



COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Forty-sixth Session
"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

Rome, 14-18 October 2019

STATEMENT BY THE CFS CHAIRPERSON

1. On 26 June 1945, 147 delegates from 50 countries assembled in San Francisco —on the Pacific coast of North America— to inscribe signatures on a document titled “Charter of the United Nations”.
2. Four were women; one of them, Minerva Bernardino, represented the Dominican Republic.
3. A coalition of like-minded ideologues had attempted to conquer the world, unleashing war in the name of racial and cultural predominance, exclusion, and hate.
4. The victorious alliance understood that stability and well-being, which are necessary for peace among nations, required global institutions for promoting rights-based economic and social development.
5. Three and a half years later, on 10 December 1948, member States adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it was Bernardino who proposed that the original formulation ‘Rights of Man’ be changed to human rights.
6. And so it is that the international community agreed to enshrine the fundamental human right to food. This is the foundation upon which the Committee on World Food Security is built, and the source of legitimacy for everything we do.
7. We all know the causes of food insecurity. Even if the experts kept them in secret, common sense would soon reveal the reasons for the persistence of hunger and malnutrition.

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8. The main drivers are the ravages of climate change and armed conflicts, and the migrations they provoke.
9. And yet, we continue generating the gases that have triggered—and continue to exacerbate—a climate crisis that is already upon us, as every food producer knows all too well.
10. Family farmers are the engines of food production, responsible for 80% of global output. Instead of investing in them by developing seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other inputs as public goods, the trade in weapons promotes perverse incentives.
11. Then, in the face of exploding bombs and weather extremes, the most vulnerable are forced to make a choice: either succumb to hunger, or migrate to seek survival somewhere else.
12. Enter the demagogues, peddling fear to conceal that they can offer no solutions.
13. It is here, in this unique space, where we find the proven manner for building a better world: agreeing on common goals and advancing together, steadily.
14. This week we will bring forward a set of guidelines on nutrition and food systems, promoting healthy diets from a holistic perspective.
15. The science is clear: overconsumption of sugars, salt and trans fats are poisoning us; legislators must intervene so that consumers can make informed choices.
16. We will discuss the 2019 report on the state of food security and nutrition in the world, which is populated with cold statistics, reveals alarming trends, and poses formidable challenges. The SOFI report also presents ways forward.
17. We will commemorate the International Day of Rural Women, in a special session I have asked CFS Vice-Chair Valentina Savastano to conduct.
18. We will tackle the challenges of urbanization, as the world's cities come up with pioneering approaches for sustainability.
19. We will promote multi-stakeholder partnerships that mirror the inclusiveness of CFS.
20. We will also commence working on innovative approaches, such as agro-ecology.
21. We will showcase the pillars of the Decade of Action on family farming.
22. We will take stock of how CFS policy recommendations are succeeding at country level, as they improve the livelihoods of smallholders by expanding their access to markets.
23. And we will debate a truly ambitious four-year program of work, for CFS to address gender, youth, data systems, and inequalities.
24. We have just over ten years for achieving Zero Hunger and the other goals; it has been said that 2030 will constitute the most consequential turning point in history, as the full potential of humanity is redirected from the struggle to eliminate hunger and all forms of malnutrition.
25. When the history of this coming decade is told, the things we are about to do here—this week—will resound much like what others before us did 74 years ago.