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Honorable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues and participants,

It is a great privilege to represent the food science and technology community as the current President of IUFoST at this 2024 Edition of the Global Food Regulators Summit, hosted by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the Ministry of Health and Welfare and their Partners.

I would like to start by thanking FSSAI and the Government of India for your generous hospitality and for your leadership in convening this forum – A forum that gathers major food regulatory organizations from around the world with such a strong representation from industry, academia and from international organizations is not only needed but indispensable to enable the dialogue, networking, and to shape the strategic directions and priorities for the collaborative agenda addressing food safety, security and sustainability.

Food Science is vital for human survival and contributes to addressing 13 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, none of the technology and food science solutions that may be developed can be implemented without the enabling power of the food regulatory community.

As the global voice for food science and technology, IUFoST applauds the leadership of FSSAI and the Government of India for creating and sustaining the Global Food Regulators Summit as a convening mechanism where challenges can be discussed, experiences shared, and collaborative solutions developed. This Forum addresses one of the key objectives that our community identified at the conclusion of the IUFoST/UNIDO Future of Food Summit in November 2023: To support the development of regulatory solutions that foster innovation and the development and propagation of new technologies, supporting the availability of new food sources and processes, the reduction of food loss and food waste, amongst other opportunities, to respond to food safety, security and sustainability challenges.

That is why, when it comes to building capacities, we consider that the availability of food regulatory science capacity is of crucial importance to accompany efforts of investment in addressing the challenges of the food production sector in the low- and middle-income countries. As a former regulator, I cannot emphasize enough such importance.

This key driver has led to the creation of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS), a disciplinary group of IUFoST dedicated to food regulatory science, with the aim to contribute to knowledge generation, dissemination and to building competencies in various food scientific disciplines supporting food regulatory decision-making.

This meeting of the Global Food Regulators Summit will no doubt enable us to discuss avenues of collaboration, of creating networks and coalitions to further contribute to building competencies, capacities and to support the generation and availability of scientific information that underpins such food regulatory decision-making, globally.

Through such enhanced capacities, we would all aim not only to strengthen food control systems nationally, but we also endeavor to enhance our collective contribution to the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the Global Food Standard Setting body, which remains our global reference and anchor, helping us all build a more convergent food regulatory environment, serving the protection of consumers and offering a fair environment for food trade.

Thank you again for your leadership and thank you for giving us such a unique opportunity.

We look forward to the Summit discussions and deliberations.