



## **Portugal - Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States**

### **Item IV: b) Terms of Reference for the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment**

#### **CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. The EU and its Member States welcome the endorsement of the Terms of Reference for the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment.
3. We consider it very important to advance gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment to achieve all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as to ensure food systems that are sustainable and resilient. We also believe that a systematic mainstreaming of gender equality in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is critically important.
4. Advancing gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment is critical to achieving our vision of ending hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all. It is also necessary for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.
5. Despite positive progress made over decades, gender inequalities persist as women continue to face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in many areas. The EU as a global leader in gender equality has made significant progress in the last decades. However, gender-based violence and stereotypes continue to persist. The objective of the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment coincide with the path that the EU and its Member States are pursuing with their Gender Equality Strategy.
6. We seek for ambitious Guidelines which will particularly provide concrete policy guidance based on good practices and lessons learnt on gender transformative interventions, gender mainstreaming and innovative solutions. They should support Member States, development partners and other stakeholders to advance gender equality, women's and girls' rights, and women's and girls' empowerment, as part of their efforts to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms, towards the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. In particular, CFS' guidance should build upon and integrate existing instruments adopted on this topic within the UN system.

7. We reaffirm our full commitment to the work of the CFS. As inclusiveness is a core principle of CFS, we also reiterate our commitment to continue promoting and encouraging RBA's and all other stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, to participate actively in the process. We thank the two Co-chairs of the Gender workstream, Ambassador Joséphine Ouédraogo from Burkina Faso, and Permanent Representative Satu Lassila from Finland, for their dedicated leadership of the CFS workstream on Gender in the preparation of the ToRs and we encourage the CFS Chair to reach out for possible volunteers to succeed Ambassador Ouédraogo.
8. We consider it essential that the Guidelines will result from an inclusive consultative process open to all interested stakeholders. Therefore, OEWG meetings should be held regularly to advance the preparation of the Guidelines. Also, regional consultations with all stakeholders in six regions of the world should be planned at an early stage in order to obtain inputs, comments and suggestions on how best to align the Guidelines with regional and national priorities and needs. Consistently with these objectives, several EU member states have announced financial contributions to this workstream highlighting the relevance given by the EU and its member states to Gender Equality and Women's and Girls Empowerment.
9. The Guidelines are targeted for adoption at CFS 50 in October 2022. We look forward to a successful and ambitious continuation and outcome of the process.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.

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