

Mildred Crawford

Jamaica

Farmers

Thank you Chair

Excellencies, Member states, Distinguished Guest in the audience,

Our constituency represents over 700,000 farmers, and we appreciate the release of the Zero Draft. We seek to address what we consider major omission.

Major omission

Food Security, roles of primary food producers and farmers are excluded from the Zero Draft despite their centrality in urban-rural linkages.

The roles and challenges of Farmers, especially in small and medium enterprises – that represent 70% of farmers worldwide and primary producers (SMEs), as critical actors in local economic development, are missing from the Zero Draft.

Primary food Producers which are categorized as SME sector generates the most formal sector employment especially in low and middle-income countries, and props up consumption that maintain local and dynamic economies. Moreover, SMEs are likely to be more committed partners in inclusive economic development; producing raw material for “added value” and large-scale investors in the food value chain. Women producers make a significant contribution to food security and their contribution cannot be left behind.

“create an enabling and fair business environment” and “addressing the challenges faced by local business communities”, are mentioned in the Zero Draft; but the particular challenges faced by primary producers as SMEs are not clearly laid out, it is lacking specific actions, recommendations to increase dynamism of the agricultural sector, such as access to municipal finance, less burdensome SME regulations in exchange for better worker conditions and affordable utilities,

provide infrastructure for post harvesting, ensuring adequate infrastructure to connect small scale producers to local markets by implementing Local Food Policy Councils and other participatory democratic tools that support food Security, the right to adequate food and nutrition and sustainable local food systems.

Public space governance should protect territorial, peri-urban and urban land from real-estate speculation and protect it for food production led by SMEs in accordance with the Committee on Food Security's Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Land, Fisheries and Forestry.

We reiterate the call for territorial balance for primary producers as farmers and development, a balance of products vs consumption in achieving an urban- rural linkage, and gender.

Zero Draft falls short of promoting revenue arrangements that will foster equitable, progressive, effective fiscal systems meanwhile user charges and fees proposed in para 137 prove inefficient and harmful, especially in developing country context, where fragmented coverage of lower-income populations and underuse of public services prevails as a result of commercial incentives within public service provision. Exemption mechanisms for the poor might lead to beneficiary targeting, tremendous transaction costs for government and opportunities for corruption.

We will continue to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as we seek to collectively achieve “The City We Need”.