

International Mountain Day 2022

Women Move Mountains

DRAFT Speaking points

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Vatican, Casina Pio IV

Friday, 12 December 2022, 9.45–10.15

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Colleagues and Mountain Friends,

1. I am honoured to be in the Vatican to celebrate International Mountain Day 2022.
2. While we are not in the mountains, this is a splendid setting, and I know that everyone here today, like me, have mountains close to their heart.
3. Within the United Nations system, the Food and Agriculture Organization leads the activities in support of sustainable mountain development.
4. FAO hosts the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, with the support of the Governments of Italy and Andorra.
5. The Mountain Partnership is the United Nations alliance dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples, and protecting mountain environments.
6. FAO is also the mandated UN agency to lead the annual observance worldwide for International Mountain Day.

My dear mountain friends,

7. This year, the theme of the Day is “Women Move Mountains”.

8. Women are vital to conserve mountain ecosystems.
9. They have a central role in the mountains as they are primarily responsible for water and food security at household and community levels.
10. Yet mountain women often lack access to credit, land ownership, markets, trainings and digital access.
11. In some mountain societies, women and girls may be more vulnerable to food insecurity due to discriminatory socio-cultural norms and gender stereotypes.
12. We heard at the recent UN Climate Conference (COP27) that when rural women gain access to resources, services and opportunities and are given a voice, they can move mountains. They become a driving force against hunger, malnutrition, the climate crisis and rural poverty, and act as agents of change.
13. We need to double our efforts in mountains, we need see real changes.
14. It is an honour to know that we can count on the support of the Vatican for this endeavor.
15. FAO is committed in the sustainable development of mountains,
16. to achieve FAO's goal of the Four Betters – better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life for all –
17. and to ensure the Four Betters become a reality for mountains and mountain people, for the well-being of the entire world's population.
18. Thank you.