It is an honor and a pleasure to share with the Council, this introduction regarding the outcome of the 37th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific. The 37th Session was hosted by the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and was inaugurated by the President of Sri Lanka, H. E. Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe. Representatives from 37 Member Nations and two observers; and representatives from multiple intergovernmental organizations, five international and non-governmental organizations and four United Nations organizations and specialized agencies also attended as observers. Nearly 1 000 participants registered to participate, of which almost 350 participated in-person. The Conference was completely digital and paperless in keeping with the corporate policy on environmental sustainability.

The Conference:

- encouraged FAO to continue its efforts in publishing data on food security and nutrition and highlighted the importance of accurate, reliable and timely data, including those provided by Members, for formulating policies and responses;
- urged FAO to ensure tailor-made support for agrifood systems transformation, especially to vulnerable Members in the Pacific;
- reiterated the need to boost resilience against climate change and disasters for enhancing food security, nutrition and achieving sustainable development by compiling, sharing and disseminating more information on useful technologies, innovative practices and examples of collaboration through events and platforms;
- recommended FAO to scale up its support to Members to access funding from the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, especially for the Pacific;
- emphasized the twin approach towards ending hunger by 2030: short-term actions to avoid setbacks during ongoing crisis, as well as long-term investments to address the root causes of hunger through domestic resource mobilization and international investments and private finance;
- highlighted the need for FAO to undertake capacity building and raising awareness among state and non-state actors and facilitate collaborations for investments to reduce food loss and waste;
- recommended FAO to support Members to promote the implementation of the Blue Transformation Roadmap to meet their existing and novel biodiversity and conservation obligations;
- acknowledged FAO’s leading role in global One Health initiatives and strongly encouraged FAO to continue supporting capacity development and technical interventions in this area;
- endorsed the four Regional Priorities identified for the 2024-2025 biennium based on key trends, issues and challenges in Asia and the Pacific region;
- recognized the relevance of the individual Programme Priority Areas mapping to each of the four Regional Priorities in the proposed results framework and to the achievement of the four betters to meet the Sustainable Development Goals;
- appreciated the implementation of key corporate initiatives in the region, including the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, the One Country One Priority Product, and the 1000 Digital Villages Initiative;
- supported FAO’s efforts to accelerate the uptake of innovations and technologies and promote gender equality and youth involvement in agrifood systems, including through vocational training;
• emphasized the strengthening of partnerships with key stakeholders, in particular national governments and the private sector, as well as through South-South and Triangular Cooperation; and

• endorsed the overarching guiding principles on Country Office transformation and requested FAO to proceed with a transparent process of consultation with Members to move towards the progressive finalization and implementation of the arrangement, keeping in view the needs imposed by the geographical and agroclimatic diversity of the Asia-Pacific region.

Ms Shiromani Edirimanna

Chairperson of the 37th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation Industries of the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka