Manager, Community Development Association in Neqada (Egypt)
    - Mr Joseph Newton Mathenge, Founder, G-Star Youth Group (Kenya)
    - Ms Chia Dorothy Vandefan, Seed entrepreneur (Nigeria)
    - Ms Shirley Casachagua, President, Asociación de Artesanas Generación Llanac (Peru)
    - Mr Simon Chottu, Entrepreneur and Community Leader (Solomon Islands)

#### **H. General statements**

17. In total, 34 statements were submitted to the Office of the Secretary for the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council by the following Members: the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Republic of Austria, the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Belgium on behalf of Benelux countries, the Republic of Benin, Canada, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the State of Eritrea, the French Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany (joint statement), the Republic of Ghana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Republic of Maldives, the Republic of Mali, the Republic of Nicaragua, the Republic of the Niger, Nordic countries (the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Finland, the Republic of Iceland, the Kingdom of Norway, and the Kingdom of Sweden), the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Rwanda, the Independent State of Samoa, the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Kingdom of Spain, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Republic of the Sudan, the Swiss Confederation, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Togolese Republic, the United States of America. The Holy See and the European Union also submitted statements as observers.
18. All statements recorded and written statements are available on the [web page of the session](#) under “Documents and Statements”.

**I. Closure of the session**

19. The President of IFAD presented closing remarks to the Council; these remarks are reproduced in full in chapter 4.
20. The Chairperson of the Governing Council, Dr Suminto, summarized the results of the Council's main deliberations and then closed the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council. The text of the closing statement is reproduced in full in chapter 4.

## Chapter 2 Decisions of the Governing Council

### A. Report of the Emoluments Committee

21. The Governing Council was informed that subsequent to the re-establishment of a committee to review the emoluments of the President of IFAD at the Council's forty-third session, the Emoluments Committee, chaired by the representative for India, had completed its review and made its recommendations to the Council.
22. The Council took note of the "Report of the Emoluments Committee" on the terms and conditions of employment of the President of IFAD, as contained in document [GC 44/L.2](#), and adopted resolution 216/XLIV on 17 February 2021.

### B. Proposal for an automated voting system at IFAD

23. The Governing Council considered document [GC 44/L.3](#) and adopted resolution 217/XLIV so as to allow use of the selected automated (online) voting system in conjunction with the appointment of the President of IFAD in February 2021, in the event of a secret ballot, and on future occasions when voting by secret ballot was deemed necessary.

### C. Appointment of the President of IFAD

24. The Governing Council considered document [GC 44/L.4](#) concerning the appointment of the President of IFAD, and appointed, by acclamation, Mr Gilbert Fossoun Hougbo, of the Togolese Republic, for a second four-year term of office as President of IFAD, with effect from 1 April 2021. The Council adopted resolution 218/XLIV thereon on 17 February 2021.

### D. Report on the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources

25. The Governing Council noted the Report on the status of the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11), as contained in document [GC 44/L.5](#).

### E. Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources

26. The Governing Council considered document GC 44/L.6 together with its addendum and corrigendum (further revised as [GC 44/L.6/Rev.1](#)) and adopted on 18 February 2021, resolution 219/XLIV approving the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources and authorizing the replenishment of the Fund's resources.

### F. Amendments to IFAD's Basic Legal Texts

27. The Governing Council considered the proposed amendments to the basic legal texts of IFAD as contained in document [GC 44/L.10](#), and adopted resolutions 220/XLIV, 221/XLIV, 222/XLIV, and 223/XLIV on 18 February 2021. The amendments would enter into force and effect on the same date.

### G. Consolidated financial statements of IFAD for 2019

28. The Governing Council considered and approved the financial statements showing IFAD's financial position as at 31 December 2019 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date, as contained in appendices A to L inclusive of document [GC 44/L.7](#), the external auditor's report and the attestation on the effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting of the external auditor.

### H. IFAD's 2021 results-based programme of work and regular and capital budgets, the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD's results-based work programme and budget for 2021 and indicative plan for 2022-2023, and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative and performance-based allocation system (PBAS) progress reports

29. After considering the proposed administrative budget comprising IFAD's regular and capital budgets for 2021 and the budget of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD for 2021, as presented in document [GC 44/L.8](#), the Governing Council adopted resolution 224/XLIV on 18 February 2021.

30. The Council also approved that unobligated appropriations at the close of the financial year 2020 may be carried forward into the 2021 financial year up to an amount not exceeding 10 per cent of the corresponding appropriations.
31. Additionally, the Council took note of the information in the progress reports on IFAD's participation in the HIPC Debt Initiative and the implementation of the PBAS at IFAD.

### **I. Elections of members and alternate members of the Executive Board**

32. After considering document [GC 44/L.9](#) and its [addendum](#), the Governing Council elected on 18 February 2021, new members and alternate members to the Executive Board for a term of office of three years.
33. The composition of the Executive Board for the three-year term 2021-2023 is shown here below.

<i>List and Member</i>	<i>Alternate Member</i>
<b>List A</b>	
Canada	Ireland
France	Belgium
Germany	Luxembourg (2021) Switzerland (2022-2023)
Italy	Austria
Japan	Denmark
Sweden	Norway
United Kingdom (2021-2022)	Netherlands (2021-2022)
Netherlands (2023)	United Kingdom (2023)
United States	Spain
<b>List B</b>	
Kuwait	United Arab Emirates
Nigeria	Qatar
Saudi Arabia	Indonesia
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Algeria
<b>List C</b>	
<b>Sub-List C1</b>	
<b>Africa</b>	
Angola	Cameroon
Egypt	Côte d'Ivoire
<b>Sub-List C2</b>	
<b>Europe, Asia and the Pacific</b>	
China	Bangladesh (2021) Pakistan (2022-2023)
India	Pakistan (2021) Republic of Korea (2022-2023)
<b>Sub-List C3</b>	
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	
Brazil	Argentina
Mexico	Costa Rica (2021) Dominican Republic (2022-2023)



## Chapter 3 Summary records

- (i) Summary record of the first meeting of the forty-fourth session held on 17 February 2021 at 1.00 p.m.

**Chairperson:** Dr Suminto (Indonesia)

**Later:**

Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina (Cameroon) (Vice-Chairperson)

**Later:**

Dr Suminto (Indonesia) (Chairperson)

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34. **The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.**

OPENING OF THE SESSION (agenda item 1) (GC 44/INF.1/Rev.1, INF.3, INF.4 and INF.5)

35. **Mr JIMÉNEZ-McINNIS** (Secretary of IFAD), welcoming participants to the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council, said that IFAD Management had been able to ensure business continuity and organize the current virtual session – the first ever in the Fund’s history – thanks to the amendments approved by the Governing Council to its Rules of Procedure through the vote by correspondence held in October 2020.
36. He described the facilities offered by the new virtual conference centre, which had been specifically designed to promote a dynamic and engaging session, and invited participants to provide their feedback on the virtual arrangements for the session by completing the short survey to be circulated at its conclusion.
37. **The CHAIRPERSON** made a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 2) (GC 44/L.1/Rev.1 and Add.1/Rev.3)

38. **The Governing Council adopted the provisional agenda (finalized as GC 44/L.1/Rev.1) and the revised schedule of work for the session (GC 44/L.1/Add.1/Rev.3).**

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

WELCOMING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD TO KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

39. **Mr HOUNGBO** (President of IFAD) delivered a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

40. **His Excellency João Manuel GONÇALVES LOURENÇO** (President of the Republic of Angola) delivered a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.

VIDEO MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

41. **His Excellency Imran KHAN (Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan) delivered a video message, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.**

VIDEO MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

42. **His Excellency Luigi DI MAIO** (Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic) delivered a video message, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
43. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked the keynote speakers for their inspiring words and the Government of Italy for the unwavering support and generous hospitality that it had always shown to IFAD.

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD (agenda item 3)

44. **Mr HOUNGBO** (President of IFAD) delivered a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
45. **The CHAIRPERSON** expressed the Governing Council's appreciation to Mr Hougbo for his statement and for his wise leadership of the Fund.
46. **A video entitled “IFAD year” was screened.**

47. **Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina (Cameroon) took the Chair.**

REPORT OF THE EMOLUMENTS COMMITTEE (agenda item 4) (GC 44/L.2)

48. **The CHAIRPERSON** introduced the report contained in document GC 44/L.2 and drew attention to the draft resolution annexed thereto on the emoluments of the President of IFAD.

49. **The Governing Council adopted resolution 216/XLIV on the emoluments of the President of IFAD.**

PROPOSAL FOR AN AUTOMATED VOTING SYSTEM AT IFAD (agenda item 5) (GC 44/L.3)

50. **The CHAIRPERSON** noted that the Office of the Secretary of IFAD had recently provided guidelines and training on the automated voting system approved by the Executive Board in December 2020. She commended IFAD's responsiveness to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning of its governing bodies and its work to ensure the Fund's business continuity.

51. She invited the Governing Council to adopt the draft resolution annexed to document GC 44/L.3 so as to allow use of the selected automated (online) voting system in conjunction with the appointment of the President of IFAD during the current session, in the event of a secret ballot, and on future occasions when voting by secret ballot was deemed necessary.

52. **A delegate from FRANCE** expressed his country's approval that the selected automated (online) voting system be used, if necessary, in electing the President of IFAD during the current session. He stressed that such approval pertained only to the election of the President in 2021 and that it should not be considered as setting any precedent for subsequent elections within IFAD or other United Nations agencies, funds or programmes.

53. **On that understanding, the Governing Council adopted resolution 217/XLIV on the implementation of an automated voting system at IFAD.**

SYNTHESIS OF DELIBERATIONS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FORUM

54. **Ms Rayanne Cristine MAXIMO FRANÇA** (Indigenous Peoples Forum and Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, Brazil), at the invitation of the Chairperson, presented a synthesis of the deliberations of the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Forum, held from 2 to 4 February 2021 on the theme "The value of indigenous food systems: resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic". The Forum's closing session had taken place on 15 February 2021, with Governors invited to attend. The full text of the synthesis is reproduced in chapter 4.

55. **The CHAIRPERSON**, conveying appreciation for the wisdom and insight provided by the synthesis, said that indigenous peoples incarnated resilience and that much could be learned from their practices, knowledge and experience.

56. **Mr HOUNGBO** (President of IFAD) expressed gratitude to the hundreds of indigenous representatives who had participated in the regional consultations preceding the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Forum and to the many delegates from numerous indigenous peoples who had contributed to the meaningful and varied exchanges during the meeting.

57. Accompanied by a rich two-week programme of side events, including the Indigenous Peoples' Film Festival, the meeting had also marked the tenth anniversary of the Forum, which was seen as a model of partnership within the United Nations system. IFAD – the host of the Forum – was delighted to partner with indigenous peoples and more committed than ever to learning about and valuing indigenous livelihoods and traditional food systems and knowledge.

58. Indigenous food systems held a wealth of knowledge, values, traditions and concepts that could promote more sustainable practices and improve the well-being of all humankind. Indigenous peoples could help to guide the transition to healthier, more sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems in the post-pandemic world. They continued, however, to suffer from systemic discrimination and marginalization, with many facing constant threats to their lands or resources and, ultimately, to their livelihoods.
59. The COVID-19 crisis had exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and underlying inequalities. At the same time, the climate crisis had led to the understanding that older models of development were not only flawed but, in some contexts, posed a threat to humanity. Thanks to their traditional knowledge and connection with nature, indigenous peoples could help to steer the world towards better practices that preserved the Earth's ecosystem and biodiversity, ensuring that the way food was grown today did not threaten the food and water supplies of tomorrow.
60. IFAD's portfolio currently included 63 projects benefiting over 6.7 million indigenous persons. IFAD's unique Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility, which fostered self-driven development through small-scale projects directly implemented by indigenous organizations, was also financing around 160 such projects in some 45 countries. The hope was that IFAD's partners would follow the example of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency in committing their support to the Facility through its next cycle.
61. IFAD would never conduct any projects or programmes on the territories of indigenous peoples without their full and effective participation and their free, prior and informed consent. IFAD would furthermore do its utmost to support the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the planning and organization of the Food Systems Summit to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2021. It stood ready to ensure that indigenous voices were integrated into the global commitment to social justice for all and remained determined to further strengthen its partnership with indigenous peoples.

