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

It is an honour to address you as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), on behalf of its Chairperson, Ambassador Gerda Verburg of the Netherlands, who was unable to attend, as planned, as she is required to attend to the activities of Queen Máxima of the Netherlands on her visit to Rome. The Chairperson asked me to convey her greetings and best wishes for a successful meeting.

This is the third time the Regional Conference has welcomed Committee officials. Former CFS Chairs – Ambassadors Noel de Luna of the Philippines and Yaya Olaniran of Nigeria – reported on progress during their term. Today I will update you on CFS activities since the Buenos Aires Regional Conference in March 2012.

I think the first point of note is that the CFS reform, adopted in 2009, was one of the most far-reaching ever made of an FAO Committee. The reform strengthened the Committee's role as the main platform for promoting coordinated policies and actions to achieve and improve food security and nutrition worldwide. One of its guiding principles is to build and strengthen linkages and working arrangements between sectors key to meeting the Committee's objectives. Its tasks and activities involve governments, civil society, the private sector and academia, as well as technical research institutions and international organizations.

The Committee meets in plenary session once a year, at which time it adopts resolutions and recommendations. Final decisions are taken by the Committee's member countries, which currently number 126. Their decisions are based on a robust process of consultation and collaboration with the aforementioned sectors. As part of the reform and in line with Committee recommendations, both civil society and the private sector have established coordination mechanisms for preparing and submitting their proposals and positions. Today they are stakeholders in this process and represent hundreds of organizations and millions of farmers, producers and entrepreneurs.

Another core source of support is the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, which the Committee established to prepare science-based reports on selected topics for subsequent follow-up. The panel is composed of academics, scientists and professionals from different regions of the world and has a 15-member Steering Committee that preserves the same distribution and balance, which includes three representatives from the Latin America and Caribbean region.

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Public consultations, round tables and diplomatic negotiations are held on the basis of inputs from the High-Level Panel of Experts and other academic and scientific sources. This fruitful process enables the Committee's annual plenary to adopt relevant and informed decisions, fostering policy coordination and convergence by developing strategies, guidelines and policy recommendations. All are based on best practice, experience, contributions from national and regional levels, expert advice and the views of stakeholders. The main focus of action at all times is on building social and gender equity. This makes the Committee the key platform for promoting collaboration among all those involved in and committed to food security and nutrition.

Let us now review the results of these efforts, starting with global strategic actions. Foremost of these is the first international instrument agreed by the Committee, which was the result of two years of negotiations: the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. The voluntary guidelines were adopted in May 2012 and provide those interested in institutional and policy strengthening with guidance on securing rights of access and tenure to land and other natural resources, which are key to fighting hunger and poverty. On 14 May 2014, the Committee meets to review progress with the guidelines since their adoption and experience in implementing them. The meeting will be webcast live at: www.fao.org/webcast/.

In addition, the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) was approved in 2012. The GSF brings together in a single document all references and practical guidelines on strategies, policies and measures validated by wide-ranging participation and consultation within the Committee. It aims to improve coordination and concerted action, recognizing the central role of country ownership of programmes to combat food insecurity and malnutrition.

The Committee hopes to add a further two instruments to those already mentioned, resulting from the consultations and negotiations currently under way.

The Committee is working actively on developing Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. The principles should help to maximize the positive impact of investment, as well as warning of any adverse effects, to ensure that investment contributes effectively to food security and nutrition. The principles will be voluntary and non-binding, and should be interpreted and applied in accordance with national and international law. A first draft has been produced following public consultations, including the one held in Panama with the valuable support of the FAO Regional Office. The draft will be considered at a May 2014 meeting to discuss and agree on a final draft for submission to the Committee's plenary in October. We urge all countries and sectors to participate in these discussions to ensure wide-ranging support for the debate and its outcomes.

Negotiations on the Agenda for Action for Addressing Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises are progressing steadily. What is meant by protracted crises? Those occurring in territories or regions where multiple causes have induced severe food insecurity and where governance and public administration are weak or have collapsed, making livelihoods and food systems unsustainable. The agenda will provide practical recommendations for every situation, not only in response to emergencies but also proposing measures to build the resilience of countries and regions undergoing such unfortunate crises. International consultations have also been held and, in June 2014, a meeting will take place to agree the final draft, which will be submitted to the Committee at its October session. Again, we urge all to participate to contribute their input and experience.

