



COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

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

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STATEMENT BY THE CFS CHAIRPERSON

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Friends and colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my pleasure to address you today at the opening of the 49th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The latest report on the 'State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World' shows that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a terrible impact on communities around the world, driving up hunger and malnutrition even further, and reversing progress made in many areas. COVID-19 has changed our lives and highlighted just how fragile our food systems are.

Even more people have lost or will lose their jobs because of the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and national and global inequalities are set to rise.

Since early last year, CFS has brought its members and stakeholders together to exchange experiences and lessons learned on the implications and potential impacts of the pandemic on food security and nutrition.

The Committee also requested its High Level Panel of Experts (CFS HLPE) to produce an Issues Paper on the Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition, which I urge you all to read.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since CFS reform in 2009, CFS has continued demonstrating its collective commitment to providing evidence-based policy guidance on issues related to food security and nutrition for all by serving as a platform for exchanging good practices and driving policy convergence. CFS will continue striving to ensure all key stakeholders are heard.

Using a multi-stakeholder and inclusive approach, CFS had many achievements in 2021. The Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition and the Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches were endorsed at CFS47 in February and CFS48 Special Session in June, respectively.

And, CFS is taking up its next workstream on ‘Gender Equality and Women and Girls’ Empowerment’ and then will continue to work on its other approved workstreams – youth, Data Analysis, and Inequalities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As evidenced by the many challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we need fundamental, systemic change to address hunger, sustainability, malnutrition, and inequality, while upholding human rights, alleviating poverty, and supporting inclusive and sustainable development for all. Such changes can only be driven and coordinated by a strong multilateral system. Therefore, the work of CFS and its HLPE has never been more relevant than before.

At the end of the Food Systems Summit, we heard that more than 150 countries had made “commitments” to “transform their food systems”, championing “greater participation and equity, especially amongst farmers, women, youth and indigenous group.” We see an opportunity to build on this momentum. As mentioned before, we need to build far more equitable, resilient, and sustainable food systems.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Developing global policies and guidelines is half of the job, but we still have the other half of the job to do, that is, to promote the uptake and implementation of those policies at the local and national levels.

We expect that CFS Global policy products including the *Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition* and others will be translated into concrete actions on the ground at the country level.

I also take the opportunity to have here the Director-General of FAO, Mr QU, the President of IFAD, Mr Hougbo, and the Executive Director of WFP, Mr Beasley, to recall that “we need the RBAs to help CFS with the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition and other CFS policy products” which can help us improve access to affordable and nutritious food that nurtures people and sustains the planet.

We need your strong commitments, bold actions, innovative solutions and applicable strategies to transform our food systems and to achieve all SDGs.

Let me conclude by thanking the CFS Secretariat for its ceaseless commitment to carrying our work forward, and to you all for your great contributions and support to CFS and for your commitment to rebuilding forward better.

Thank you.