IFAD TALK: RESPONDING TO GLOBAL SHOCKS: HOW PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS CAN IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS AND BUILD A MORE RESILIENT RURAL WORLD

62. **Ms PAPPER** (Director, Communication Division), speaking as moderator of the session, introduced **Mr Frank MARS**, Chair of the Board of Directors of Mars, Incorporated. The IFAD Talk can be viewed through this [link](#).
63. **Dr SUMINTO (Indonesia) resumed the Chair.**

APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENT (agenda item 6) (GC 44/L.4, INF.2 and INF.2/Add.1)

64. **The CHAIRPERSON** drew attention to the modalities of the procedure for appointment of the President of IFAD, as described in document GC 44/INF.2, and announced that only one nomination for the position had been received. As specified in document GC 44/L.4, and in accordance with the nomination procedure set out in the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD, the Togolese Republic and Canada had nominated Mr Gilbert Hougbo for a second term of office as President of IFAD. The recent interaction in a fruitful meeting of the nominee with the IFAD membership had highlighted Management's efforts to ensure open interaction and constructive dialogue with Members. Indeed, the process had been recognized as an international good practice for the enhancement of transparency and adopted as such by other organizations.
65. Rule 41.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, as recently amended, established that, in the case of only one nominee, the Council may use the method

of acclamation to appoint the President, while Rule 35.1 established that the Chairperson should attempt to secure a consensus on a proposal in lieu of taking a vote thereon. Having consulted with the Bureau, he accordingly proposed that, pursuant to Rule 38.1 of its Rules of Procedure and in the absence of any objection, the Council should appoint by acclamation the sole nominee, Mr Gilbert Hougbo, for a second term of office, with effect from 1 April 2021.

66. **Mr HOUNGBO was declared President of IFAD by acclamation.**
67. **The Governing Council adopted resolution 218/XLIV on the appointment of the President of IFAD.**
68. **Mr HOUNGBO** (President of IFAD) made a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
69. **The CHAIRPERSON** extended his warmest congratulations to Mr Hougbo on his re-appointment as President of IFAD and expressed confidence that, under his leadership, the Fund would continue to enjoy success in discharging its vitally important mandate.
70. **A delegate from MEXICO**, speaking on behalf of the entire IFAD membership, congratulated Mr Hougbo on his re-appointment and assured him of the continued strong support of Members as he led the Fund's work over the next four years to further improve the food security and incomes of the poorest and strengthen their resilience to climate change in particular.
71. Its growing importance already highlighted by the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12), IFAD's role would be even more critical in the efforts to recover and build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Member States were confident that, under Mr Hougbo's continued stewardship, IFAD would deliver more and better resources to its beneficiaries. They looked forward to continuing to work closely with him to strengthen IFAD with a view to delivering its mandate, enhancing its strategies, ensuring its sustainability and advancing its role in the international architecture while ensuring accountability and appropriate risk management.
72. **A delegate from GUINEA-BISSAU** wished the President the greatest success in continuing the Fund's work to combat food insecurity and strengthen the resilience of rural communities, especially against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic.
73. **A delegate from SAUDI ARABIA** said that the President's re-appointment by acclamation clearly demonstrated the membership's trust in his wise leadership of IFAD. His Government remained committed to supporting the Fund in its mission.
74. **A delegate from KENYA**, welcoming the President's re-election on behalf of the African Group, said that his dedication, commitment and strategic vision would help to further consolidate IFAD's existing achievements in relation to agriculture, particularly in the run-up to the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit. In retaining its commitment to the political vision set out in, among others, Agenda 2063, Africa remained focused on long-term development goals to end hunger and poverty on a sustainable basis, notwithstanding the frequency of natural disasters and diseases that it faced. The Group looked forward to closer collaboration with IFAD for building the continent's resilience against such challenges and assured the President of its continued support.
75. **A delegate from GABON**, congratulating the President on his re-election, reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting IFAD and ensuring the rural development that was so crucial for Africa.

76. **A delegate from MAURITANIA** expressed congratulations to the President on his well-deserved reappointment, highlighting his keen awareness of the realities in Africa, including in the context of COVID-19 and its impact as well as the importance of sustainable food systems and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Her Government looked forward to working with him.
77. **A delegate from EGYPT**, welcoming the President's re-appointment, confirmed his country's continued support for IFAD in its mission to assist farmers in developing countries, especially small farmers in remote areas. Egypt looked forward to further enhancing its successful cooperation with IFAD.
78. **A delegate from TUNISIA**, also welcoming the President's re-election, reaffirmed the vital role of innovation in rural and sustainable development alike. The hope was that IFAD would include research on agriculture and sustainable development among its priorities.
79. **A delegate from ARGENTINA** said that the President's re-election marked an important day for developing countries, as it not only consolidated the leadership of a key institution but also reaffirmed its universality. His country would continue its support for IFAD.
80. **A delegate from CHAD** said that the President's re-election demonstrated the appreciation for his work during his first term of office and reflected the need for consensus on the issues faced in the current COVID-affected times, with a special emphasis on combating hunger and poverty and promoting rural development.
81. **A delegate from MOROCCO** said that the newly re-elected President could be assured of full commitment and support from his Government, which looked forward to strengthening its partnership with IFAD.
82. **A delegate from BURKINA FASO**, congratulating the President on the progress achieved by IFAD during his first term, said that her country looked forward to working with the Fund towards a structural and far-reaching transformation of rural economies for a better world.
83. **A delegate from the SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC** said in congratulating the President that his Government looked forward to further cooperation with IFAD to improve the livelihoods of the country's rural poor.
84. **A delegate from SAMOA**, extending congratulations to the President on his re-election, said that his Government looked forward to continuing its excellent partnership with IFAD over the coming four years in a peaceful and enjoyable working relationship.
85. **A delegate from INDIA** said that his country was delighted by the President's reappointment and looked forward to further strengthening its partnership with IFAD in the interest of eradicating poverty and bettering the lives of the rural poor in all developing countries. IFAD could count on the support and collaboration of India in its pursuit of a transformation towards greater effectiveness and efficiency with a view to improving results and achieving sustainability on the ground.
86. **A delegate from the BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA**, reiterating the congratulations expressed to the President by previous speakers, said that IFAD would surely do much under his leadership to achieve a fairer world.
87. **A delegate from CÔTE D'IVOIRE** said in endorsing those congratulations that the President could be assured of his country's support and cooperation as he further harnessed his skills during his second term towards addressing the major challenges of the day.

88. **A delegate from IRAQ**, echoing the congratulations expressed to the President, said that his Government looked forward to further cooperation with IFAD to improve rural livelihoods and the agricultural sector as a whole.
89. **A delegate from ETHIOPIA** congratulated the President on his re-election and said that her country remained committed to working in collaboration with IFAD for achievement of the SDGs.
90. **A delegate from UGANDA** said that the President's reappointment by acclamation, on which he congratulated him, reflected the great confidence of Member States in his able leadership and their satisfaction with the service he had provided during his first term of office.
91. **A delegate from the UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**, joining in the congratulations, said that the President's re-election was the outcome of his efforts to realize IFAD's mission of poverty eradication. He wished the President every success in achieving that goal.
92. **A delegate from SENEGAL**, adding his warm congratulations to those of previous speakers, said that the President's reappointment reflected appreciation for his willingness to strive for a substantial transformation of food systems that would increase self-reliance and enhance the sustainability of agriculture.
93. **A delegate from LIBYA** said that the President's reappointment was to be roundly congratulated and clearly spoke to his trustworthiness and to his sincere efforts to improve the agricultural sector.
94. **A delegate from NIGER**, in expressing his congratulations, said that the President could rely on his country to support his vision of a system-wide transformation for the benefit of rural populations, in particular the more marginalized, with an emphasis on results in the field.
95. **A delegate from the MALDIVES**, congratulating the President on his reappointment, said that her Government looked forward to seeing its partnership with IFAD help communities in the Maldives to reach their food security goals and foster resilience.
96. **A delegate from ERITREA** expressed congratulations to the President and appreciation for his past work to achieve food security and nutrition, stressing the need to strengthen solidarity and partnerships to that end.
97. **An observer for the EUROPEAN UNION** congratulated the President on his reappointment and said that the excellent IFAD12 outcome held great promise for bold and promising investments benefiting smallholder and family farmers, farmers' organizations and "agripreneurs". He welcomed IFAD's full and sustained engagement in the 2021 Food Systems Summit, which would mark the start of a long-term, transformative endeavour.

**The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.**

- (ii) Summary record of the second meeting of the forty-fourth session held on 18 February 2021 at 1.00 p.m.

**Chairperson:** Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch  
(United Kingdom) (Vice-Chairperson)

**Later:**  
Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina  
(Cameroon) (Vice-Chairperson)

**Later:**  
Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch  
(United Kingdom) (Vice-Chairperson)

**Later:**  
Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina  
(Cameroon) (Vice-Chairperson)

**Later:**  
Dr Suminto (Indonesia) (Chairperson)

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98. The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.

INTERACTIVE SESSION WITH GOVERNORS: BRIDGING THE INVESTMENT GAP IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A PREREQUISITE FOR GLOBAL RESILIENCE POST-COVID-19

99. **A video entitled "IFAD four-year achievement" was screened.**

100. **Ms Marie HAGA** (Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department), speaking as overall moderator of the interactive session, introduced the three keynote speakers for the session:

- Dr Agnes Kalibata, Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the 2021 Food Systems Summit
- Ms Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission, on behalf of Ms Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships
- Ms Sabrina Elba, IFAD Goodwill Ambassador

101. The addresses of the keynote speakers can be viewed through this [link](#).

102. **Ms HAGA** (Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance) introduced the moderator of the Centre Stage event, **Mr Dominik Ziller**, Vice-President of IFAD. The panellists for the event were:

- His Excellency Ousmane Mamoudou Kane, Minister for Economic Affairs and Promotion of Productive Sectors, Islamic Republic of Mauritania
- Dr Maria Flachsbarth, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Federal Republic of Germany
- Mr Marwan Al-Ghanem, Deputy Director-General for Operations, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development

103. The discussion can be viewed through this [link](#).

104. **A video entitled "IFAD thank you to donors" was screened.**

105. **Ms HAGA** (Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department) introduced the moderator for the "Voices from the field" segment of the session, **Ms Meike van Ginneken**, Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department. The panellists for the segment were:

- Ms Shirley Casachagua, President, Generación Llanac Artisans Association, Republic of Peru
- Mr Joseph Newton Mathenge, co-founder, G-Star Youth Group, Republic of Kenya
- Ms Hassania Moussa, Project Manager, Community Development Association, Arab Republic of Egypt
- Mr Simon Chottu, entrepreneur and community leader, Solomon Islands
- Ms Chia Dorothy Vandefan, seed entrepreneur and rice farmer, Federal Republic of Nigeria

106. The discussion can be viewed through this [link](#).

107. **A video of a performance by the Kingdom Choir, a British gospel group, was screened.**

REPORT ON THE ELEVENTH REPLENISHMENT OF IFAD'S RESOURCES (agenda item 7)  
(GC 44/L.5)

108. **The CHAIRPERSON**, presenting the Report on the Status of the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11) contained in document GC 44/L.5 and also providing an update on the information set out therein, said that, as at 31 December 2020, pledges to IFAD11 had amounted to US\$1.08 billion. Since December 2020, a new pledge had been received from Senegal. Together with expected regular budget contributions, total pledges amounted to approximately US\$1.1 billion. Instruments of contribution or direct payments received as at 31 December 2020 had amounted to US\$1.03 billion but had since increased by US\$5.2 million. Payments received as at 31 December 2020 had amounted to US\$770.4 million, increasing to US\$801.5 million as at 11 February 2021 following payments received from Brazil, Burkina Faso, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan and Turkey.
109. **The Governing Council took note of the Report on the Status of the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources.**

