



Extracts from the Statement for the 31st FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and Caribbean by the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The extracts below are taken from the statement made by the Chair of CFS Noel D. De Luna to the 31st FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean on 28 April 2010, Agenda Item 7 – The Role of FAO Regional Conferences in the Reformed CFS LARC/10/7.

As Chair of the Committee on World Food Security - the CFS - it is my privilege and pleasure to address you today and to say a few words about the CFS reform and the challenges and opportunities this presents in the context of this Regional Conference.

A big part of the reform is more involvement from the regions and countries. The reformed CFS can help bring more attention to the food security situation in your region and the lessons you have learned can be shared with others. So, while it is my privilege to be here today, I am also here because CFS needs your involvement to succeed. You are a crucial part of the reform.

To that end, in the 36th session this coming October we are proposing to include country and regional case studies highlighting lessons learned and showcasing best practices. These experiences are fundamental pillars of the link between the CFS reform process and the regions and I'm sure this region will have important contributions to make.

The Latin American and Caribbean region has other important inputs too. The Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative 2025 is an excellent example of how to successfully tackle food security at a regional level. These valuable lessons should be shared.

We all need to learn from each other. An integral part of the CFS reform process was involvement of multiple stakeholders in the debates, and this is now a feature of the reformed CFS. Food security is such a big challenge the more people who participate, the better.

The CFS reform document suggests ways in which Member Nations can advance food security and nutrition by establishing or strengthening multi-disciplinary mechanisms based on a multistakeholder partnership. Such measures would improve the effectiveness of regional bodies to address food security and would also help the reformed CFS perform its overall role. This Conference may wish to consider how it could contribute to these efforts.

From a regional point of view, the reformed CFS presents two challenges. The first is for this Conference to decide how the newly reformed CFS, seen as a process or dialogue rather than a one-off event, can reduce hunger and food insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean. The second is to consider how regional structures can be modified or strengthened to link up more effectively with the CFS. It is not the intention of the CFS to create new structures. Rather, the CFS wants to build on existing structures and networks.

The desired outcome would be for regional bodies to more effectively address pressing regional food security challenges, including those resulting from natural catastrophes like Haiti.

Also, the causes of persisting hunger in a net food exporting region need to be addressed. Progress towards realizing a "Latin America Without Hunger" within the framework of a right to food approach has enjoyed considerable political support across the region. Indeed, the

promotion of a rights based approach to food security is very impressive and can serve as a model for other regions.

The document LARC/10/7 has other suggestions as to how to implement the CFS reform at a regional level such as improving the sharing of information on food security and nutrition policies and programmes and to be more inclusive by inviting non voting members to participate in the debates and contribute to the work.

I am extremely happy to note that in the food security campaigns in the Latin American region, the participation of other multistakeholders has been encouraged. Such an experience should be made known to other regions who seem to be slow in developing their own food security and nutrition programmes.

I would like to end by again stressing how important this dialogue is between us so that we can learn from each other and support each other's actions and initiatives as we work towards our common cause. It's time that we work together to remove the scourge of hunger from the face of the earth. Let me repeat - the world is watching and they are expecting results. We cannot miss this unique opportunity. We cannot let down the millions of people who undeservedly pass their days in hunger.

In two years time when the next Conference is held in this region, I look forward to celebrating with you the positive results of our joint efforts to ensure food security for all.

Finally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Government and people of Panama for their hospitality in hosting this conference.