



## COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

### Thirty-sixth Session

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### STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)

**Delivered by Ms Yokiko Omura, Vice President of IFAD**

Excellencies,  
Honourable Delegates,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to thank the Chair and members of the Bureau for the major efforts they have put into reforming the CFS over the past year. This year's agenda, and the activities unfolding this week, clearly show the high level of commitment and work that has gone into this reform process.

As we are all aware, while there has been encouraging progress on hunger and poverty reduction in many regions, globally the world is not on track to achieve the first Millennium Development goal of halving the proportion of people living in hunger and poverty. As Dr Diouf noted – the number of hungry people in the world today is higher than in 1996, when the hunger-reduction target was set.

The numbers, on their own, can seem abstract, but we must remember that each one of the 925 million hungry people is a person – somebody's mother, somebody's daughter, somebody's father, somebody's son.

We will not end be able to end hunger unless we also reduce extreme poverty and vulnerability.

In many countries -- particularly in sub Saharan Africa – this means making a major effort to boost food production and help poor rural people adapt to the impact of climate change. But in many countries, it also means ensuring that poor rural people have access to the food they need to be healthy and productive.

It is one of life's cruel ironies that smallholder farmers often do not have the tools they need to grow enough food for their families. Three-quarters of Africa's malnourished children live on small farms. In Asia and Latin America, farm children also often go hungry.

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Indeed, more than two-thirds of the world's extremely poor people live in the rural areas of developing countries, many of them on small farms.

But as farmers, they have tremendous potential to increase food production and improve food security. Indeed, small farms are often more productive, per hectare, than large farms, when their agro-ecological conditions and access to technology are similar.

Investing in small farmers -- improving their access to land, improving their access to appropriate technology, improving their access to financial services and markets, and responding to their other requirements -- is the most effective way to generate a broad-based movement out of poverty and hunger.

This has been increasingly recognized in the past few years, as evidenced by the range of new initiatives by governments and international organizations that directly or indirectly support smallholder farming.

One innovative example is the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP). This brings together donors - including several governments and the Gates Foundation, a number of partners (including IFAD), and representatives of civil society organizations - to fund projects that boost and commercialize smallholder production.

However, we need to be clear that increased investment in agriculture can deliver results only in the context of supportive and coherent national and international policy and partnership frameworks.

The Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda have taken us in the right direction, but improving aid effectiveness is only one part of the solution. It is equally important that all stakeholders work together to share their experiences and their solutions and to create supportive policies that reflect the global, as well as local, nature of food security.

It is here that the CFS -- a reformed CFS which is more inclusive, with active participation of civil society, farmers' organizations and the private sector, a CFS which is now equipped with a stronger Secretariat, a broad-based Advisory Group and a panel of internationally accredited experts -- It is here that the reformed CFS can play a central role.

We agree with FAO Director General Diouf that there is a pressing need for the CFS and the Panel of Experts to focus on **food price volatility** and food commodity markets, both at international and national levels.

The **impact of climate change on agriculture** is another priority area that directly and increasingly threatens production and food security. The issue of **secure and equitable access to land and water** in a context of growing competition for natural resources is also extremely important. These all pose major challenges for farmers and food producers as they strive to invest in and modernize agriculture.

IFAD believes that the CFS has a very important role to play in the years ahead. We have participated intensively in the CFS reform process and we are committed to continued engagement in the new CFS. We are also working with FAO and WFP in the joint Secretariat and in the Advisory Group. IFAD is also providing some financial support for the CFS and will consider the possibility of further funding next year.

Our engagement in the CFS is basically a support function. The success of the CFS reform depends primarily on the engagement and support of its member governments. And this is precisely where the value-added nature of the CFS comes in -- in its nature as an intergovernmental forum.

On that note, I will conclude with a plea that we do not lose this opportunity to make the reform of the CFS a successful reality, and use it to achieve results on the ground.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you a fruitful and interesting week and look forward to a successful outcome.