TWELFTH REPLENISHMENT OF IFAD'S RESOURCES (agenda item 8) (GC 44/L.6/Rev.1)

110. **The CHAIRPERSON** drew attention to the final Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12), as contained in document GC 44/L.6/Rev.1, and to the related draft resolution set out in annex VIII thereto. An updated table of pledges to IFAD12 was available on the interactive platform for Member States.
111. **Mr Kyle PETERS** (External Chairperson of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources), introducing the report, said that, in fulfilling the request for it to review the adequacy of the Fund's resources, the consultation had reviewed progress in the implementation of IFAD11 commitments and discussed issues and proposals for IFAD12. The report on its deliberations of the past year outlined a vision for IFAD's work over the 2022-2024 period, with a focus on recovery, rebuilding and resilience after the pandemic and on setting a trajectory towards 2030 with the ambition of doubling the Fund's impact. The IFAD12 Consultation had been a particularly important one for IFAD, having taken place in a difficult global context, with only 10 years left in which to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and during a pandemic that had significantly increased hunger and poverty around the world. IFAD's ability to respond, deliver and engage in the field had been enhanced, however, thanks to key reforms that – as borne out by its positive credit ratings – had turned it into a more agile, decentralized and stronger organization from both the operational and financial perspectives.
112. Strong appreciation had been expressed during the consultation for that ability and for IFAD's activities in support of food security, its engagement on the mainstreaming themes, and the manner in which it had adjusted its programmes in response to COVID-19. Recognizing that the Fund was well on course to meet the commitments made under IFAD11, the consultation had agreed on an ambitious programme of work for the IFAD12 period. The consensus had been that IFAD should focus on low-income and lower-middle-income countries by allocating 100 per cent of core resources to those countries, whereas upper-middle-income countries would receive between 11 and 20 per cent of the IFAD12 programme of loans and grants, in line with the recently approved Integrated Borrowing Framework.
113. Building on IFAD's Transition Framework, a new graduation policy was set to be formed on the basis of principles agreed during the Consultation, which had also

agreed on a results management framework and commitments matrix, including more ambitious targets for IFAD12, that would help to enhance the Fund's development effectiveness and value for money. Those targets included the allocation of 50 per cent of core resources to sub-Saharan Africa; the earmarking of 40 per cent of IFAD's programme of loans and grants for climate activities; and an increased target for cofinancing of US\$1.5 for each dollar of IFAD financing.

114. IFAD12 also included a robust financial framework and ambitious targets for rises in both contributions and borrowing with a view to supporting an increased programme of loans and grants and to ensuring the Fund's financial sustainability. The framework would also maximize grant resources for countries in debt distress and respect IFAD's commitment to universality while giving priority to the needs of the poorest countries.
115. The progress accomplished in strengthening IFAD's financial architecture and risk management, including its strong credit ratings and the approval of the Integrated Borrowing Framework, had facilitated agreement on a robust set of financial targets for IFAD12, amounting to some US\$1.5 billion in new replenishment contributions and US\$1.2 billion in borrowed resources. Of the latter, a projected US\$225 million in concessional partner loans formed an important component of the replenishment resources, as they could be used to support low-income and lower-middle-income countries. The remainder consisted of resources borrowed under the new Integrated Borrowing Framework.
116. IFAD would therefore be able to support a sustainable programme of loans and grants of US\$3.8 billion, which would allow increased support to debt-distressed countries through the Debt Sustainability Framework. IFAD was also seeking to mobilize a total of US\$200 million and US\$500 million, respectively, as initial financing for the private sector financing programme and the enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+). The aim behind those ambitious targets was to support a total programme of work of US\$11 billion reaching 140 million poor rural people, representing an increase of over 30 per cent above the IFAD11 programme of work target.
117. He thanked all Member States that had made pledges to IFAD12, amounting thus far to just over US\$1.1 billion, which was already the highest-ever level of core contributions to the Fund. The large number of contributors was one of IFAD's strengths and made it unique among major international financial institution replenishments. As many countries, including some traditionally large donors, had not yet been able to pledge, the expectation was that pledges would continue to increase over the coming months. Other Member States had committed to providing concessional partner loans, an essential part of IFAD's financial framework, and pledges had also been made to ASAP+ and the private sector programme. He urged Member States that had not yet done so to make their pledges as soon as possible and expressed sincere thanks to the membership for having entrusted him to serve as external chair of the IFAD12 consultation at such a critical time.
118. **A delegate from ARGENTINA**, underscoring IFAD's strong commitment to small-scale producers, women and rural youth, said that the past year had been difficult for developing countries especially. IFAD had nonetheless promoted significant transformation by rising to the challenges and giving emphasis to action on the ground. In a world where rural poverty knew no boundaries and huge inequalities persisted, it was vital to uphold the principle of universality. The fact that not all countries had full access to IFAD's resources was, however, jeopardizing that principle. Close attention must therefore be paid to the use of those resources,

including in the context of access to financial markets and external financing mechanisms, in responding to issues of vulnerability.

119. Whether from developed or developing countries, the increased contributions to IFAD12 were greatly welcome, as were the first-time contributions from some of the latter. As Pope Francis had emphasized, the moral importance of gestures such as making contributions was very significant during such difficult times. Despite the negative impact of the pandemic, its reduced gross national product and the rise in poverty indicators, Argentina would maintain its agreed contribution to IFAD.
120. **A delegate from INDIA**, welcoming the report and the draft resolution annexed thereto, said that the bold directions and priorities outlined in the report were critical to ensuring that IFAD was fit for purpose and could deliver on its mandate in a timely manner. The increased attention that IFAD would be devoting to food systems, climate change, women's empowerment and nutrition would contribute significantly to global prosperity and well-being. Its additional attention to the quality of programmes would also lead to better, deeper and more sustainable results and impact.
121. Those Member States that had not yet done so should make their pledges to IFAD12 without delay so that the replenishment target could be met and thereby allow IFAD to deliver a programme of loans and grants amounting to some US\$3.8 billion between 2022 and 2044. The annual Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness submitted to the Executive Board and the midterm review of IFAD12 would both provide opportunities to take stock of the progress achieved in relation to the commitments and results targets outlined in the consultation report.
122. **A delegate from PERU** congratulated Mr Hougbo on his re-election and welcomed the work of Mr Peters saying that the consultation showed that, even in the present difficult circumstances, IFAD could continue working towards the achievement of its targets by 2030. Rural development was essential for the eradication of hunger and poverty. IFAD's objective of inclusive sustainable rural development was intended to offer better livelihoods and conditions for the poorest and most vulnerable populations in developing countries. The broad debate relating to the replenishment confirmed the urgency of continuing to invest ever more in rural areas so as to drive the change needed to accomplish that objective while also preventing forced migration to urban areas.
123. IFAD should continue to direct the investment and management of the available resources towards the poorest and most vulnerable in rural areas, not only in low-income and lower- and middle-income countries but also in upper-middle-income countries, where pockets of poverty remained. Peru reaffirmed its pledge of US\$375,000 to IFAD12.
124. **A delegate from CANADA** said that Member States could unite around IFAD's common and ambitious vision of doubling its development impact by 2030 under the lofty and ambitious theme of recovery, rebuilding and resilience. The most crucial issue, however, was how to realize that vision.
125. The draft resolution expressed a commitment to a solid, focused and cost-effective plan for IFAD to expand its reach and impact on the rural poor. Although increased pledges were important to that plan, it would build on the successful reforms to IFAD's financial architecture, which would make the pledges go further through, for example, prudent increases in borrowed resources.
126. It was equally important for IFAD, at the same time as increasing its funding and programme of work, to move closer to its partners by decentralizing even more staff, including technical experts, and by delegating decision-making authority. The enhanced commitments in IFAD12 on climate action, gender transformative

approaches and biodiversity were to be welcomed, as was the greater focus on indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and youth.

127. IFAD should work even more actively at the intersection between women's rights and climate adaptation, which was essential for the achievement of inclusive climate resilience in rural areas. As a strong and enthusiastic supporter of IFAD, its mission and its efforts towards recovery, rebuilding and resilience in the face of the pandemic, Canada was proud to be the first country to support the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility. It had made significant contributions towards IFAD's work on climate adaptation and mitigation, with more to follow in the near future. Canada continued to work towards a scenario D target and had joined other Member States in announcing its initial pledge to IFAD12. It looked forward to an ambitious launch of IFAD12 in under one year's time.
128. **A delegate from SWITZERLAND** said that, at the outset of the replenishment process, IFAD had spoken candidly about what was needed to restore its financial sustainability. During a challenging year in which ways of working had fundamentally changed, IFAD had put in place the components to ensure a viable and credible future for itself as an international financial institution. Those components included the credit rating process, the new graduation policy and revisions of the Debt Sustainability Framework. IFAD had been imaginative and resourceful in seeking ways to leverage new money, particularly from the private sector, as it expanded into the Private Sector Financing Programme.
129. Despite their budget challenges, Member States had collectively expressed their trust by making strong commitments to carry IFAD forward into a decade of action in support of the global effort to achieve SDG 2 (zero hunger). As indicated by its pledge of CHF 47 million, equivalent to some US\$50 million, Switzerland fully supported the priorities agreed for IFAD12 with the aim of doubling IFAD's impact on rural people, establishing a forward-looking mechanism and business model, and developing a new financial architecture.
130. As a strong proponent of harnessing the private sector as both a source of funding and a means of implementation, Switzerland welcomed IFAD's efforts to tie private sector initiatives into its planning portfolios and put in place appropriate risk management mechanisms. While there was still much ground to be covered, the hope was that, with experience, IFAD would succeed in increasingly leveraging private sector initiatives for the benefit of small-scale producers and the rural poor. Switzerland intended to make further financial contributions to the private sector financing programme later in 2021.
131. **A delegate from the BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA** welcomed the valuable guidance contained in the report on the achievement of the SDGs in the rural areas most in need. The report recognized that rural communities were disproportionately affected by the increasing climate volatility and the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, which was undermining the progress achieved towards the eradication of poverty and hunger. His country's economy was adversely affected in particular by coercive unilateral measures, which also prevented it from making its usual contribution to IFAD's important work through the replenishment.
132. In that light, it was vital to implement paragraph 30 of the Declaration annexed to United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1, concerning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which urged Member States to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impeded the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in

developing countries. It was similarly vital to implement General Assembly resolution 75/179 on the right to food.

