

# President Addresses The Virtual Plenary Of The UN Food Systems Summit.

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President Gotabaya Rajapaksa stressed that it is essential to transform global food systems to be more sustainable and that all stakeholders should work together in this regard. The President expressed these views while addressing the Virtual Plenary of the UN Food Systems Summit.

The UN Food Systems Summit commenced in New York in parallel to the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly. UN Secretary-General António Guterres made the keynote remarks of the Summit organized under the theme 'Accelerating Action for the Future We Want.'

While addressing the Summit, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa pointed out that the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in global food systems and will only worsen with climate change. Sustainable food systems are part of Sri Lanka's rich socio-cultural and economic heritage. The President said and added that the step taken by the Government to ban chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and weedicides that led to adverse health and environmental impacts, was a crucial point in the state policy on sustainable development.

The President pointed out that changing the mindset of farmers long accustomed to using chemical fertilizers was difficult, and producing a sufficient quantity of organic fertilizer domestically was challenging. "Sri Lanka welcomes technical

assistance and bilateral support in this regard,” he said.

It is essential to enhance market-oriented inclusive food value chains to reduce rural poverty when fostering organic agriculture. “Through such improvements, I am confident Sri Lanka will be able to sustainably transform its food system and ensure greater food security and better nutrition for its people,” the President said.

The President appreciated the technical assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the World Food Programme provided to Sri Lanka and thanked for the support of other global organizations and scientific bodies in this regard.

President Rajapaksa said that it should be the aim of all state leaders to ensure a better future for our people and our planet. Everyone must work together to find solutions to the universal challenges we will have to face in the future in this regard.

The President also expressed optimism that the Summit will help facilitate the transformation of the global food systems better to foster the health of both humanity and our planet.