**Food Systems Summit**

**Uzbekistan’s Pathway**

**to Transforming to Efficient and Sustainable Food Systems by 2030**

With the purpose of diversifying production, improving land
and water relations, creating a favourable agribusiness environment and high value-added chains, supporting the development of cooperative relations, as well as widespread introduction of market mechanisms, information and communication technologies in the industry and the effective use of scientific achievements and increasing staff potential:

The **Strategy for the development of the agri-food sector of the Republic
of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030**, developed with the participation of international organizations and experts;

the **"Roadmap" on the implementation of the Strategy
for the development of the agri-food sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030**.

Future sustainable development of the agriculture and food industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan requires state policy on the basis of new approaches. The Strategy for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030 will serve to achieve these objectives.

The main objective of this Strategy is to radically improve public policy directed to deepening on-going reforms, aimed at improving the competitiveness of the agri-food sector and includes the following strategic priorities:

ensuring food security of the population;

creating a favorable agri-business environment and added value chains;

decreasing state involvement in sector management and enhancement of investment attractiveness;

ensuring rational use of natural resources and environmental protection;

development of modern public administration systems;

gradual diversification of state expenditures on sector support;

development of research and education, and system of information and advisory services in agriculture;

development of rural areas;

development of transparent industry statistics system.

The development of agriculture is based on the achievement of target indicators set out in Annexes 1 and 2 of the present Strategy.

A program on the implementation of the Strategy for the following year will be developed and approved annually by December 1.

**Chapter 2. Priority areas of the Strategy**

**I. Ensuring food security of the population**

Food security is one of the structural components of the country's development since it affects a wide range of socio-economic, demographic and environmental factors.

State food security policy will be developed and implemented based on four components (availability, access, utilization and stability).

Major factors affecting food security are population growth, increased demand for land, water and energy resources, as well as dramatic climate change.

In recent years, as a result of a series of measures to bolster food security in the country, Uzbekistan has strengthened its position in the world and gradually improved its position in the global rakings. In the Global Hunger Index for 2018, the Republic of Uzbekistan was ranked 52nd out of 119 countries and reached a “moderate” status with an indicator of 12.1.

However, the main challenges that need to be addressed are the problems of achieving a stable supply of food for vulnerable segments of the population, increasing the purchasing power of low-income households, and preventing sharp fluctuations in prices and outputs.

The main goal of the strategic priority is the development and effective implementation of state policy aimed at ensuring food security for the entire population.

The priority focuses on ensuring that all households have access to safe and nutritious food at affordable and stable prices. This, in turn, will contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals of the Republic of Uzbekistan (SDG), in part SDG2 “End hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.”

The following objectives are set for achieving these goals:

improving the mechanisms for providing food to socially vulnerable segments of the population, as well as the integration of agricultural producers with objects of social significance;

introduction of a system of state intervention procurement in the production of cereal grains, the phased abolition of state regulation of prices for agri-food products, as well as the introduction of a mechanism for the purchase of cereal grains based on quotas at market prices;

development of long-term programs to promote healthy food culture;

implementation of regular food security assessment system and continuous monitoring based on internationally recognized methods and best practices;

development of sectoral programs for the intensification of production of socially significant types of products;

 conducting research works aimed at increasing livestock productivity, sustainable intensification of production of fish and poultry meat, as well as milk.

**II. Creating a favorable agribusiness environment and added value chains**

An important factor in ensuring agricultural competitiveness is the development of value chains. The high costs for collection, transportation, storing, processing, packaging and certification while delivering products from the field to final consumers reduce the profit earned by agricultural producers.

The low level of development of the food industry limits the capabilities for increasing the volume of production of high value-added products

In order to attract investment in infrastructure development, developed financial markets, a favorable business climate, and the adoption of measures aimed at supporting manufacturers and promoting the development of value chains are required.

Limited opportunities in processing and packaging of products in dekhkan farms that produce the bulk of exported fruits and vegetables lead to significant losses. At the same time, seasonal price fluctuations and volatility of market conditions also negatively affect their activity.

In recent years, small producers have actively invested in modern storage facilities and processing equipment through various sources of financing, including credit lines from international financial institutions. Despite this, they remain largely isolated from processing enterprises and exporting organizations.

Due to the insufficient development of effective mechanisms for combining small agricultural producers, their activities remain unorganized. This impedes the achievement of high economic indicators and also limits the opportunities of integration into value chains.

It should be noted that the share of cooperatives in the markets of developed countries (EU, USA, Canada) exceeds 40%, while in Uzbekistan this area is just being developed.

There is a shortage of laboratories, wholesale markets and logistics centers that meet the requirements of international standards and quality requirements, as well as equipment at customs and border points for phytosanitary control of horticulture products.

This in turn prevents the increase in the volume of manufactured and sold products, the growth of value added and diversification of product types and export geography.

It is necessary to ensure the safety and quality of agricultural and food products by bringing the national legal framework for sanitary and phytosanitary control in accordance with the requirements of the World Trade Organization and the standards of target international markets.

In addition, partnerships between procurement agents, processing enterprises and exporters with dekhkan farms and owners of household plots, which account for more than 70 percent of gross agricultural output, are not sufficiently developed.