133. Following her recent visit to the country, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights had recognized the devastating effect of unilateral sanctions on the broad scope of human rights, especially the rights to food, health, life, education and development. The Special Rapporteur had also urged countries and the corresponding banks to unfreeze assets of the Venezuela Central Bank for the purchase of medicine, vaccines, food and medical and other equipment to guarantee the humanitarian needs of the Venezuelan people.
134. Lastly, he welcomed IFAD's decision to enhance its decentralization through efficient and effective management, which was leading to relevant and quantifiable improvements in the impact of its operations.
135. **A delegate from SUDAN** reaffirmed the importance of IFAD's work and its contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly with respect to ending rural poverty and hunger, building resilience and rebuilding. IFAD12 and private sector contributions would have a positive impact in the poorest countries and on the poorest people in those countries. Tremendous efforts had been made to improve IFAD's financial situation and increase the programme of loans and grants, with a focus on supporting rural people in order to achieve the SDGs. To respond to urgent global challenges, IFAD would need to expand its activities, especially those benefiting the most vulnerable population groups affected by protracted crises and conflict.
136. Agricultural development was fragile in Sudan and yet agriculture formed the livelihood of a multitude of smallholder farmers, who depended on climate-sensitive resources and had been severely affected by recent desert locust invasions. Recognizing SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger) as a priority, Sudan had re-established a framework of agricultural and pastoral organizations so as to pool resources for increasing agricultural productivity. The interim Government was keen to institute micro-credit programmes and strengthen financial inclusion for all groups, with special guarantees for smallholder farmers, small enterprises and producers to strengthen rural development and improve the use of resources. Focused support to agriculture, climate change and poverty eradication, in keeping with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, was imperative, as it was investment in agriculture, rural development and food safety that would generate positive results towards attainment of the SDGs in the limited time remaining until 2030.
137. **A delegate from MALI** welcomed the conclusions reached with regard to IFAD12, which would help those in rural and conflict-affected areas to escape poverty and promote the achievement of SDG 1 and SDG 2. Mali was ready to stand by its commitments in relation to IFAD12. He also extended his congratulations to Mr Hougbo on his re-appointment.
138. **A delegate from ANGOLA** said that the consensus reached in the context of IFAD12 would set the path for IFAD to double its impact over the next few years in terms of improving rural living conditions. He looked forward to the results of IFAD's activities. He also congratulated Mr Hougbo on his re-appointment as President of IFAD.
139. **A delegate from NIGERIA** said that, thanks to its metamorphosis into a new and more dynamic institution, IFAD was ready to face the current global situation but that the core resources available to it were no longer adequate. The new financial architecture provided an opportunity to help countries, including those suffering

from unilateral sanctions, at only a slightly higher cost. Although the IFAD12 deliberations had not been easy, patience and commitment had prevailed. IFAD must be commended on its work in the field, particularly in Africa and more so still in West Africa. It took tremendous devotion and dedication to work in difficult environments affected by insurgency. With that in mind, the United Nations Security Council should step up its efforts to curb the proliferation of small arms preventing farmers from carrying out their daily activities.

140. **An observer for the Holy See** said that there should be no indifference to suffering and that no one should go through life as an outcast. People should be not only indignant but also challenged to emerge from their comfortable isolation and be changed by contact with human suffering. In such difficult times, it was impossible to turn a blind eye to the suffering of the most impoverished, to be deaf to their legitimate demands or to ignore the serious deterioration of the shared home. For the sake of change, it was essential to safeguard global food security and achieve diversified and sustainable agriculture while also strengthening an economy that placed the human person and real human needs at its core, particularly in the most deprived and neglected parts of the world.
141. To that end, international solidarity and loyal cooperation among Member States must be strongly encouraged as a basis for the swift adoption of adequate and effective measures, for enabling rural areas to contribute in a responsible manner to their own progress. The aim should be to increase production capacity and market possibilities, reinvigorate resistance to climate change, and offer training and resources to workers, fishers, livestock farmers and those living in forest areas with few economic and technical resources.
142. It was therefore important for IFAD to have at its disposal significant financial contributions so that it could continue to support small farming communities in remote areas, farming organizations and indigenous peoples through a genuine spirit of partnership. Pope Francis was firmly convinced of the need for urgent action to defeat hunger and end the current inadmissible and unacceptable economic inequalities by overcoming vested interests in search of the common good through alliances, huge doses of generosity and countless sacrifices, which would be truly worthwhile.
143. **The Chairperson** thanked the Holy See for its pledge to IFAD12, noting that it was the first-ever contribution from a non-Member State to an IFAD replenishment.
144. **The Governing Council adopted Resolution 219/XLIV on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources.**

#### AMENDMENTS TO IFAD'S BASIC LEGAL TEXTS (agenda item 12) (GC 44/L.10)

145. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that the Executive Board, after reviewing the amendments set out in the draft resolutions contained in annexes I to IV of document GC 44/L.10, had recommended the submission of those resolutions to the Governing Council for its consideration and adoption.
146. **Ms Katherine MEIGHAN** (General Counsel of IFAD) said that, in drawing up the proposed amendments to the Agreement Establishing IFAD, to the Policies and Criteria for IFAD Financing and to the Financial Regulations of IFAD, as set out in the draft resolutions contained in annexes I, II and III to the document, Management had been guided by considerations of good governance, peer alignment and ensuring a holistic approach to the amendments of the texts. The substance of the amendments fell into three main categories: codification of existing practices in relation to borrowing and lending to subnationals, national development banks and similar entities; implementation of previously approved policies and strategies, including the Debt Sustainability Framework Reform and

the Accelerated Repayment and Voluntary Prepayment Framework; and implementing the IFAD12 strategic objectives in relation to the Integrated Borrowing Framework and the early encashment mechanism.

147. In order to complement the express borrowing authority and the proposed amendments to the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the Executive Board had, in December 2020, reviewed and endorsed for the Governing Council's approval an additional draft resolution clarifying the Market Borrowing Authority. Set out in annex IV to the document, the resolution was fully aligned with the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources, as contained in document GC 44/L.6/Rev.1, and stipulated that any commencement of market borrowing would first need to be reviewed and endorsed by the IFAD Executive Board and subsequently presented to the Governing Council for approval.
148. **A delegate from BRAZIL** said that the proposed amendments were the culmination of the efforts – vital to both IFAD and its beneficiaries – that the entire IFAD Management had undertaken with a view to modernizing IFAD's financial framework. It was in fact crucial to explore new financing possibilities if IFAD were to achieve its mission to leave no one behind, especially at a time of likely socio-economic downturn thanks largely to the COVID-19 pandemic.
149. The proposed amendments would have a positive impact not only for Members, who would be able to continue assisting their poor rural populations with IFAD's resources directly assessed by subnational entities, but also for IFAD itself once long-standing and successful practices had been codified in the basic texts. In addition to boosting cofinancing, those amendments would place IFAD on an equal footing with other international institutions and improve its effectiveness. In turn, they would have a direct impact on country projects by allowing IFAD to lend directly to second-floor institutions with the capacity to mobilize cofinancing, thereby further increasing the value for money of IFAD's operations. Brazil also considered these amendments as a fundamental step to consolidate IFAD's transformation from a Fund into a financial institution with diversified sources of funding.
150. **The Governing Council adopted resolutions 220/XLIV (Amendment to the Agreement Establishing IFAD), 221/XLIV (Amendments to the Policies and Criteria for IFAD Financing), 222/XLIV (Amendments to the Financial Regulations of IFAD) and 223/XLIV (Market Borrowing Authority).**
151. **Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina (Cameroon) took the Chair.**

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF IFAD FOR 2019 (agenda item 9)  
(GC 44/L.7 and GC 44/INF.3)

152. **The CHAIRPERSON** recalled that the audited financial statements of IFAD for the 2019 fiscal year and the report of the external auditor as contained in document GC 44/L.7 had been reviewed by the Executive Board at its 129<sup>th</sup> session in April 2020. The Executive Board had recommended their submission to the Governing Council for approval. Additionally, the financial highlights of 2020 (GC 44/INF.3) had been posted for information.
153. **Mr Alvaro LARIO** (Associate Vice-President, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Controller, Financial Operations Department) introducing the item, said that, in the opinion of the Fund's external auditors, the Consolidated Financial Statements of IFAD as at 31 December 2019, as appended to document GC 44/L.7, presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Fund and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards. The external auditors had also issued an independent attestation on Management's assertion that IFAD maintained



effective internal controls over financial reporting, thus demonstrating IFAD's commitment to best international financial practice. The external auditor's statements had been reviewed by the Audit Committee at its 156<sup>th</sup> meeting and subsequently endorsed by the Executive Board at its 129<sup>th</sup> session in April 2020.

154. **Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch (United Kingdom) resumed the Chair.**
155. **The Governing Council approved the financial statements showing IFAD's financial position as at 31 December 2019 and the results of its operations for the year ending on that date, as set out in appendices A to L inclusive of document GC 44/L.7; the external auditor's report thereon; and the external auditor's attestation on the effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting.**

IFAD'S 2021 RESULTS-BASED PROGRAMME OF WORK AND REGULAR AND CAPITAL BUDGETS, THE IOE RESULTS-BASED WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2021 AND INDICATIVE PLAN FOR 2022-2023, AND THE HIPC AND PBAS PROGRESS REPORTS (agenda item 10) (GC 44/L.8)

156. **The CHAIRPERSON** recalled that, at its 131<sup>st</sup> session in December 2020, the Executive Board had approved the programmes of work of IFAD and of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) for 2021. It had also reviewed the proposed budgets for both and recommended their transmission to the Governing Council for approval.
157. **Mr ZILLER** (Vice-President of IFAD), introducing the Fund's budget proposals set out in part one of document GC 44/L.8, said that the Executive Board had recommended submission of the proposed budget for 2021 to the Governing Council for approval. Amounting to US\$159.4 million, that budget represented the third consecutive zero real growth budget in the three-year IFAD11 period. The nominal increase of slightly under 1 per cent compared with the approved budget for 2020 was essentially due to inflation. More importantly, the active portfolio for each dollar of the proposed strategic budget amounted to US\$55, as opposed to US\$46 under IFAD10, which indicated more efficient spending by IFAD.
158. Many of the activities foreseen under the 2020 budget had had to be postponed to 2021 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, to ensure the continuity of IFAD's operations and optimal rebalancing of the planned programme of work, the Board had also recommended that the Governing Council should approve the carrying forward into 2021 of up to 10 per cent of the unobligated appropriations remaining at the close of the financial year 2020.
159. In addition to regular facilities and IT infrastructure, the capital budget of US\$6.75 million would contribute towards further digitization at headquarters and in field offices, further completion of IFAD's robust financial IT infrastructure, and targeted projects for leveraging institutional efficiencies. Those critical investments would allow IFAD to keep pace with industry standards while supporting its enhanced business model.
160. **Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina (Cameroon) resumed the Chair.**
161. **Mr Fabrizio FELLONI** (Interim Officer-in-Charge, IOE), introducing the IOE results-based work programme and budget for 2021 and indicative plan for 2022-2023, as set out in part two of document GC 44/L.8, said that a subregional evaluation in West Africa and a project cluster evaluation of rural enterprise development projects would be piloted in 2021 in line with the recommendations of the external peer review of IFAD's evaluation function carried out in 2019. IOE would also conduct a corporate-level evaluation of progress on IFAD's

decentralization reform, five country strategy and programme evaluations in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Eswatini, Indonesia, Malawi and Uzbekistan, and an evaluation synthesis report on government performance. In addition, it would prepare the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations, conduct four project performance evaluations, and validate all project completion reports. Lastly, it would draft a new evaluation manual, in collaboration with Management, and prepare the first IOE multi-year evaluation strategy to guide its work in the medium term.

162. The proposed IOE budget for 2021 amounted to US\$5.81 million, representing a nominal decrease of 0.85 per cent in comparison with the budget approved for 2020. Also representing the second consecutive nominal decrease, it corresponded to 0.62 per cent of IFAD's expected programme of loans and grants for 2021, which was below the budget cap of 0.9 per cent adopted by the Executive Board.
163. **A delegate from INDIA** said that his country fully supported document GC 44/L.8 and the draft resolution contained therein. Given that 2021 was the final year of the IFAD11 period, the proposed net budget level was appropriate for enabling IFAD to meet the planned delivery of US\$778 million in new loans and grants. India also supported the People, Processes and Technology Plan as a far-reaching initiative that would enhance IFAD's efficiency and agility.
164. India welcomed plans to further decentralize from headquarters through the establishment of regional offices, including in the Asia and the Pacific region, and stood ready to provide necessary support to the endeavour. It also appreciated the human resources reforms, as in the areas of upskilling and reskilling, which would ensure that IFAD had the expertise and capacities needed to deliver its mandate and achieve the targets of the Results Management Framework.
165. **The Governing Council adopted resolution 224/XLIV on the administrative budget comprising the regular budget, capital budget and an Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD budget for 2021, and a targeted capacity investment of IFAD for 2021. In so doing, it also approved the carrying forward of unobligated appropriations at the close of the financial year 2020 into the financial year 2021 up to an amount not exceeding 10 per cent of the corresponding appropriations.**

ELECTION OF MEMBERS AND ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
(agenda item 11) (GC 44/L.9 + Add.1)

166. **The CHAIRPERSON** recalled that the term of office of the current membership of the Executive Board would expire with the close of the present session of the Governing Council. Schedule II of the Agreement Establishing IFAD provided that 18 new members and 18 new alternate members should be elected or appointed: 8 members and 8 alternate members from List A; 4 members and 4 alternate members from List B; and 6 members and 6 alternate members from List C. A list of the Member States against whom an accounting provision existed under Rule 40.1 of the Rules of Procedure was appended to document GC 44/L.9.
167. **Mr JIMÉNEZ-McINNIS** (Secretary of IFAD), drawing attention to the composition of the Executive Board proposed by the Convenors of the three Lists set out in document GC 44/L.9/Add.1, said that for List A, the countries selected as members were Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. Those selected as alternate members, respectively, were Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg in 2021; Switzerland in 2022-2023; Austria, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Spain. As the Netherlands and the United Kingdom rotated every two years, the Netherlands would be the member in 2023 and the United Kingdom would be the alternate member.

