Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

1. It is a pleasure to address this session on the Follow-up to the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

2. Eating a healthy diet throughout life is critical for preventing all forms of malnutrition and diet-related non-communicable diseases, which are currently the number one cause of mortality globally.

3. Yet, more than 3.1 billion people in the world are unable to afford a healthy diet.

4. Healthy diets are diverse, balanced in energy intake, adequate to meet nutrient needs, and moderate in the consumption of foods of high energy density and minimal nutritional value, which are often foods high in fats, sugars and/or salt.

5. As the UN specialized agency for food and agriculture working across all elements of agrifood systems, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has a leadership role in accelerating policies and actions with impact across agrifood systems to enable healthy diets for all.

6. Recognizing the importance to health of what we eat, and the lack of consensus on how to measure and monitor healthy diets at scale, FAO, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and WHO joined forces to chart a way forward via the Healthy Diets Monitoring Initiative.

7. An Initiative to enable national and global decision-makers and stakeholders to monitor and achieve healthy diets for people and the planet.

8. FAO has developed “step-by-step” guidance to assist countries develop, implement and use food based dietary guidelines that not only address nutritional challenges and priorities but also contribute to the transformation of agrifood systems towards sociocultural and environmental sustainability.

9. Moreover, FAO is promoting and supporting the implementation of sustainable public food procurement and home-grown school feeding policies and programs to enhance the accessibility of nutritious foods and trigger agrifood systems transformation.

10. FAO is committed to continuing its collaboration with WHO on promoting healthy diets in a multisectoral way.

11. Thank you.

1 Theme: All for Health, Health for All