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Good morning, ladies and gentlemen and friends. It is a real pleasure and an honor for me to be here, especially on this panel since I have been involved in agricultural production and development throughout the world for three decades. Also, because over the past years, I have been introduced with the Board of Danone to other dimensions of what we used to call the food revolution.

To address the important issue of food security, we have here a wonderful panel that I will introduce a bit later. Let us start by saying that, even though different numbers may be floating about, this year around 20 countries around the world have introduced partial or full bans on agricultural exports. Of course, this is a very worrying signal that is undermining the trust which is at the foundation of any security system in the world. It is also not the smallest countries, among them, and one of the latest is India with rice. India is a major exporter of rice with, if I am not mistaken, around 25% of world rice exports. There is an underlying global fear of a shortage of production in the world and I think we will address whether this is fantasy or reality, especially in the long run. It also shows how political this market remains. It is not just about exchanging goods it is about being in international relations and I think that our panelists will help us to understand how economics and politics interplay there.

What has also been very striking in recent years is to see those agricultural issues being raised as major environmental issues. This is not only because climate change is affecting agricultural production, of course, but also because agriculture has emerged as a major carbon emitter worldwide and is part of the goals for the climate change strategy.

Let me end by highlighting the fact that at the root of many of our challenges are poverty issues. Extreme poverty is increasingly aligned with rural areas across the world, poor farmers and as average wealth in the world increases, poverty concentrates in those rural areas and hence we have a major social problem.

One major issue for our panel is whether or not we will have an agricultural or a water war. Yes, no, this is part of the type of issues we will discuss. It is very important to talk about it because, after all, those agricultural issues tend only to be addressed when major crises occur. The last time we had hot debates around those issues was in 2007-2008, when we had similar problems arising, and then afterwards the kind of political tensions on those issues dropped. However, they are now being revived so maybe we should try to restart a conversation around those issues that can last and that can address one of the most



important structural issues in the world from the side of changing demand as well as changing production.

As I told you, we have an incredible, talented and knowledgeable panel to address these issues. Let me start with Minister Mariam Al Mheiri, who is the Minister in charge of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates, but who is also in charge of food security, a very interesting policy association. Minister Al Mheiri will close our panel and therefore have an opportunity not only to share her messages but also to react if she wants to what has been addressed before her. We will start the panel with two very senior academics, policymakers and advisors. Mr. Máximo Torero Cullen is online with us and is the Chief Economist of FAO, and then we have Pierre Jacquet is President of the Global Development Network and Professor at the École nationale de ponts et chaussées. His most prestigious incarnation was as former Chief Economist of the French Development Agency. Then we will turn to Mr. Krisnamurthi, who is currently Associate Professor of Agrobusiness at Bogor University but used to be Vice Minister of Trade and Vice Minister of Agriculture in Indonesia. He will be able to provide us with an Asian perspective on global issues. Unfortunately, we tried to have gender parity on this panel but one of our women panelists could not come, a woman, which I am just mentioning for those people in the room who complain about gender parity. That means our panelists will have a bit more time, but I ask them kindly not to go beyond 10 minutes so that we also have time to draw on the experience of the very knowledgeable people in this room. For instance, I expect people like Jean-Marie Paugam, who is the Deputy Director General of the WTO in charge of agriculture, and people like Lionel Zinsou, to provide additional perspectives in our debate.