

166th Session of the Council

Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

Secretariat response to written inputs from the Council

FAO thanks the Dominican Republic for its comments on the institutionalization of the cost and affordability of healthy diets indicators, and takes note of its encouragement to FAO to continue efforts to systematically monitor the cost and affordability of healthy diets and support Members to transform agrifood systems to ensure healthy diets are affordable for all.

FAO thanks Argentina for their comment that the high cost of nutritious foods is among the most serious impediments to accessing the healthy nutrition that is essential for ensuring a healthy and active lifestyle and preventing all forms of malnutrition. This endorsement provides further confirmation that FAO should continue its efforts to institutionalize the cost and affordability indicators to enable the systematic monitoring of these. FAO acknowledges the comment by Argentina on the impact of agricultural trade distortions on the cost of nutritious foods. FAO's analysis shows that trade can improve economic access to food for the most vulnerable populations by bringing down food prices and reducing excessive food price volatility. Trade and related policies play an important role in this regard and, as such, it is essential that governments carefully consider the impacts on the cost of nutritious food and avoid creating unnecessary barriers to trade. At its 73rd (Extraordinary) Session, the Committee on Commodity Problems *“recalled and underlined the importance that, in line with the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and in keeping with their commitments under the WTO agreements, Members correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions as well as eliminate and do not create unnecessary and unjustified barriers to trade in agricultural markets”*. It should also be noted that an integrated and coherent set of policies within a clear strategy will have a greater and more lasting impact than any isolated policy action towards the objective of healthier diets.

FAO thanks Guinea and the Africa Regional Group on their endorsement of the importance and pertinence of indicators for the cost and affordability of healthy diets and their analysis and for communicating that transforming agrifood systems to ensure healthy diets are affordable for all is one of the key factors for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2. FAO is in agreement that this is one of the key factors to achieve SDG 2 and will continue the work to enable FAO to institutionalize and systematically monitor and report on the cost and affordability of healthy diets, at the global, regional and national level.