168. For List B, the countries selected as members were Kuwait, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and those selected as alternate members, respectively, were the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Indonesia and Algeria.
169. As to the three sub-listings within List C, the countries selected as members for sub-List C1 (Africa) were Angola and Egypt, with Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire as alternate members, respectively. For sub-List C2 (Europe, Asia and the Pacific), China and India had been selected as members. Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea would share the two alternate member seats in accordance with the rotation method whereby Bangladesh and Pakistan would be the alternate for China and India, respectively, in 2021; and Pakistan and the Republic of Korea would be the alternate members for China and India, respectively, in 2022-2023. For sub-List C3 countries (Latin America and the Caribbean), Brazil and Mexico had been selected as members. Argentina would be the alternate to Brazil, and Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic would be the alternate member for Mexico in 2021 and 2022-2023, respectively.
170. **The CHAIRPERSON**, noting that there were no objections, declared the members and alternate members elected to their respective positions on the Executive Board, as set out in document GC 44/L.9/Add.1.
171. **The Governing Council approved the elections.**
172. **The CHAIRPERSON**, speaking in her national capacity as Governor of Cameroon, congratulated Mr Hougbo on his re-appointment, and thanked Member States for having elected her country of Cameroon to the Executive Board for a further term and announced that Cameroon had finalized its pledge for IFAD12 at US\$1.5 million, to be paid in three equal instalments over the period.

#### CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD

173. **Mr HOUNGBO** (President of IFAD) delivered his concluding remarks, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
174. **Dr Suminto (Indonesia) took the Chair.**
175. **The CHAIRPERSON** made a closing statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4, and declared closed the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council.
- The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.**

## Chapter 4 Statements and special addresses



His Excellency João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola



His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



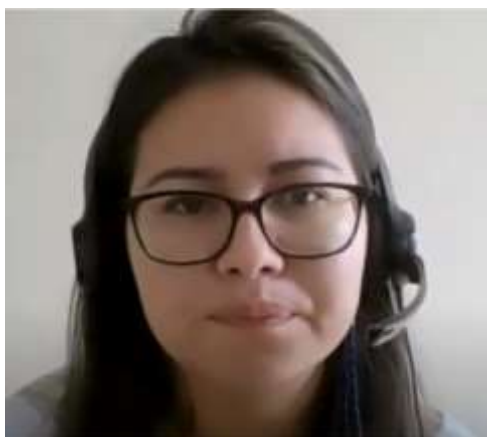
His Excellency Luigi Di Maio, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic

## THE BUREAU MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

		
<p>Dr Suminto Chairperson of the Governing Council Governor for the Republic of Indonesia</p>	<p>Her Excellency Clémentine Ananga Messina Vice Chairperson of the Governing Council Governor for the Republic of Cameroon</p>	<p>Her Excellency Marie- Therese Sarch Vice Chairperson of the Governing Council Governor for the United Kingdom</p>



Mr Gilbert Houngbo, President of IFAD



**Synthesis of the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum**

Ms Rayanne Cristine Máximo França,  
representative of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum  
at IFAD

**IFAD Talk**

Mr Frank Mars, Chair of the Board of Directors of  
Mars, Incorporated

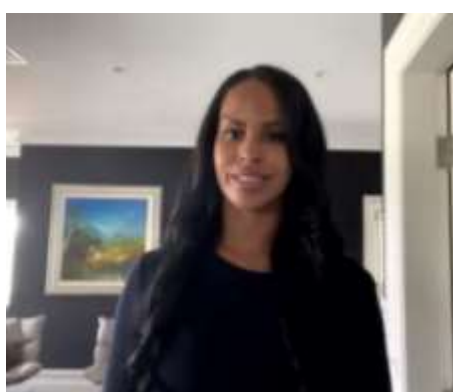


**Keynote speakers of the interactive session**



Ms Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General for International Partnerships, European Commission

Dr Agnes Kalibata, Special Envoy for the United Nations Food Systems Summit



Ms Sabrina Elba, IFAD Goodwill Ambassador

**Welcoming statement by Dr Suminto, Chairperson of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council of IFAD**

It is my great pleasure and honour to welcome you all to the forty-fourth session of IFAD's Governing Council.

This year's session is of particular importance as the Governing Council has convened virtually for the first time. I would like to express my appreciation and that of my fellow Bureau members, for your positive response to the proposed amendments to the rules of procedure, which have allowed us to convene in this way and to ensure continuity in IFAD's governance and operations. On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank the President of IFAD, IFAD Management and staff for responding to these changing circumstances in a rapid and innovative manner.

We have all been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen its devastating impact on human lives, on economies, on countries already struggling on their development path. As so often happens, it is the world's most vulnerable, marginalized, people who suffer the most. It is in this light that we recognize the continued relevance and importance of IFAD's mandate. We must do what we can to ensure that IFAD is best placed to fulfil that important mandate. With that in mind, I would like to thank all our Member States for their support to IFAD and to its mission. We must continue to show our concrete commitment to ensure that IFAD has the tools to achieve its noble goal.

As Governors of this Fund, we will be called upon to make a number of important decisions at this session, which will define the future direction of IFAD. Among these decisions is the approval of the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources and the Amendments to the Basic Legal Texts of IFAD, not to mention the appointment of the President of IFAD. We will be joined by distinguished keynote speakers who will share their wisdom and insights, and we will have opportunities to exchange ideas, to interact and engage with fellow Governors, development partners and IFAD staff.

I am confident that you will all join with me in making this session a successful one – for IFAD and for its goal of investing in rural people, investing in recovery, in rebuilding, in resilience.



## **Welcoming statement by Mr Gilbert Houngbo, President of IFAD**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Governors,

It is an honour to welcome His Excellency João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola. Mr President, I salute your vision of reform to diversify the drivers of development in Angola, in particular through rural transformation and by promoting sustainable, inclusive food systems. I would also like to convey my heartfelt appreciation to Angola for its excellent contributions to successive IFAD replenishments. This sends a strong message for the eradication of hunger and rural poverty. I am and will always be grateful to you for the quality of IFAD's relations with your country.

I also wish to express my gratitude to His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, who has been instrumental in supporting the reduction of poverty and malnutrition across his country, as well as fostering economic development through the mainstreaming of youth issues. A recent landmark in this context has been the establishment of the "Ehsaas" (È-Saas) programme, the biggest poverty reduction programme and social safety net ever launched in Pakistan. I would like to underscore IFAD's appreciation for the long-standing partnership with the Government of Pakistan, which has gone from strength to strength over the last 40 years, as well as its role in the founding - and funding of IFAD through substantive contributions to our replenishment exercises.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge His Excellency Luigi Di Maio, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic. For many years, the Republic of Italy has demonstrated international leadership in the local-sustainable-healthy diets and Rome is recognized as the world's food security hub. Italy is a leading advocate of global agrifood systems, a source of best practices, and active in mobilizing financial resources and technical expertise to support the most vulnerable. It has been also been a generous host to all the Rome-based agencies. Italy and IFAD recognize the importance of family farming and share a commitment to fighting poverty and hunger through sustainable, inclusive and fair rural and agricultural development. Furthermore, as a member of IFAD's Executive Board, and as Chair of the Audit Committee, Italy continues to be a strategic partner for IFAD. Through both the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Italy has been very active in helping to shape a robust financial framework for the Fund and to engage others to advocate for reforms. IFAD looks forward to Italy's G20 presidency and to its co-hosting of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) later this year.

It is a real privilege that you have accepted to address this Council.

## **Statement by His Excellency João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola**

Mr Gilbert Houngbo, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development  
Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Governing Council  
Ladies and Gentlemen Representatives of the Contributing Member Countries of the Fund

It is my great honour to address this audience, greeting all those who, in person or virtually, are participating in this important event, and to express my best wishes that the work of this forty-fourth session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) will proceed as smoothly as possible and that the hoped results will be achieved.

Allow me to support Mr Gilbert Houngbo, on his re-election to the prestigious post of President of IFAD and thank him, on behalf of the Angolan Executive, for the kind invitation I received to attend this session of the Governing Council of this important institution.

Allow me also, on behalf of the Angolan Executive, to warmly greet all the attending Governors and thank them for the support that IFAD has been bringing to Angola in the struggle our country has been waging to reduce hunger and poverty.

Mr President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Angola is experiencing a period of major reforms in the various areas of its political, economic and social life.

The focus of our governance has been on the need to establish and consolidate a society in Angola that respects the rule of law and also on building a market economy that is capable of effectively diversifying the national economy and changing the economic structure of Angola, which is currently highly dependent on resources and income from the oil sector.

We have been taking measures to combat practices that are neither healthy nor recommended for the management of the country's public life, and which, because they were so common, were becoming a serious threat to the country's prestige.

From an economic point of view, we have developed several initiatives to improve the business environment and thus attract more and more direct private investment, both national and foreign.

We need to encourage growth in the non-oil sector of the economy, since this is the sector that creates the most jobs and is therefore in the best position to contribute to increasing the income and well-being of Angolans.

For this reason, we have been paying special attention to sectors such as agriculture, agro-industry, fisheries, mining and manufacturing, construction, tourism and other labour-intensive sectors.

We are making a great effort to revitalise and further develop agriculture in Angola so that we can reduce our great dependence on food imports.

The results of these measures are beginning to be visible. Although Angola had negative global growth in 2020, the agriculture sector actually registered positive growth of around 5 per cent that year.

On the other hand, food imports fell by 24 per cent last year, which is a sign that national production is beginning to gain space and replace products that were previously imported.

Mr President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Even with the constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to increase national production, we have been developing initiatives in order to increase investments in agriculture.

Rural Extension programmes and projects, as well as concessional financing for rural workers and agribusiness operators have been developed with subsidised interest rates for loans to the private sector.

Although we are registering positive results in the implementation of these agricultural programmes and projects, we do feel that we can do more and better in creating conditions for the resumption of economic growth in the country in general, and for the development of the agricultural and rural sector in particular.

We believe it is very important to guarantee an increasingly active involvement of farmers' organizations and to strengthen the contribution of small, medium and large enterprises that operate upstream and downstream of agricultural production, both through the supply of goods and services to support production and through the acquisition, processing and distribution of products of local origin.

We also believe that in order to make the rural world more attractive and more competitive, we must intensify and extend even more the programmes and projects, open up and rehabilitate access roads, increase the supply of education and health services, water supply, rural electrification as well as research and innovation.

All these measures should be geared towards increasing the production and productivity of locally sourced products.

Mr President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

International cooperation, both bilateral and with development organizations, was very crucial for the success of our struggle for post-war reconstruction (build back), and it continues to be necessary so that together we can tackle the effects of the crises we have been facing, resulting from the fall in the price of oil on the international market and from climate change.

