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*Opening statement*

**At the Online Workshop on Climate Smart Mechanization  
for Sustainable Food Systems Transformation in Central Asia**

14:00-16:00, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
(Beijing time)

Good afternoon dear colleagues,  
Dear Dr. Yutong LI,  
Distinguished participants,

It is a great pleasure to participate in today's workshop because it is a relevant and timely important for all countries in NCA taking into account the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and food security issues.

This year faced a few important publications on the above mentioned issues. In June OECD revealed a report *Water, Food and Energy Security in Central Asia: Background Analysis - Benefits of Cross-Sectoral (Nexus) Solutions (SIC-ICWC and experts' draft data and analysis for discussion)*. According to this research, based on FAO introduced the Global Food Security Index (GFSI), the food security situation in CA countries is as follows: Kazakhstan takes the 48th position, Uzbekistan takes the 71st position, Tajikistan takes the 93rd position; for Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan the data is not available. Analysis of data shows that the CA countries supply themselves individually: with bread – by 40-60% (except for Kazakhstan); with meat – by 45-75%; with milk - by 70-90%; with vegetables – by 40-120%. Therefore, although the number of undernourished in the region is well lower than the average figure in the world, the CA countries still do not meet criteria of food security if one considers only domestic production. The share of agriculture in GDP is: 4.4% - Kazakhstan; 11.65% - Kyrgyzstan; 19.2% - Tajikistan; 9.3% - Turkmenistan; 28.9% - Uzbekistan.

According to a number of assessments, by 2030, expenditures related to health care and diet improvements will reach \$69 billion. Food security strategies oriented to healthy nutrition patterns should be promoted to make major changes towards healthy diets. Compensatory/incentive measures may be required<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, it is advisable to create conditions for *integrated food balance in CA, not limited to bilateral agreements*. These actions must be ahead of population growth in the CA countries.

Another important report is the *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. It highlights that the human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in at least the last 2000 years. Climate change is already

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<sup>1</sup> FAO, WFP, UNECE, UNICEF, WHO, WMO. 2021. Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia 2020: Affordable healthy diets to address all forms of malnutrition for better health.

affecting every inhabited region across the globe with human influence contributing to many observed changes in weather and climate extremes, such as heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones. With further global warming, every region is projected to increasingly experience concurrent and multiple changes in climatic impact-drivers.

And one more 2021 publication by WB and ADB - *Climate Risk Country Profile of Kazakhstan*. Key messages: Temperatures in Kazakhstan are projected to rise at a faster rate than the global average and faster than most other Asian nations, with potential warming of 5.3°C by the 2090s. Warming is projected to be even stronger for maximum and minimum temperatures and the extreme temperatures which will result are likely to threaten human lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Severe droughts are expected to occur more frequently. Temperature rises will accelerate the melting of Kazakhstan's glaciers. More frequent droughts and reduced water security could damage agricultural productivity of crop and livestock farming. In the absence of adaptation, spring wheat yields in Kazakhstan are projected to decline by as much as 50% by the 2050s due to higher temperatures and reduced soil moisture. Unless adaptation and disaster risk reduction support is provided, inequalities are likely to grow and poverty to prevail.

How to prevent and reduce negative consequences of pandemic and climate change through sustainable agricultural mechanization and climate smart agriculture is the purpose of today's workshop, organized by ESCAP. I wish you all successful discussion and getting new valuable knowledge and best practice.