

**Speaking notes - Huseyin ARSLAN**  
**October 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Side event on Market Access & Stability**

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for joining us this morning and for engaging with our distinguished panelists.

Last December, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2016 the International Year of Pulses. It provides the international community with a unique opportunity to highlight the importance of pulses for food security, nutrition health, and sustainable development.

It is also a unique opportunity to make commitments that will spur action in key areas critical to pulse production, trade and consumption. I am very proud that my country, Turkey, proposed the motion for the International Year in conjunction with the government of Pakistan. Everyone from farm groups to pulse processors, are deeply grateful to you, and the unanimous support received on the motion.

A large yield gap in pulse cultivation persists between developing and developed countries. This gap could be bridged by fostering the dissemination of improved varieties and the adoption of better management techniques. Productivity gains in countries such as India, where kilogram per hectare yield is a third of that achieved in countries such as Canada or the United States, could have substantial positive implications for food security and rural development.

In many countries there is little awareness of the ways in which pulses may contribute to the solution of several pressing food-related issues. For example, incorporating pulses into one's diet may help lower the risk of diabetes and heart disease, while their small carbon and water footprint, relative to cereals and other sources of protein, make them ideal for environmentally sustainable farming. Efforts should be made to acquaint governments and consumers with the possible health and environmental benefits associated with pulses.

The International Year will be an opportunity to discuss these issues and to identify solutions. Effecting change will require concerted action, partnerships and long terms commitments by governments, UN agencies, NGOs, farmers and the private sector.

Today we have discussed one particular topic – market access and stability. Improving production and awareness is not enough. As my colleagues highlighted, difficulties and unpredictability in trade are major obstacles to improving pulse consumption and supporting pulse farmers. This needs to be tackled at several levels: Through the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues and the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues to address issues related Maximum Residue Limits but also through national policies to strengthen markets and building a futures systems to improve visibility, predictability and stability.

Tackling the non-tariffs trade barriers that impede trade in pulses needs to be part of the priorities for 2016. This will require devoting specific attention and resourcing to this topic to ensure progress is made. We believe now is the time for Codex to start planning for the needs of pulse crops in 2016 and beyond.

At the same time, I want to highlight how eager we are to work collaboratively on the International Year of Pulses. The Global Pulse Confederation has begun thinking and researching in four other areas as well:

- Food Security
- Creating Awareness
- Health, Nutrition and Innovation
- Productivity and Environmental Sustainability

These are all based on the UN General Assembly declaration. Many other partners have come to the table, and we are proud to have leaders from three CGIAR centres involved, along with academics, nutritionists, farm groups and processors in the brainstorming done to date. Every aspect of the pulse value chain is galvanised by the opportunity this year provides.

Groups like the Feed the Future program are already planning major events, including a conference on pulse research in Africa. Under the leadership of Dr. Mohamed Solh of ICARDA, it

is hoped to have an event on drylands and pulses, and many exciting new partners are talking about ways they can contribute to 2016 related to nutrition.

For our part, \$1.1 million has been designated by the Global Pulse Confederation (CICILS) to fund activities related to the Year. In addition to this funding, Global Pulse Confederation (CICILS) has raised further funds, increasing that initial amount to \$1.35 million. We hope it is the start of more to come.

Of course, we are eager for you – FAO and the member states – to convene the international steering committee as soon as you can. We are eager to discuss our ideas for the International Year of Pulses at any time and are eager to work with the International Steering Committee as soon as it is formed.

Thank you and looking forward to 2016.