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# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

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**Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security  
(CFS)**

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1. Chairperson, Honorable Ministers, Director-General, Excellencies, Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen,
2. It is an honor for me to make a statement at the Regional Conference for Europe as Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). I am grateful to the Director General, Mr. Qu Dongyu, for this opportunity.
3. All countries in the world are going through very difficult times with the COVID-19 pandemic. Hunger and food insecurity are increasing dramatically, further impairing the achievement of SDG-2 and other related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. CFS provides policy guidance in many areas to address the challenges of food security and nutrition and is more relevant than ever to help your countries identify relevant actions. CFS policy guidance has proven to be relevant to many countries of the region.
5. Let me first say a few words about the Committee as some of you may not be familiar with CFS.
  - a. The Committee was established in 1974 as a committee of the FAO Council but was then fundamentally reformed in 2009 to become an independent multistakeholder platform for dialogue and debate on global food security and nutrition policy, jointly supported by FAO, IFAD and WFP.
  - b. CFS's vision and roles were redefined in 2009 to focus on the key challenges of ending hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition, for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.
  - c. A remarkable feature of the committee is its inclusiveness, which gives its policy recommendations an unrivalled level of legitimacy and authority. The CFS Advisory Group includes all the main actors involved in food security and nutrition from the UN System, civil society, international agricultural research systems, international and regional financial institutions and private sector and philanthropic foundations.
  - d. Since the 2009 Reform, CFS policy debates and work have benefited from scientific evidence and knowledge provided by a CFS High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE), whose reports are outstanding.
  - e. Finally, this unique UN platform reports to the United Nations General Assembly through FAO Conference and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
6. Let me now present to you CFS achievements since you met at the regional conference in Voronezh two years ago, as well as the CFS programme of work for 2020-23.
7. Since its reform in 2009, CFS has issued outstanding policy work, providing developed and developing countries with effective instruments to fight hunger and malnutrition. I will mention:
  - a. The well-known *Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security* (CFS-VGGT);
  - b. The *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems* (CFS-RAI principles);
  - c. The *Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises* (CFS-FFA); and
  - d. 14 sets of policy recommendations stemming from CFS HLPE reports on a wide range of food security and nutrition topics.

8. All CFS policy products can be downloaded from the [CFS website](#).
9. CFS is currently developing *Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition*, for expected endorsement at CFS 47 in February 2021. The preparation of these Guidelines is informed by the CFS HLPE Report on Nutrition and Food Systems, and by contributions received at open meetings and regional consultations in 2019.
10. CFS is also developing policy recommendations on agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems, based on a CFS HLPE report on the same topic. We anticipate negotiating these next Spring, and adopting them next year ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit.
11. CFS will also provide global policy guidance on new topics, as per its programme of work for 2020-23, approved at CFS 46 in October 2019:
  - a. Gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition. The TORs of the Voluntary Guidelines are expected to be endorsed at CFS 47 in February 2021 and the Guidelines at CFS 49 in October 2022.
  - b. Youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems, to promote policies that foster enabling environments capable of tapping into the energy and skills of youth to improve food systems (endorsement foreseen at CFS 49 in October 2022).
  - c. Data collection and analysis with the objective of strengthening the capacity of countries to collect, analyse and utilize quality data to improve decision-making on food security and nutrition (endorsement foreseen at CFS 50 in 2023).
  - d. Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition (including gender inequalities), with an analysis of the drivers of socio-economic inequalities between actors within agrifood systems that influence food security and nutrition outcomes (discussion to start at the end of 2023).
  - e. And, we will be looking at ways to review our Policy recommendations on Water, and on Climate Change, to see how they have been used, and if more can be done.
12. Honourable Ministers, Excellences, dear colleagues, the situation today is extremely worrying. We all agree that we must act to address the pressing challenges of today. More so, after the coronavirus pandemic exposed the vulnerability and weaknesses of our global food systems.
13. The Committee on World Food Security was reformed in 2009 to help countries progress towards the achievement of SDG-2 and the fulfilment the 2030 Agenda and will make every effort to support your country with its policy guidance.
14. CFS also needs you, members and stakeholders, to participate actively and constructively in its debates, to gain full ownership of its outcomes and to communicate and implement its policy recommendations where appropriate.
15. If your country is not yet a member, I urge you to join now.
16. I am grateful to the Director-General for the support expressed to the work of the CFS, and accordingly I would like to underline the importance of FAO field offices supporting the work of the CFS, and to see how best to operationalize CFS products, and achieve more concrete results.
17. I look forward to welcoming you to Rome at the next plenary session of the Committee, in February 2021, to continue this conversation.
18. My last words are to thank again FAO for its great contribution and continued support to CFS.
19. Thank you for your attention.