



12 December 2011

Dear Permanent Representatives,

During the 37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) held from 17-22 October 2011 and the subsequent FAO Council (28 November-2 December), Members agreed that the CFS-led Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, should be concluded as soon as possible. The CFS Bureau, in consultation with the Advisory Group and Secretariat, agreed that these negotiations should be held from 5 – 9 March 2012.

It is thus my pleasure to invite your countries to participate in the final round of CFS-led Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security that will take place at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy from 5 – 9 March 2012.

The purpose of the negotiations is to reach agreement on a final version of the Voluntary Guidelines in English by Friday, 9 March. The final document will then be translated into all official languages before it is considered for adoption by a special Session of CFS being planned no earlier than three weeks after the translation is completed in all languages, tentatively during the period of 14-18 May 2012. Details concerning the negotiation process as well as work to be conducted by the Language Harmonization Group beforehand, are provided in the attached letter from the Chair of the Open Ended Working Group, Dr Gregory Myers.

The participation of your country in these negotiations would be highly appreciated and valued. A copy of the Voluntary Guidelines document in all languages, which reflects the current state of the negotiations, is available on the Permanent Representatives web site.

Should delegates from your countries need a visa to enter Italy, feel free to use this invitation as an official document to assist them with their application. They should please enquire from the Italian Consulate or competent Diplomatic Mission in your country about the formalities that need to be accomplished. Visa applications must be submitted well in advance of departure, as up to three weeks may be required for an Italian visa to be issued. Exclusively those participants traveling from a country where there is no Italian Consulate or other competent Diplomatic Mission may obtain a visa on arrival in Rome, provided that they advise the Secretariat of the meeting (vg-tenure@fao.org) of their full name, date of birth, nationality, passport number, issue and expiry dates, flight number, date and hour of arrival and their full travel itinerary, which must not include any other Schengen country. This information must reach FAO well in advance of the arrival of participants to permit the Protocol Branch to request that a visa be issued at Rome airport. We will be happy to support their application with a Note Verbale if required. Participants failing to comply with the above will not be allowed to enter Italy by the Italian authorities.

I trust that your countries will be able to accept this invitation, and remain at your disposal for any further information or clarification you may require.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran', is written over a horizontal line.

Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran
Chairman, Committee on World Food Security