

**Briefing on the Seventeenth Session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization**

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Respected Chair and distinguished delegates,

As the Chair of the Seventeenth Session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM), it is my privilege to brief you on the meeting which was attended by all nine Governing Council members and two observers.

During the meeting, the Governing Council highlighted the importance of mechanization for agricultural modernization and rural development. It particularly noted the need to reduce post-harvest loss and waste in order to enable the transformation of food systems and promote achievement of the related SDGs as envisioned at the United Nations Food Systems Summit convened last year, for which sustainable agricultural mechanization can play a vital role.

The Governing Council was briefed about the key results of CSAM's work on sustainable agricultural mechanization in 2021. The Centre responded quickly to global United Nations initiatives like the Food Systems Summit and COP26, supported recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in agriculture, promoted resilience building, and strengthened regional integration through stakeholder networks. Two CSAM initiatives were awarded as 'Best Poverty Reduction Practices' by a consortium of Government and international partners in China. The Council commended CSAM on the achievements of its work programme, including the recognition received for its projects in 2021.

Some of the areas recommended for focus in 2022 include:

- (a) Climate-smart mechanization and green equipment;
- (b) Innovation including artificial intelligence and digital technologies;
- (c) Needs of vulnerable groups;
- (d) Post-harvest mechanization; and
- (e) Agricultural machinery custom hiring centres and testing stations.

The Council endorsed CSAM's work report and financial status report for 2021 and work plan for 2022.

Among matters for attention of the Commission, the Council recommended that CSAM conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing a regional agreement for the mutual recognition of agricultural machinery testing to enhance trade of safe and efficient machinery.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate the important role of sustainable agricultural mechanization in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs in this Decade of Action. I urge all ESCAP members and associate members, and other stakeholders, to support the important work of CSAM.

I thank you.