



International Day of Potato High-Level Ceremony
Video message by H.E. Paula Narváez, President of ECOSOC
30 May 2024 | Sheik Zayed Centre, FAO | 16.30 – 17.30

H. E Mr QU Dongyu Director-General, Food and Agriculture
Organization of the United Nations

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you in celebrating the International Day of Potato, a symbol of how something that seems so simple can have such a significant impact on achieving sustainable development. We know that climate change, conflict, poverty and hunger are making it harder for us to achieve the SDGs. Only one third of countries are on track to halve their national poverty levels by 2030 and 735 million people do not have enough to eat.

The potato has been with us for thousands of years and is grown in diverse countries and climates. Two thirds of the world population includes potato in their diet. We must ensure that we are protecting this important crop, so it continues to be a staple for millions around the world. But, we must also embrace the positive impacts that the potato can have across the SDGs.



For the potato farmer, potatoes are a source of livelihood, critical to SDG1 on poverty eradication. The potato is also a hardy crop, packed with protein, carbohydrates and other essential nutrients. It is a key part of SDG 2 on ending hunger.

Global potato production has increased by 10 percent in the past decade, producing more jobs and higher incomes, crucial to SDG 8 on promoting decent employment and economic growth; and the potato value chain speaks to SDG 12, on responsible consumption and production.

Life on land, SDG 15, can be enhanced for farmers with better pest management, capacity building and mechanization. And partnerships between all stakeholders, outlined in SDG 17, will be essential to ensuring that these objectives can be fully implemented.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Days like the International Day of Potato require us to reflect on how best we must support the incredible work of local farmers, women, and youth that are working every day to innovate, grow and sustain crops for their communities. We must also commit to fully realizing meaningful policies and practices to amplify their



voices, allocate resources and scale-up the cross-cutting impacts of this important crop on lives and livelihoods.

The UN Economic and Social Council is committed to advancing sustainable development, across all its forums and segments. We bring people together across the world to focus on emerging challenges and we foster efforts to find solutions for overcoming food insecurity and poverty. We stand with you in this pursuit. I thank you all for your commitment on this day, and every day, to achieving the SDGs and wish you all a successful event to commemorate the International Day of Potato.

Thank you.