

168th Session of the Council
Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version
Item 4.1 – Food Coalition

Member Name	Comments
<p style="text-align: center;">Australia (Wed 17/11/2021 7:03)</p>	<p>Australia notes the information provided on the Food Coalition in CL 168/4 and we respectfully provide the following comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Australia welcomed the advice provided at the Joint Meeting of the 132nd Programme Committee and 188th Finance Committee that Food Coalition proposals will dovetail with the FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. Noting that Members may be contributing to COVID-19 recovery efforts via other mechanisms, we highlight the importance of avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring that any proposals seek to harmonise/amplify broader global efforts – including any potential follow-up processes and initiative arising in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit. 2. Australia also welcomed the advice provided at the Joint Meeting of the 132nd Programme Committee and 188th Finance Committee that Food Coalition proposals will be resourced by voluntary funding. 3. We look forward to receiving further information on any proposals made through the Food Coalition coordination mechanism, including proposed workplans and budgets.
<p style="text-align: center;">Argentina (Wed 17/11/2021 16:21)</p>	<p>Firstly, as Argentina stated during the 132nd Programme Committee, we reiterate that the G20 Matera Declaration encouraged partners and stakeholders “<i>to collaborate with or join the Food Coalition launched by FAO</i>”.</p> <p>From a technical viewpoint, we understand as G20 members that the language of the Declaration acknowledges the Coalition's proposal and initiative but does not necessarily endorse its formation or future actions. We believe that FAO should take this technicality into account.</p> <p>Along the same lines, regarding the reference in the document prepared by the Chief Economist, Máximo Torero, where it is stated that voluntary funds will be earmarked for “<i>development projects as an emergency</i>”, we would like to reaffirm our conviction that it is crucial to encourage appropriate cooperation between the three Rome-Based Agencies. This will result in each Agency conducting its actions taking into account its comparative advantages, specificities, capacities and mandates.</p> <p>Therefore, the World Food Programme is in a privileged position, and possesses superlative skills, to respond to emergency situations due to its track record and technical expertise. With its extensive experience, FAO is undoubtedly the key international agency for promoting agricultural and productive development on the ground.</p> <p>The triple nexus tells us that prioritizing humanitarian action as part of the response (as is the case in many long-term and cyclical crises) is not enough. This prioritization of humanitarian action can also mean ignoring underlying causes of conflict and vulnerability, including poverty, inequality and the absence of functioning democratic systems.</p>

However, this does not mean that one UN agency alone has to cover all the actions necessary to respond to the triple nexus. Instead, each organization has to play its part according to its mandate and comparative advantages in close cooperation with other agencies (overcoming compartmentalization).

We emphasize this point in order to avoid any future overlapping of activities on the ground that could be promoted by the voluntary contributions of certain regions seeking to expand their vision and approaches through the Food Coalition. At the same time, as we have stated previously, we would like to obtain more information on:

- 1.- What the Coalition's governance mechanism will be.
- 2.- What type of projects will be promoted by this entity.
- 3.- What will be the degree of FAO's involvement in the design, implementation and monitoring of future projects.
- 4.- How FAO's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme will tie in with the Coalition's actions.
- 5.- How any coordination between the Coalition and the functioning of the G20 will be implemented.

After reading the document, we also found that it mentioned the "*need to transform food systems*". As we have repeatedly said, improving food systems depends on the context, needs, circumstances and priorities of individual countries. Advocating global transformation without taking into account subtleties and the fact that there is no single solution for achieving agro-productive sustainability seems inappropriate to us.

The document also mentions the importance of food systems and world trade in ensuring global food security. On this point, we would like to reiterate that regional and international trade is an essential and determining factor for ensuring global food security and generating sustainability in the livelihoods of millions of people, especially micro- and smallholder producers, by strengthening local economies.

When the pandemic was at its global peak, agricultural, biological and industrial supply chains proved to be robust, resilient and reliable in maintaining a supply of safe and wholesome food to the world, while expanding the supply of healthy diets and, in the main, balancing price imbalances.