The Committee also prepares recommendations on specific issues with multiple impacts. Over the past two years, it has adopted more than 70 recommendations on the linkages between food security and nutrition and such issues as climate change, biofuels, social protection and investment in smallholder agriculture.

The plenary in October will make recommendations on the role of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition and on food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems. The reports of the High-Level Panel of Experts on these topics will be presented in June.

The topic on which the 2015 plenary session will adopt recommendations is "Water and food security", to follow up a sensitive issue already discussed at such important international events as Rio+20 and the Global Water Forum.

In the less distant future there is the CFS 41st Plenary Session in October 2014. We have already discussed the international instruments that it expects to approve and the issues on which it will adopt recommendations. Now let us look at its other important activities. Under the reform, the Committee must strive for a world free from hunger where countries implement the Voluntary Guidelines to support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. CFS 41 will review the dissemination and implementation of these guidelines 10 years after their adoption, to ascertain how they have impacted on legal and political frameworks and institutional mandates, as well as on cooperation, international organizations and global governance.

It will also consider the Post-2015 Development Agenda currently being developed by the United Nations. The Committee is studying the best way to contribute to this important process, in compliance with the course of negotiations. Other inputs include the results of the CSF Chairperson's mission to New York in February 2014, during which she attended one of the meetings of the open-ended working group on the issue.

In 2015, a High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Market will also be held. This issue was driven by countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region, aware of the challenge faced by family farmers and smallholders in marketing their products. The forum will examine this situation and explore alternatives.

A Round Table on Building Knowledge, Skills and Talent Development to further Food and Nutrition Security will also be held in 2015. Food security and nutrition workers should be provided with the required training, including by enhancing the extension services of national and international organizations.

However, the Committee's remit is not confined to approving guidelines and recommendations. It is also developing a system to monitor implementation of CFS decisions and the way in which outputs are utilized. It is hoped that all participants and stakeholders will share methods for using the Committee's outputs, successes and lessons to be learned.

An active communication and outreach strategy is being implemented as part of this process. The Committee has a website providing access to background information, documents, consultations and the results of its work. It also contains information on meetings and events organized by the Committee and transmitted via the internet, together with reports by the High-Level Panel of Experts. All this is available in the official languages of the United Nations. The contact details are given online. However, there is also a campaign to engage with regions and stakeholders that do not have internet access.

As you can see, the Committee is highly active, reflecting the interest and support it has secured. Since the 2009 reform, it has been working with multiple stakeholders towards a common goal. These stakeholders have helped the Committee to address a variety of issues, many of which pose a real challenge because of diverging perspectives, interests and needs. Exchanges of view in the Committee are frank and do not always result in consensus. However, as there is always a desire to find common ground, the Committee has made significant progress and produced concrete outputs. The key is to continue developing trust and understanding among stakeholders in order to achieve successful and sustainable outcomes for the benefit of future generations.

This is entirely feasible, as the past two years have demonstrated. We have consolidated the Committee as the open and inclusive platform specified in the reform – and it has worked. Time constraints prevent me from talking at length on the Committee's progress with its internal organization but I can confirm that, over the past two years, the Committee's rules and structure have been further defined and clarified, and this is, of course, an ongoing process.

In conclusion, Ministers and delegates, all countries and stakeholders have joined forces to meet the challenge by designing and adopting innovative, robust and constructive international instruments and policy recommendations.

A point of note is that the Latin America and Caribbean region continues to spearhead this process. The region is present in all Committee working groups, consultations and negotiations. Not only is it present, it also plays an active role by submitting initiatives and proposals. That is because the Latin America and Caribbean region

is not only a major food producer, it also serves as a model of successful experiences and outcomes in the key issue of fighting hunger and malnutrition, where it has identified poverty as the cause of these twin scourges and decided to resolve them by means of social inclusion. This approach and experience are what the region contributes to the Committee's activities and, in view of their success, we urge all stakeholders to continue to participate with the same enthusiasm.

Thank you for your attention.