The main objective of this strategic priority is to increase the export potential of the agricultural sector, increase the volume of value-added products, widely introduce a certification system based on international standards and develop cooperation mechanisms.

The following objectives are set to achieve this goal:

the organization of short-term, including distance-learning trainings for gardening and greenhouse specialists, the development and distribution of training manuals;

harmonization of the national plant quarantine and protection system with the requirements of the World Trade Organization Agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures;

bringing the national system for protecting animal health and controlling livestock production into line with the standards of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE);

establishment of an Innovation Education Center to support the development of value chains in agriculture, based on international best practices;

development of mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of internationally recognized quality standards (Global G.A.P, Organic, HACCP, etc.);

development and implementation of feedback mechanisms with leading agricultural enterprises;

prioritization of negotiations and implementation of trade agreements in new target export markets;

reduction of costs for transportation and marketing of agri-food products in local and target international markets;

assessment of opportunities for expanding the use of the «Made in Uzbekistan» brand to promote domestic food products in target export markets;

development of a plan to improve the national quality system;

development of advisory services aimed at providing information on export markets, export readiness, trade regime and trade finance;

increasing the role of diplomatic missions of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the process of collecting information about target markets and in promoting trade of agri-food products;

improving the system for protecting the rights of authors of plant varieties (including patent tests);

introduction of a unified trading system based on agro-logistics centers (based on auction and exchange trading);

improvement of services provided by the Crop Variety Testing Center, creation of the National Gene Bank for the storage of new plant species;

improving the types of services provided by the center for agricultural standardization;

widespread introduction of market mechanisms in the production of raw cotton and the cotton and textile sector;

adherence to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC);

development of a mechanism for allocating land on preferential terms to dekhkan farms in order to stimulate the expansion of activities;

creation of a special laboratory for testing genetically modified plant varieties with the attraction of funds from international financial institutions;

further stimulation of attracting investments in trade infrastructure and agri-logistics centers, food safety laboratories and sanitary and phytosanitary systems, necessary equipment and inventory;

improving the registration system of pesticides and the maximum permissible levels of pesticides (MRL) in accordance with the International Plant Protection Convention and other relevant international standards, providing information to exporters and manufacturers;

attraction of grants and technical assistance funds from international financial institutions for the modernization of the material and technical base of research institutes in the field of seed production and horticulture;

stimulation of cooperation between agricultural producers and development of measures for their integration into modern value chains in the domestic and international markets

formation of associations (cooperatives and others) coordinating the manufacture of agricultural products and services provided in this area, making operational decisions and participating in a dialogue on the formation of industry policy

ensuring cooperation between agricultural associations, farms and dehkan farms with industrial processing enterprises (including clusters);

implementation of pilot investment programs to support the development and diversification of small business in the agricultural sector;

development of an export growth strategy based on the results of assessments of the horticulture and livestock sectors (initially for the main 10-15 types of exported products based on an analysis of long-term data and market trends);

modernization of the food safety and quality control system.

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a Food Systems Summit in September 2021 as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit constitutes a major awakener at the global level to the fact that the world needs to stop and/or reverse the deterioration in the food systems and to transform into more efficient, healthier, equitable and sustainable food systems, which inevitably requires rethinking the way we produce, consume and think about food. The Summit is a people's Summit where everybody is and should be a doer and contributor to the transformation process at family, local, national and global levels.

The UNCT in Uzbekistan, led by UNDP and FAO, joined forces with Uzbekistan's Ministry of Agriculture for the fourth national dialogue, taking collective action to transform the way Uzbekistan produces, consumes and thinks about food. Through this Dialogue, the UN draws attention to food systems sustainability and addresses the global triple crisis of climate, nature and pollution through an agricultural lens.

The first and concluding National Dialogue of Uzbekistan's Food Systems Summit, was held on Tuesday 29 June, 2021, in Tashkent. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Dialogue was conducted partly online. It began with opening remarks from high-level speakers (Deputy Minister of Agriculture, UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, Assistant FAO Representative in Uzbekistan), and the Convenor of the National Dialogues, Mr Alisher Shukurov (Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture), presented outcomes of the two sub-national food systems dialogues, conducted in Nukus and Namangan.

In the final Dialogue, international donor organizations in Uzbekistan, including the European Union, Japan International Cooperation Agency, the United States Agency for International Development, and the Islamic Development Bank, reconfirmed their commitment to support agriculture and food industries in Uzbekistan.

In the discussion session, participants discussed the 5 Action Tracks; 1) Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all; 2) Shift to sustainable consumption patterns; 3) Boost nature-positive production; 4) Advance equitable livelihoods; 5) Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress. They reviewed the evidence on key challenges to strengthening food systems as highlighted in the previous dialogues and explored options for collective action that can contribute via national pathways towards sustainable food systems.

The concluding Dialogue successfully created an opportunity for engagement and interconnection among an even broader set of food systems stakeholders, connecting the sub-national and national level, and consolidated country-level commitments and actions, shaping the direction of the pathway to sustainable national food systems for the coming decade.