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Second Committee, 76th Session of the UNGA
Item 24: Eradication of poverty and other development issues and sub-items
Item 26: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition and sub-items

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ENKHBOLD VORSHILOV,
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MONGOLIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

6-7 October 2021

Madam Chair,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement delivered by Kazakhstan on behalf of the Group of the LLDCs.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive reports with in-depth analyses of the today's situation.

Madam Chair,

The world stricken by the sudden pandemic of COVID-19 is slowly recovering and trying to return to normalcy. At this point, we need to think carefully about our contribution to the economic recovery and the intensification of SDGs implementation.

Today, under this agenda item, I wish to introduce briefly Mongolia's initiative to observe the year of 2026 as "International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists".

Currently, pastureland accounts for more than half of the world's land and plays an important role in pastoralism. As healthy pastures play a vital role in ensuring economic growth, adapting to the climate change, it has potential to contribute to the SDGs, especially in reducing poverty and hunger as well as the conservation of terrestrial biodiversity.

Madam Chair,

In spite of Mongolia's rapid modernization and industrialization, the traditional agriculture/livestock industry still plays an important role in the national economy. As of 2020, agriculture occupies 12.8 percent of GDP, agricultural products - 5.8 percent of

export income, and 26.3 of workforce works in the agriculture sector¹ with the agricultural land occupying 73.6 percent of the total land.

Therefore, we pursue a policy of combining traditional and modern ways of life and have set the goal of “preserving traditional nomadic heritage, ecologically friendly, sustainable and organic animal husbandry, and promoting nomadic animal heritage to the world” in the “Vision 2050” long-term development policy adopted in 2020.

However, some 76.9 percent of the country’s land is facing desertification to some extent, and it is continuing to expand. The country’s key socioeconomic sectors including agriculture and animal husbandry in addition to the natural ecosystem are adversely affected by the changing climate conditions, requiring urgent and timely actions.

Since 2014, 51-70 million heads of animals have been regularly counted in Mongolia, which is an increase of 2.0 - 2.7 times in the last 30 years. This increase in the number of livestock has improved the economy and the livelihoods of herders, but on the other hand, pastures are being overgrazed and there is a shortage of pastures. In other words, the need for improved ecosystem-based measures to improve their resilience to climate change has increased due to the relatively large number of people living in rural areas, who make up almost 20 percent of Mongolia’s households.

This is a problem not only for us, but also for other pastoral and nomadic countries; thus, since 2020, we have been working to realize this initiative on the “International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists”.

We believe that Mongolia’s initiative will raise awareness of the importance of pastureland and enhance the natural and cultural value of pastoral and nomadic livestock. It will not only to help pastoralists to increase their cultural competence and traditional pride, especially among young generations, and but also play a significant role in global sustainable development and poverty reduction both in developed and developing countries.

Madam Chair,

In this regard, my delegation wishes to underscore the support by the FAO, on the proposal of Observance of an International Year on Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026, initiated by Mongolia.

The 42nd session of the FAO Conference held on 14-18 June 2021 endorsed the proposal of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) in 2026 by the Mongolian government and adopted the Resolution.

¹ NSO

Currently, 34 Governments and 291 organizations² are now supporting the IYRP.

In addition, an International Support Group (ISG) is taking proactive actions to raise awareness and identify supporting governments and organizations and as well as their commitment to indirect, re-directed and re-branded resources.

Pastoralists are not just victims, but also a strong ally who may play a vital role regarding global challenges, including Covid-19 pandemic and climate change.

We are confident that the proclamation of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 will bring a concrete result and positive impact on increasing the world's food supply, reducing global hunger and poverty, and providing the world's population with high-quality and eco food by developing organic production of livestock products and efficient use of the pastureland.

Thus, we are looking forward to an extended support of the Member States when our delegation will table a draft resolution on Observance of an International Year on Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 to the General Assembly.

I thank you.

² International Year on Rangelands and Pastoralists <https://www.iyrp.info>