



Investing in rural people

Closing remarks by the Chair of the first special session of the IFAD Governing Council, His Excellency Oscar Miguel Graham Yamahuchi

Distinguished delegates,

It has indeed been a privilege to have presided over this historical first special session of the IFAD Governing Council.

There are few decisions as important as choosing the leader of an organization. In Dr Alvaro Lario, we have collectively placed our trust and our hopes for a better future for IFAD and most importantly for IFAD's beneficiaries: the poor rural women, men and children that we serve.

Dr Alvaro Lario, the road ahead is not easy. There are many challenges to face – climate change, conflict, fragility, growing inequality, to name but a few. We must not be discouraged. We must look to our mutual goal and work together towards a just world, where extreme poverty, food insecurity and marginalization are a thing of the past.

President Houngbo, I am sure I speak on behalf of my fellow Bureau members and Governors when I express our sincere appreciation for your leadership over the past five years. We wish you every success in the future.

Last, but definitely not least, distinguished delegates, our thanks must go to the IFAD staff who have worked tirelessly to make this special session a reality. To the Secretariat, the technical staff, the messengers and the interpreters who facilitated our communication; to each and every one of you, I convey our deepest gratitude.

Ladies and gentlemen, I understand that the President has graciously invited us to join him for a reception in the foyer and I look forward to seeing you there.

Once again, I thank you for your support and I now declare the first special session of IFAD's Governing Council closed.