In this context, agricultural development projects co-financed by the Angolan government and our external partners such as IFAD, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the French Development Agency, the European Union and others, have helped the country to increase its resilience and autonomy, achieving the goal of fighting poverty and increasing food and nutritional security, perfectly in line with the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations.

Mr President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would not conclude my statement without mentioning in a special way the attention, the moral, technical and material support given by IFAD to agricultural and rural development efforts in Angola.

IFAD has increasingly mobilized technical and financial resources to implement agricultural and fisheries development projects, intervening (taking action) in the key areas of agricultural research and extension, rehabilitation of rural infrastructure, direct support for productive investments and promoting access to markets, which has benefited more than 480,000 families in at least ten provinces.

We are aware of the present and future challenges that we must face together to modernize Angolan agriculture in order to make it increasingly competitive.

Let me stress that the efforts under way to strengthening and bolstering IFAD's presence in Angola, as well as the recent creation in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of a coordination unit for IFAD-funded projects, will increase and improve national capacity to implement the programmes.

I wish the Governing Council every success in its work.

Thank you very much for your attention.

## **Statement of His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Mr Gilbert Houngbo,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be invited to speak to IFAD's Governing Council. Agriculture is central to human survival. IFAD has made a significant contribution to enhancing agricultural production in the developing countries.

Today, the world confronts a looming agricultural crisis. The global population will soon reach 8 billion people. Six hundred million suffer from hunger. Over 100 million children are stunted due to under nourishment.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to push another 100 million people into extreme poverty. Over 20 countries are "food insecure". The World Food Programme has warned of the danger of famine in some of the poorest countries and conflict zones.

The world faces multiple challenges in recovering from the pandemic and achieving the vital first two Sustainable Development Goals: "No Poverty" and "Zero Hunger". There is:

- lack of financing;
- shortage of investment;
- trade distortion;
- unsustainable production and consumption patterns;
- degradation of agricultural lands and forests;
- an impending water crisis;
- loss of bio-diversity; and
- polluted rivers and oceans.

We need a revolution in our vision of our future. The COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis should drive home the message to all – rich and poor, weak or powerful – that their destinies are intertwined. We will perish or survive together. The concepts of geo-strategic adversaries, of regional or global domination, of the political advantages of foreign intervention and occupation and the oppression of peoples, are outdated and will soon be seen as irrelevant.

We need a common plan and strategy for global recovery, and survival and prosperity of all humanity.

In response to the recession triggered by the COVID-19 crisis, I proposed a "Global Initiative on Debt Relief" last April. The Debt Suspension announced by the G-20 and the emergency lending programmes of the World Bank, IMF and others have provided some breathing space. But, according to latest estimates, the developing countries need 4.3 trillion dollars to recover from the pandemic and achieve the SDGs.

Last December, at the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, I proposed several measures for generation of early financing to enable developing countries' recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. These steps include:

- comprehensive debt relief and restructuring;

- the creation of 500 billion dollars in SDRs;
- larger concessional financing; and
- measures to halt and recover illicit financial flows from developing countries to haven destinations and to richer countries.

But, if we are to end poverty and hunger, we will need to go much further. I propose a five-point agenda:

*First*, we need to invest in sustainable agriculture infrastructure – to facilitate transport, production and distribution of agricultural inputs and food products. The “Green Lanes” created by China are a good example.

*Second*, governments need to more actively ensure adequate and fair prices for agricultural and food products. The so-called “magic of the market place” should be balanced by the very visible hand of the State. We in Pakistan have suffered from market manipulation by monopolists and hoarders. Farmers should not be left to the mercy of the corporations. At the same time, international agricultural trade must be rationalized. The huge agricultural subsidies provided by certain richer economies distort global markets and make it impossible for farmers in the developing countries to compete.

*Third*, the new and breakthrough agricultural technologies and techniques must be consciously applied to enhance food production; ensure efficient usage of water and land; and above all improve seed quality. IFAD and the FAO can play a major role in this context.

*Fourth*, the adoption of digital technologies is as vital in agriculture as in other economic sectors. Ensuring internet and broadband access to the rural areas will be vital for their integration into national and global supply chains.

*Fifth*, and perhaps the most important, we must re-think our patterns of food consumption and production. We can eat better and many of us would do well to eat less. We can produce food with greater respect for nature. We can stop the pollution of our lakes, rivers and oceans. We can produce more with less water, and without dangerous chemicals.

I further propose that a new strategy for sustainable food production and consumption should be considered and adopted at the Food Systems Summit this year.

Excellencies,

In Pakistan, we have integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our national development plan. My government has accorded the highest priority to achieve SDG1 “No Poverty” and SDG2 “Zero Hunger”.

Despite our financial difficulties, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided a relief package of around 8 billion dollars. It included emergency cash assistance to the poorest families and other vulnerable groups, including women and children. We did so through our *Ehsaas* programme, which means compassion, fully utilizing digital technologies and data bases. This was the largest poverty alleviation programme in Pakistan’s history.

The agriculture sector, which had to grapple with the twin challenges of COVID-19 and Locust attacks, which we were subjected to last year, continues to have my utmost attention. Budgetary allocation has been increased almost three times. Growth target for the current year has been set at 3.5 per cent.

We are also engaged in one of the largest reforestation programmes in the world. We plan to plant 10 billion trees over the next three years. We will also set aside eight large areas as national reserves or national parks.

Under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), agricultural modernization has been included as a vital element of our development strategy. This will move us significantly towards combating hunger and poverty.

Excellencies,

The national efforts of developing countries like Pakistan, to promote sustainable development, and eliminate poverty and hunger, can only succeed through international cooperation. We desire such cooperation with all countries. We greatly admire the role played by IFAD in promoting such cooperation.

I wish you all the success in the important deliberations of your current session.

I thank you.

## **Statement of His Excellency Luigi Di Maio, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic**

Mr President,

I am pleased to participate, on behalf of the host country, in the inaugural ceremony of this forty-fourth session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

We find ourselves in the throes of a challenging moment in history, one that is also having an impact on environmental and food sustainability.

If we are to overcome the pandemic emergency and return to economic and social growth, it is essential that the COVID-19 vaccines be distributed equally throughout the world and made available to the most vulnerable people and essential workers.

Today I would like to convey three key messages:

(1) First of all, I would like to reaffirm Italy's commitment to achieving the second Sustainable Development Goal, zero hunger. We are among the main proponents of doing so and consider this a prerequisite for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Guaranteeing the right to food is a moral imperative.

Even before COVID, more than 10 per cent of the world's people were living in conditions of chronic food insecurity.

The pandemic has aggravated the situation. In 2020 the number of malnourished people rose significantly, and women and children suffered the most.

Last year we were confronted with the disruptive effects of the lockdown on global supply chains, with serious consequences in terms of poverty, food insecurity and nutritional deficits.

It is essential, therefore, to support the work being done by IFAD. Sufficient and appropriate resources are needed to fund work in the field and investments in the rural economy, food security, food access and sustainable productive cycles.

In the face of these formidable challenges, IFAD can always count on our country. The new Government of Italy has just allocated the sum of 84 million euros for the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. This represents a significant increase in our contribution.

(2) Supporting and promoting the transformation of agrifood systems is also important from the point of view of building back better and more sustainably post-pandemic.

IFAD is a key partner in the United Nations Food Systems Summit to be held next September. We are confident that the Member States will undertake a series of voluntary commitments on the occasion of the pre-Summit that is to take place from 19 to 21 July here in Rome.

This event will also provide an opportunity for the Fund to put forward innovative solutions and instruments to finance projects in the areas of sustainability, innovations in technology and organization, food education and a culture inspired by the circular economy.

(3) Lastly, I would like to underscore the green approach that Italy, as host to the Pre-COP26, will be adopting during our term in the G20 presidency. I believe that the priority accorded to environmental sustainability should unite the world's major economies and inform all plans for rebuilding post-pandemic, harmonizing reconstruction with ambitious climate action. This is the path that the Italian Government intends to follow, with determination and with support from the recently created Ministry for Ecological Transition.



The links between environmental sustainability and food sustainability are clear. Italy supports IFAD in promoting resilience among smallholder farmers in the face of climate change, providing funding for solutions that have a smaller environmental footprint and contribute to protecting fragile ecosystems.

These activities are essential to human health. Agricultural production will need to double by the year 2050 to meet the needs of the world's growing population, further endangering biodiversity and hence the prevention of new zoonotic diseases.

Accordingly, the multilateral health architecture will need to be strengthened. At the World Health Summit to be hosted by Italy together with the European Commission on 21 May, we will discuss the best strategies to address these threats, which call for a balanced response that is both ecologically sound and economically feasible.

Nor should it be forgotten that 63 per cent of those living in poverty are employed by the agriculture sector, mainly on small-scale farms. The pandemic, with its impact on this activity, is placing in jeopardy the progress made in reducing poverty levels over the past twenty years.

Resilient and sustainable rural development is a prerequisite to fuel widespread, inclusive economic recovery, particularly in low-income and middle-income countries.

IFAD, together with the other Rome-based United Nations food and agriculture agencies and with Italy by its side, can accomplish much: promote investments benefiting smallholder farmers, develop value chains, reinforce financial services and storage facilities, and improve food security – especially in fragile contexts such as sub-Saharan Africa.

## **Statement of Mr Gilbert Hougbo, President of IFAD**

Mr President of the Republic,

Excellencies,  
Governors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me officially to welcome you to this forty-fourth session of the Governing Council.

At the time of the last session of the Governing Council, held in February 2020, no one would have imagined that virtual meetings would become the norm.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all in one way or another. I would like first and foremost to pay a solemn tribute to all those women and men whom we have lost, and to commend the unprecedented efforts that have been made everywhere in the world to overcome this pandemic and its socio-economic consequences.

Dear Governors,

This Governing Council session marks the end of my first term. It seems fitting, therefore, to share with you some thoughts on the past four years – without however giving into the temptation of presenting an exhaustive report.

My conviction today remains unchanged, and if anything is stronger than ever: we can achieve a more equitable world, a world without abject poverty, a world without hunger. IFAD is already making an important contribution, but we can do even more towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. And if we are to do so, as I said to you four years ago, IFAD needs to grow.

In accepting the presidency of this fine institution, my aim was to make it stronger and more agile, and to enhance its impact on the ground. That, I believed, was the prerequisite to support a paradigm shift towards building greater resilience and greater prosperity in rural areas, and towards shaping truly sustainable, inclusive and, of course, equitable food systems.

In short, we needed to transform IFAD in order to better transform our rural areas.

The reforms in the financial architecture and the operating model, and the advances on the institutional front, were the building blocks of a single structure: sound governance, a more effective and more transparent organization, one with zero tolerance for discrimination and featuring gender parity and enhanced social dialogue.

Those reforms have already borne fruit. The decentralization has enabled us to double our presence in the field. Today one third of our staff work in close proximity to the people we serve.

IFAD is more relevant and more visible as an interlocutor and as an actor fully dedicated to development.

Bearing witness to IFAD's transformation is the AA+ credit rating issued by Standard and Poor's and Fitch. The institution now enjoys greater financial maturity – with a reform of the Debt Sustainability Framework, an Integrated Borrowing Framework and a more rigorous and systematic approach to equity and liquidity safeguards – which, together with sharper financial and operational risk management, allow us to make the most of it.

Streamlining internal processes also led to more effective implementation of IFAD operations. By way of illustration, the time between project design and Executive Board approval dropped from 17 months to less than one year. In 2019, we provided US\$1.67 billion in project financing, the highest amount ever seen in a single year.

More importantly, the reforms enabled us to help millions more people – because ultimately, what matters most is our impact on the ground. The number of people benefiting from our programmes rose from 97 million at the beginning of the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources period to 132 million by the end of 2019. Each year IFAD helps at least 20 million of the world’s poorest people increase their annual incomes by at least 20 per cent.

The reforms also allow us to significantly strengthen our cooperation with the private sector. Accordingly, working together with institutional and private partners, we created the Agribusiness Capital (ABC) Fund. Today this fund, which operates independently of IFAD under Luxemburg law, channels funding towards young entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized rural businesses.

