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## **Closing Statement by President Alvaro Lario**

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Statement by  
Alvaro Lario  
President of the  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Closing of the forty-sixth session  
of the  
Governing Council

Rome, Italy  
14-15 February 2023

Dear Mr Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Governors,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing IFAD's forty-sixth Governing Council, let us take stock of this highly productive session and the rich thematic discussions we have had over the past two days. The Governing Council approved an extra Member, Ukraine, bringing us ever closer to universal membership.

We all agree that every person facing hunger is a reason why we need to step up action for food security, rural resilience and the transformation of food systems. Even more so now, as the impacts of the food, fuel and fertilizer crisis on the world's most vulnerable populations are still unfolding.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are still more than 800 million people away from meeting the second Sustainable Development Goal of achieving Zero Hunger by 2030, but during this year's session of the Governing Council, we heard powerful messages and had meaningful exchanges on holistic, longer-term solutions to accelerate action.

H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, has reminded us that the current food insecurity challenge is not insurmountable. "We can overcome it together."

His Excellency's optimism confirms that IFAD's approach to invest in areas in situations of fragility is much needed.

We can break the vicious cycle of conflict and hunger, provide alternatives and invest in sustainable solutions and resilience building.

Under-Secretary-General Cristina Duarte, Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General, put the approach needed in very simple terms in our deep-dive on Africa's food insecurity: "We have to shift from managing poverty to managing development."

We have heard from our partners how addressing questions of water, energy and fertilizers, by bolstering local solutions, tailor-made infrastructure and local production, is essential to foster such development in a sustainable manner.

IFAD is well aware through its work that vulnerable populations are often the most resourceful in addressing challenges of food security. We rely on their unique knowledge, their expertise and their solutions to bring about change.

Representatives from the Indigenous Peoples have reminded us of the importance of translating global policies into local action and tapping into indigenous knowledge for project design, implementation and evaluation.

Rural young people told us how they share information and best practices in their communities. Their efforts expand IFAD's work to build a sustainable, food-secure future, free of hunger and poverty.

Today's challenges, however, are far too large for any single institution to solve. Therefore, we rely on scaled up support from our Member States, and we will continue to leverage innovative finance mechanisms and our cooperation with the private sector to potentiate our investments.

Ladies and gentlemen,

H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, has shared an utterly pragmatic statement with us: "If we want to achieve the best for humanity, then we have to invest in rural people."

With your support, IFAD is ready to do so.

Our upcoming IFAD13 replenishment is our opportunity to scale-up investments and impact that can help put the world back on track towards our shared commitment to end poverty and hunger.

I would like to express my appreciation to our Governors for showing unwavering support to IFAD and to our Thirteenth Replenishment. We are thankful for your insights and suggestions to enable IFAD to act as an assembler of finance to scale up the transformation of food systems.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by thanking IFAD's workforce for their incredible commitment to this institution and its mandate, as well as the interpreters and the organizational crew for their hard work in making this session, our first in-person Governing Council in two years, successful.

As we bid him farewell at the last Governing Council as IFAD Vice-President, I would like to thank Dominik Ziller in particular.

Many of us first met Dominik when he was a Director General for International Development Cooperation and Policy at the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and German Governor for IFAD. Already in this function, he was an advocate for stronger support to rural people, and a stronger IFAD.

I would like to sincerely thank Dominik for the critical contributions he has made to IFAD's reform agenda, especially our transformation to a solid international financial institution.

Dominik has championed improvements to how we ensure the quality of our programmes and projects, how we assess and manage risks, and how we do workforce planning in a more agile and forward-looking way.

He is known for being a great leader, a straight shooter who champions efficiency, and a fierce advocate of gender equality and work-life balance.

I know that you – Governors, Executive Board members, representatives to IFAD – hold Dominik in high esteem and trust his straightforward approach. His contributions have helped put us on the right direction so we can deliver on our joint promise to accelerate action for food security, now.

Thank you.