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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CELAC FOOD PLAN RECEIVES OVERWHELMING SUPPORT AMONG MEMBER STATES

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, January 31, 2024 – The CELAC Ministers of Agriculture are preparing to move towards the implementation phase of the CELAC Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and Hunger Eradication 2030 after the conclusion of a successful High-level meeting of Agriculture Ministers in Chile on Tuesday, 16th January, 2024 at the Food and Agriculture Office (FAO), Regional Office, which saw the unanimous support and validation of the plan. The document will be submitted to Dr. Hon. Ralph Gonsalves, Pro Tempore President of CELAC and Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, for review and guidance through the established CELAC processes. The meeting saw almost one hundred delegates engaged both in-person and via online platforms.

After months of discussions among key stakeholders including: policy makers, experts, technical governing bodies, international agencies, civil society and others, a working plan is now ready for each member state that will serve as a guide for a unified approach which takes into consideration the varying socio-economic dynamics of the region.

The validation process was a collective effort that demonstrated the support and dedication of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), The CARICOM Private Sector (CPSO), and the Inter-American Institute for Corporation on Agriculture (IICA).

Mario Lubetkin, Deputy Director General of the FAO and Regional Representative for LAC and His Excellency Dr. Douglas Slater, CELAC PTP Co-ordinator played critical roles in supporting the convening of the meeting.

The plan is recognised by policy makers and technical experts for its cohesiveness, while addressing the complexities and peculiarities of the region; highlighting concerns such as gender and human right issues, legal and institutional structures, and public policies. The plan is also being recognised for its added components of financing, monitoring and implementation in addressing its sustainability towards production, accessibility, and consumption; against the backdrop of climate change and mitigation efforts.

The meeting was co-chaired by Ministers of Agriculture of Chile; Hon. Esteban Valenzuela and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Hon. Saboto Caesar, and comes ahead of the CELAC Summit to be held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in March. The Summit is expected to further cement the collaboration among Member States in attaining greater food security while fostering deeper regional integration, and leveraging expertise from among Member States, utilising new innovations and technologies to facilitate increased production and minimised environmental impacts.

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