In addition, the Executive Board’s approval last December of our first non-sovereign operation, in the form of a direct investment in the Nigerian private sector, marked a major milestone and the beginning of greater investments directly into the private sector.

Although it is true that we have accomplished much, I recognize that we still have a long way to go. As you know, the ancient city of Rome was not built in a day.

The COVID-19 pandemic, as I mentioned earlier, has posed a formidable challenge to the lives of both our staff and our beneficiaries.

Within the institution, the health, well-being and safety of our staff and their families have been our top priority. We have taken the necessary steps to protect them while ensuring continuity in fulfilling our mandate towards the rural people we serve.

At the request of several of our Member States, we have reallocated funds towards vital activities such as the supply of seed and fertilizer, as well as access to markets, financial services and agricultural advisory services.

In addition to these measures for rehabilitation and recovery, we have created the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility in support of rural poor people. Today that Facility is providing close to US\$50 million to some 1.6 million women and men living in 68 different countries.

With the brunt of the pandemic and the effects of climate change falling upon the most vulnerable, we are obliged to undertake an in-depth rethink about the way we produce and feed ourselves. I would underscore how much we can benefit from the traditional knowledge passed on by indigenous peoples, who see ecosystems, the earth and human beings as part of an integral whole. We absolutely must take this into account in coming up with any sustainable solution.

Today we have the privilege of welcoming some of their representatives, who will be sharing with us the conclusions of the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Forum.

This year’s theme for the Governing Council is Rural development: a prerequisite for global resilience.

IFAD is determined to put forward this issue at the Food Systems Summit to be held next September at the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres. It is essential that all those working within the world’s food systems receive a decent income that meets their basic needs and those of their families living in rural areas.

Finally, I would like to say that heading IFAD and overseeing its evolution is an honour, a very great honour. Let me conclude simply by thanking you once more for your vote of confidence.

## **Synthesis of the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum by Ms Rayanne Cristine Máximo França, representative of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD**

The fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD took place on 2, 3, 4 and 15 February 2021. It was preceded by 14 consultation meetings conducted at the regional and subregional levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The consultation meetings saw the involvement of over 540 participants, including representatives of Indigenous Peoples' organizations, institutions and communities, representatives from IFAD and IFAD-funded projects, members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and development partners.

The extensive, inclusive and rich dialogue held in the lead up to and during the global meeting is summarized herein.

### **Preamble**

We, Indigenous Peoples of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the fifth global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD, whose theme is "the value of indigenous food systems: resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic", recall that our peoples, who retain connection to long-evolved cultures and patterns of living in local ecosystems, have unique traditional food systems that are biodiverse, nutritious, climate resilient and equitable, and anchored in sustainable livelihood practices.

Indigenous Peoples' farming, pastoralism, shifting cultivation, rotational agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering have ensured the food sovereignty, health and well-being of indigenous communities over generations. These have also contributed to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for the benefit of all humankind.

Nonetheless, our livelihoods and traditional food systems are still not well understood, valued and supported, and our traditional knowledge is fast disappearing.

Our holistic approach to resource management, including sustainable food systems, is directly linked to the exercise and protection of the rights to our lands, territories and resources and to self-determination. It is imperative that development actors fully respect and protect these collective rights in order for Indigenous Peoples to continue playing their invaluable role in, and contributing to, sustainable food systems and the protection of the planet.

We, Indigenous Peoples around the globe, remain highly marginalized and discriminated. Our collective survival is being threatened by: the widespread grabbing of our lands, territories and resources; forced displacement resulting from extensive extractive industries, infrastructure projects, industrial agriculture and agribusiness; development schemes without indigenous' vision; criminalization; increasing poverty and hunger; loss of livelihood and cultural heritage; increased violence against indigenous women and girls; and rising inequality, among others. Imposing the conversion to modern food systems is leading to health problems among Indigenous Peoples, and to malnutrition, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. This is aggravated by the adverse impacts of climate change, which is contributing to the depletion of resources and the loss of our traditional food systems.

As a result, despite five years of working towards the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs, we, Indigenous Peoples across the globe, have not just been left behind but we have been pushed further behind and we are affected by major losses in terms of lives and cultures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased existing vulnerabilities and exacerbated underlying structural inequalities, socio-economic marginalization and pervasive discrimination. The pandemic is disproportionately affecting and impacting indigenous communities and posing enormous risks to our physical and cultural existence. However, we, Indigenous Peoples and governments, have a common challenge: to establish strategies and plans that integrate the concept of development from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples.

Among the factors reducing our ability to sustain ourselves and fuelling the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on our communities are: lack or limited access to land and natural resources including clean and safe water; restrictions on the exercise of our sustainable practices; loss of livelihoods and the disruption of local economies; limited access to adequate health and social services; lack of access to information in local languages on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The situation of indigenous women, who are often the main providers of food and nutrition to our families, is even more serious.

It is against this backdrop that we call on IFAD, governments, development partners and the private sector – including investors – to help change the narrative, and to recognize that indigenous food systems hold a treasure of knowledge, experience, values, traditions and development concepts that – if adequately supported – can contribute to the well-being and health of all humankind.

In September 2021 a United Nations Food Systems Summit will be convened, providing a unique opportunity for global public mobilization and commitments to make food systems inclusive, productive, resilient and sustainable.

Within this context, we urge IFAD, United Nations agencies, governments and development partners to look at us, Indigenous Peoples, as game changers for more inclusive, sustainable, healthier and equitable food systems that offer sustainable solutions for developing a more caring and equitable post-pandemic world, while preserving and safeguarding the health of our planet.

### **Recommendations**

Indigenous peoples' food and production systems and the United Nations Food Systems Summit

1. **To recognize the value of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, traditional practices and food systems** in ensuring the food and nutrition security and food sovereignty of our communities.
2. **To promote the systematization and dissemination of our knowledge and practices**, with a focus on women and youth and inter-generational transfer, through the: creation of knowledge platforms and the use of ICT; research; exchange of knowledge and experience between Indigenous Peoples' organizations including food/culinary fairs; documentation of indigenous recipes and traditional medicine; engagement of partners with the needed capacities to support these processes.
3. **To support Indigenous Peoples' full, meaningful and effective participation in the planning and organization of the United Nations Food Systems Summit**, including in Member State, Independent and Global Summit Dialogues. To ensure that our voice, views, solutions and recommendations towards the sustainable transformation of food systems are taken to the Summit and integrated in action-oriented global commitments.
4. **To support the full recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights to our lands, territories and resources.** This will include support to land

demarcation and titling, water management and irrigation of productive lands of indigenous communities, and community-based forest protection and management systems.

5. **To promote agroecology and organic farming and to recover and strengthen the production of traditional medicines, seeds, crops, livestock, wild food sources and indigenous food with high nutritional potential.** These will strengthen the food and nutrition sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples based on our knowledge, traditional practices and expertise.
6. **To rescue native seeds** resistant to diseases and climate change, and to support seed-exchange programmes among Indigenous Peoples and the creation of local community-based indigenous seed banks.
7. **To facilitate the marketing of indigenous products** by supporting indigenous community-based enterprises, economic initiatives of Indigenous Peoples (including sustainable and community-centred ecotourism) and the formal recognition of **Participatory Guarantee Systems**, and by improving access to market information, infrastructure facilities and post-harvest technology.

We request IFAD to convey the above-mentioned recommendations to the Secretariat of the Food Systems Summit.

#### **Recommendations to IFAD:**

IFAD country programmes

8. To ensure the involvement and meaningful, full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, including indigenous women and youth and indigenous peoples' organisations, in the **design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of IFAD strategies and operations**, through:
  - Full and effective consultation with Indigenous Peoples;
  - Systematic engagement with indigenous experts in project design, supervision and evaluation through structured mechanisms for consultation and participation;
  - Effective targeting of Indigenous Peoples based on our own identified needs and priorities;
  - Capacity-building of Indigenous Peoples' organizations and of our governance structures;
  - Translation of relevant IFAD documents into national and local indigenous languages; and
  - Promoting and facilitating women and youths for social sustainable enterprises.
9. **To ensure that specific indicators on the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and disaggregated data** on Indigenous Peoples are systematically collected and monitored in the M&E systems of IFAD-supported projects and programmes and that the participation of Indigenous Peoples in IFAD's initiatives is assessed through community and evidence-based information at the national and regional level.
10. **To ensure that the principle of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)** is fully understood and systematically applied in IFAD-supported interventions, taking into account Indigenous Peoples' visions, needs, practices and self-determined development. The FPIC process should also be properly documented.

11. To improve the collaboration between IFAD and Indigenous Peoples' representatives at the country level through regular **communication** and exchange of information, including the regional action plans, with IFAD **Country Offices**, as this is not happening in the majority of countries.

Knowledge generation and sharing on IFAD's operations

12. **To continuously document best practices and experiences** within IFAD- and the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility- supported interventions, with the objective of replicating and scaling up results and impact.
13. To promote knowledge exchanges among Indigenous Peoples.
14. **To update IFAD's toolkit on** "Engaging with pastoralists – a holistic development approach" in order to better reflect the current situation and take into account the present challenges and key issues faced by Indigenous Peoples in pastoral areas.
15. **To prepare a toolkit** on the engagement with hunter-gatherer indigenous communities

IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

16. **To further disseminate the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples** among IFAD staff, especially newly recruited staff in country offices, and implementing partners to ensure that it is well known, understood and fully applied in IFAD operations.
17. **To ensure that the updated IFAD policy**, to be submitted to IFAD's Executive Board in 2022, is prepared in consultation and partnership with Indigenous Peoples and focuses on the operationalization of the existing policy.
18. **To translate and disseminate the policy** in national and local indigenous languages as a precondition to enable the effective understanding and participation of Indigenous Peoples in IFAD's operations.

Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources

19. In line with the decisions taken during the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources, to reaffirm IFAD's commitment to Indigenous Peoples including by: (i) replenishing and mobilizing additional resources for (IPAF); (ii) ensuring the presence of representatives from Indigenous Peoples' organizations in the advisory committee of the enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+) and facilitating access to resources for Indigenous Peoples under this instrument; (iii) ensuring that Indigenous Peoples can benefit from the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility to support our resilience and recovery in the context of the COVID-19 crisis; (iv) promoting Indigenous Peoples' participation in projects involving financial intermediaries and the private sector.

The Indigenous Peoples' Forum process and the dialogue with Indigenous Peoples

20. To ensure that recommendations from the regional consultations held in 2020 are integrated and reflected in the **regional action plans** agreed upon with IFAD's regional divisions. The plans should be finalized and submitted to the Steering Committee by 15 March 2021, with financial resources earmarked by IFAD to support their implementation.
21. To organize within the 2-year period between the Forum's global meetings at least **two consultation meetings in each region**, with the participation of representatives from Indigenous Peoples' organizations and IFAD, in order to monitor the implementation of the action plan, assess progress, identify obstacles and solutions, and revise priorities as needed. The first consultation meeting should

also focus on the preparation of the updated IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

**Joint recommendation to IFAD and governments:**

22. **To advocate for enhanced engagement and full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in IFAD funded projects and programmes**, particularly in those countries where Indigenous Peoples are not recognized by national governments.
23. **To support and facilitate policy dialogue** at all levels between Indigenous Peoples, governments and the United Nations system on issues of relevance to Indigenous Peoples including:
  - Access to land, territories and natural resources;
  - Access to markets for indigenous products;
  - Sustainable production systems;
  - Conservation and safeguarding of indigenous seeds;
  - Technology transfer on agricultural production, transformation and conservation; and
  - Promotion and protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Recommendations to governments:**

24. **To meaningfully engage in the preparatory activities** of the Food Systems Summit and facilitate and ensure the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in Member States Dialogues held in preparation for the Summit.
25. **To ensure the access to and use of ICT** for Indigenous Peoples to promote our economic activities including farming, artisanal fisheries and harvesting as key to strengthening the resilience of indigenous food systems.