At the same time, the document properly draws attention to the price escalation for certain products, which could even be interpreted as examples of high price volatility for certain food types. However, from a financial viewpoint, it is wrong to attach blame to countries producing raw materials and foods for this phenomenon. We believe that agro-export activity, especially in developing countries, is a key element of the economic fabric in those countries, which generates genuine income for their micro, small, medium and large-scale producers and also allows an influx of foreign currency to tackle situations where there are external restrictions.

In any case, the reason for the rising food prices could lie in the policies that developed countries have carried out – and continue to carry out – in order to address the pandemic. These accelerated the expansion of their monetary, regional and/or national bases, which automatically placed pressure on the demand trend and led to inflationary price hikes. At the same time, the maintenance of distortionary incentives and subsidies, which are even spreading in some regions, helped interfere with the natural fluctuation of market prices, exacerbating the price escalation of some products and possible qualitative restrictions on exports.

	<p>As we have said on other occasions, international agricultural trade is still marked by strong structural distortions, whose negative impact is aggravated by the spread of sanitary, phytosanitary and technical barriers that are not underpinned by scientific evidence.</p> <p>Lastly, we would like to thank Italy for breathing life into this initiative, thus giving evidence of its commitment to the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition.</p>
<p>Japan (Fri 19/11/2021 13:20)</p>	<p>Japan expressed its interest in the Food Coalition in January 2021. We hope that the Food Coalition will contribute to developing sustainable food systems, including the COVID-19 response.</p> <p>We would like to work with the Coalition in various dimensions, such as promoting a guiding principle for strengthening the global food supply chain, which FAO is formulating with Japan's support.</p> <p>Japan requested FAO to share the list of Food Coalition members and proposals submitted to the Food Coalition, and its detailed activities.</p>
<p>Spain (Fri 19/11/2021 19:05)</p>	<p>With regard to the Food Coalition, we would like to highlight the following:</p> <p>Spain fully supports the statements delivered on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.</p> <p>While thanking FAO for its work on the Food Coalition, recently endorsed at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rome, we would like to have more information on its implementation, funding and progress.</p> <p>We encourage FAO to ensure that the Coalition is consistent with the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and with FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31.</p> <p>We also consider it crucial to the success of the Coalition that it can share its results with other initiatives that are also seeking to achieve SDG 2, Zero Hunger.</p> <p>Finally, we would like to ask FAO how the Coalition will contribute to the follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit outcomes, including the other resulting coalitions.</p>
<p>European Union (Mon 22/11/2021 20:42)</p>	<p>I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding item 5 on the agenda of the 168th Session of the FAO Council.</p> <p>The Candidate Countries Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia¹ and Turkey, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of San Marino, align themselves with this written statement.</p> <p>The EU and its Member States appreciate the work done by FAO to date on the Food Coalition Initiative as part of the FAO's response to COVID-19. We encourage partners and stakeholders to collaborate and contribute, or join the Food Coalition - as stated in the June 2021 Matera Declaration and reaffirmed in the October 2021 G20 Rome Leaders' Declaration.</p> <p>The EU and its Member States noted the first call for proposals under the Food Coalition and would welcome information on applications, on the methodology used and the projects selected. This will help guarantee transparency</p>

¹ The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

	<p>and ensure that the objectives pursued by the Food Coalition are coherent with the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, and FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31.</p> <p>We look forward to receiving the procedural and financial details and encourage FAO to provide regular updates on the FAO website, including information on the membership and available funds, and to periodically inform FAO's governing bodies on progress made.</p> <p>We would also appreciate more information from Management on how the work of the Food Coalition must be seen in relation to the core mandate of FAO and on how it intends to operationalise the Food Coalition, also in the context of the outcomes of the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.</p> <p>Lastly, we would encourage cooperation and sharing of information and lessons learnt with other initiatives aiming at achieving SDG 2.</p>
<p>Thailand (29/11/2021 16:19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand takes note of the progress made by the Food Coalition in its first year of activity. • Thailand supports the Food Coalition and has actively participated in the formulation of a multi-lateral, multi-stakeholder project on 'Promoting the uptake of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition' to be submitted to Members.