

## **Hon. Minister of Agriculture addresses 40<sup>th</sup> FAO Conference in Rome**

Hon. Duminda Dissanayake, Minister of Agriculture, addressed the 40<sup>th</sup> FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference held in Rome from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 08<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. This year the main theme of the FAO Conference is “Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security”. In his address he highlighted the impact of the prolonged drought and the recent floods in Sri Lanka by saying that “Sri Lanka has suffered an unprecedented drought continuously over two seasons and severe floods in some part of the country due to the impact of climate change, which has brought serious crop losses, death and displacement of many families and challenging the food security”. On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, His Excellency the President and the people of Sri Lanka, he extended his appreciation to the FAO for the recent drought relief assistance extended to Sri Lanka to facilitate the supply of seeds and planting materials to affected farmers.

During the Conference, Hon. Minister met with the Director General of FAO on 07<sup>th</sup> July, in a special discussion and discussed future activities proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, such as development of climate resilient agriculture in the country, rehabilitation of minor tanks and the initiatives by the Ministry to establish 25,000 farmer women organizations empowering women to achieve domestic level food and nutritional security. Hon. Minister also met with the Minister of Food Security and Research of Pakistan and had bilateral discussions on the promotion of agriculture and food security in the region. Also, Hon. Minister took part in the election of the Independent Chair of the FAO Council on July, 07<sup>th</sup>.



*(Hon. Minister is addressing the plenary of the 40<sup>th</sup> FAO Conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2017)*

During his address at the plenary session, the Hon. Minister also delivered the joint statement of the G15 Countries, as Sri Lanka is the current Chair of the G15. The G15 is a Group of Developing Countries representing Asia, Africa and the Latin America established

to promote and sustain fruitful South-South cooperation and policy cohesion on areas of mutual interest with a view to achieving economic progress, stability and sustainable development.

In his G15 address he stated that “The G-15 views the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference as auspicious and timely, considering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs). Further, G15 views the 2030 Agenda as a plan of action for the ‘people, planet and prosperity’ built on the three pillars of social, economic and environment of the SDGs. With the adverse impacts of climate change on agriculture and people whose livelihood depends on agriculture, particularly small-scale farmers, there is a need to enhance research and empower institutions that will assist the most vulnerable segments of the world population and make them the focus of development and technology transfer”.

The Sri Lankan Delegation at the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference comprised of Hon. Minister as the Head of the Delegation, H.E Daya S.J. Pelpola, Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Rome and the Permanent Representative to FAO, Dr. Gerry Jayawardena, Chairman of Council for Agriculture Research Policy and the Adviser to Hon. Minister, and Mr. Somasena Mahadiulwewa, Minister Counsellor (Commercial) and the Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO in Rome.

***Prepared by Embassy of Sri Lanka/ Permanent Representation to FAO, Rome***

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