**As Indigenous Peoples, we commit to:**

26. **Promoting the coordination of indigenous peoples' organizations** so as to effectively engage at the country and regional levels with IFAD, governments, the United Nations Country Teams and other relevant development actors in order to promote and defend our rights, well-being and self-determined development with a unified voice.
27. **Ensuring stronger networking and communication** among Indigenous Peoples at all levels in order to propose, promote and advocate for sustainable solutions to food insecurity.
28. **Strengthening partnership with organizations of afro-descendants**, and to support the inclusion of afro-descendants in the LAC regional action plan.
29. **Promoting and facilitating the participation, engagement and representation of indigenous youth, women and persons with disabilities** at all levels, including in the decision-making and steering bodies and structures that are relevant for our organizations.



**Statement by Mr Gilbert Hougbo upon his re-appointment as President of IFAD**

Mister Sastroswito SUMINTO, Chairperson of the Governing Council,  
Distinguished Governors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My first word is a vote of thanks to all of you. I feel very humbled and I would like to sincerely thank you for the confidence you have shown by electing me for a second term as IFAD's President.

I am humbled and conscious of the task ahead that you have entrusted to me and it is an honour that I do not want to take lightly.

Looking back, I think it is fair to say a lot has been achieved. While preparing for the hearing, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on what still needs to be improved and reached, and the challenges ahead of us.

Looking forward, my first priority – which will not be a surprise – will be the consolidation of the reforms we made over the past four years so that IFAD's trajectory towards doubling its impact by 2030 becomes irreversible.

This consolidation will focus on three mutually reinforcing areas.

First is the decentralization, including the further delegation of decision-making authority to colleagues that are or will be based in the field. Our goal, which was very clearly discussed during the replenishment, is to reach 45 per cent of all staff based in the field by 2025.

The second is that we will continue with our financial reforms and innovations, which will help maximize the leveraging of core contributions. In turn, this will enable us to continue broadening our resource base. The key thing for us to have in mind is how IFAD shall contribute to the wider development challenge to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, particularly with regard to the financing gap for SDG 1 and SDG 2.

The third point is complementing our replenishment funds with the two windows that you are very familiar with – ASAP+ and the Private Sector Financing Programme. Taken together, these will channel additional financing to the most vulnerable countries to address the two biggest development issues. We saw the very good session with Mars in terms of climate change, and most of you are familiar with what IFAD has done since 2012 with ASAP. Bringing that to the next step, with ASAP+, is going to be a critical piece of what I see us doing in the coming few years, maybe several years. You will also not be surprised that I attach great importance to IFAD contributing to youth employment, pairing that with the entrepreneurial opportunities for youth through our private sector window.

All three of these areas shall be considered alongside ongoing efforts to improve the quality of our projects. It is important for us to keep drawing on the recommendations of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD and ensuring that our focus on the mainstreaming thematic areas keeps improving.

In addition to those four areas that we know very well – gender, climate change, youth and nutrition – you will notice through the discussion we had yesterday, in terms of the replenishment, the importance that we are going to attach to biodiversity, as well as our commitment to indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

Building better resilience at both the farm and systemic level, including through innovative digital agriculture solutions is also going to be key. If there is one lesson that we are also learning from the impact of COVID, it is the need for us to step up our digital agriculture in the rural areas. Quite frankly, this is an area in which I think I should have done better. We are going to spend more time on this.

Distinguished Governors,

With the pandemic still devastating in many ways our rural settings, and the projections for increased poverty and hunger, the need for IFAD to scale up is more urgent than ever.

Let us be forthright, today it is COVID; yesterday was the tsunami; tomorrow we do not know what it will be. The point is that climate change and extreme weather conditions are not going away. We better be ready or be much better prepared. No rural woman or man should ever be in a position of having to sell his or her meagre assets – or migrate – to survive. IFAD should never forget this.

Finally, let me stress the importance for us to continue to work on managerial excellence, namely internal issues that we have to continue improving. We do have workload issues. We do need to improve work/life balance. Some staff corrected me last week by saying that now work/life balance is becoming work/life blending in the COVID context. We have to work on that as well. We need to enhance measures to incentivize strong performers, and continue to aim for gender parity and geographic balance at all levels. We need to continue to enforce ethical behaviour for us all, at all levels: here in headquarters as well as in the field. This obviously includes doing more to prevent and address all forms of discrimination, and zero tolerance when it comes to sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.

IFAD is evolving in the right direction. Our mission is not limited to fighting against food insecurity and poverty. It calls for a fundamental and structural transformation of rural economies for a fairer, more equitable and just world – for the benefit of all humanity.

Unavoidably, the issue of the financing gap will remain an important point of discussion. I will be engaging with you individually and collectively to deeply reflect on the best ways to leverage our core resources, tapping increasingly on private capital while remaining focused on the poorest and the neediest rural communities.

Once again, I am very humbled by this gesture of your trust in me to lead this institution.

Thank you.

## **Concluding remarks by Mr Gilbert Hougbo, President of IFAD**

Mr Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Governors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a few minutes our Chair will bring this forty-fourth session of IFAD's Governing Council to a close.

I would like to start by thanking you, Mr Suminto, for your excellent guidance and your patience over the past several months, and by expressing my thanks to our Vice-Chairs, Her Excellency Minister Ananga Messina from Cameroon and Her Excellency Ambassador Sarch from the United Kingdom.

I am sure that you will also want to join me in acknowledging all my colleagues, IFAD staff, as well as your respective teams – who made our first-ever virtual Governing Council a success and a truly engaging event.

Quite frankly, those successes will also, in the coming months, bring us to reflect on the best and most efficient way to organize our Executive Board and Governing Council in the future, even in the post-COVID era. There are a lot of lessons to learn.

As recalled yesterday by the President of Angola and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the challenges to realize the SDGs are greater than ever. They also reminded us that transforming rural areas and investing in rural people are at the very core of the solution. This year's Governing Council session has clearly demonstrated what IFAD stands for, and what we will be standing for in the years to come.

The year 2021 is one with unprecedented opportunities for another series of game-changing moments. You can count on IFAD to help advance our common goals at the United Nations Secretary-General's Food Systems Summit. You can count on your institution to do its best during the COP26, co-chaired by both Italy and United Kingdom, two very active Member States. You can also count on us during 2021 to work together with our Governor from Italy to try our best to capitalize on the G20 under the Italian Presidency.

So, 2021 is full of opportunities. We will also continue to deliver bigger, better and smarter to transform the lives of millions of women, men and youth, as we have been discussing all along.

I would like to take a moment to thank Frank Mars who I believe was really quite inspirational yesterday when he shared his perspectives and his engagement – and that of his colleagues – in helping the cause of small-scale producers. This is the type of engagement that we want to have with the private sector. We want to ensure that we can encourage our youth to take their own entrepreneurial initiatives.

We will also continue focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalized so that the whole food system transformation is inclusive, sustainable and equitable. We have heard from the representative of the indigenous peoples' forum about the outcomes of their deliberations and we know that these dimensions are intertwined.

Our programme of work will continue integrating and taking into account the indigenous peoples' dimension. We will also accelerate access to technology and adoption of innovative approaches for small-scale producers to seize new opportunities.

In closing, I cannot help but remind us all that the heart of the matter, as I indicated yesterday, will continue to be: How do we use these instruments? How do we use IFAD, which *prima facie* is a development financier? How do we use IFAD in its current state, with an AA+ credit rating, to continue bridging the financing gap in our effort to achieve SDG 1 and SDG 2, particularly for the small-scale producers in our rural areas?

We should not shy away from having a frank discussion on these important subject matters. I know it is going to be difficult, but that is exactly why we are here. The difficulty of the subject matter must not stop us from trying. Very often it is the lack of trying that makes the task difficult.

In the coming weeks and months, we will need your maximum support to reach the highest possible outcome for IFAD12 to pave the way for doubling our impact. I know I can continue counting on you to give IFAD the strength we need to realize our vision.

Finally, distinguished Governors, allow me once again to thank you so much for the continued trust in me, a trust that I do not take for granted. I promise that we will continue doing our very best so that you will not be disappointed.

Thank you.

## **Closing Statement by Dr Suminto, Chairperson of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council of IFAD**

Mr President,  
Distinguished Governors and Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The time has come to draw the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council to a close. This year's Council has been both a Council of firsts and a Council of consolidation. For the first time ever, the Governing Council was held by virtual means. Notwithstanding the physical distance that separated us, we came together as Governors of this Fund to take a number of important decisions.

This session will remain in our memories thanks to the distinguished guests who honoured us with keynote speeches during the inaugural ceremony – His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, the President of the Republic of Angola, His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and His Excellency Luigi Di Maio, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic. Their words and participation in this session bear witness to the esteem in which they hold our organization. We also had the pleasure of hearing the outcomes of the recently concluded Indigenous Peoples' Forum, the impact of IFAD's engagement with indigenous peoples, our successes, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities.

It was my pleasure and privilege to preside over the appointment of Mr Gilbert Houngbo to his second term as President of IFAD. His vision and leadership of the Fund have transformed IFAD and made it more fit for purpose, better placed to contribute substantively to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. He has achieved much in his first term and we look forward to his continued success over the next four years.

Governors considered and approved various business items, not least of which the Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment, which sets out the strategic direction for the Fund for the period 2022-2024. Our sincere thanks and congratulations to our colleagues on the IFAD12 Consultation for their dedication and commitment to IFAD. Our thanks also to those Member States who have pledged contributions to the IFAD12 Replenishment. IFAD is the champion of rural people, of those most often marginalized and left behind. We need to ensure that IFAD has the resources required to make the difference we know it can make. It is in that spirit that Member States, who have not yet done so, are strongly encouraged to make their pledges as soon as possible.

By approving the proposed amendments to IFAD's basic legal texts, we have ensured that Management can implement the financial architecture policies and frameworks that have already been approved by the Executive Board and that will facilitate the successful delivery of IFAD12.

The Council elected 18 new members and alternate members of the Executive Board for the three-year term of office from 2021-2023. Allow me to congratulate the new Executive Board members. We look forward to their dedicated leadership and we thank the outgoing Board members for their commitment to the Fund.

Distinguished Governors,

During this Governing Council, we benefitted from a rich programme of events that provided opportunities to hear from and exchange experiences with many partners and stakeholders. From the board room of Mars Incorporated to the rural areas of Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru and the Solomon Islands; from the European Commission to the office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the upcoming Food Systems Summit; from the Finance Ministries, the Agriculture Ministries, the Foreign Ministries of the Fund's Member States to this virtual platform, all voices spoke as one in proclaiming support for IFAD and the relevance of its mandate.

It has been an honour to have presided over this important session of the Governing Council. I wish to thank my colleagues on the Bureau and the Secretary of IFAD, who have assisted me in this endeavour. I would also like to express the Council's thanks to the staff of IFAD, who have all worked so diligently in organizing such a successful and highly innovative conference. A special note of thanks goes as well to all those behind the scenes without whom no conference could function, not the least of which the interpreters and technical staff.

Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The task ahead of us is not an easy one – eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2030. Over the past two days, we have done our part to place IFAD firmly on the path towards increasing its impact where it is most needed – in the rural areas of the developing world. But our job is not done. We have a mere nine years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Let us continue, therefore to advocate for IFAD, to provide concrete support and to bridge the investment gap on rural development.

On that note, I hereby close the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council.

The Annexes can be viewed through the hyperlinks provided below.

**Annex I [Agenda](#) and [schedule for the session](#)**

**Annex II [Resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its forty-fourth session](#)**

**Annex III [Links to digital content of the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council](#)**

Video recordings of [Day One](#) and [Day Two](#)

**Annex IV [Delegations at the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council](#)**

**Annex V [List of documents placed before the forty-fourth session of the Governing Council](#)**