

Statement on Item 5 (VGFSyN) by the Delegation of Hungary at CFS47

Mr Chair, I am pleased to inform you that we fully align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States and I wish to make some additional comments.

Let me start with a personal note. 36 years ago I had the opportunity to attend CFS 10 in April 1985. Since then my whole career has been strongly linked to issues related to food security. I was involved in the elaboration and approval of the Right to Food Guidelines in 2004, closely followed the CFS reform process and the policy convergence leading to the approval of the VGGT, RAI and many other policy recommendations. I have become a passionate advocate of CFS and its relevant policy products, trying always to push for promoting the uptake and implementation of these relevant products.

This is why it is my great pleasure to be present here today and to be able to personally endorse the VGFSyN, although I agree with France, Senegal and others, that it could have been more ambitious. I express gratitude to the HLPE for their related excellent report. Special appreciation should go to the OEWG participants for their constructive discussions and to the chairs, Khaled El-Taweel from Egypt, Lilane Ortega from Switzerland and Hans Hogeween from the NL for facilitating this process, assisted by an excellent CFS Secretariat.

Mr Chair, I think we can all agree that properly addressing hunger and all forms of malnutrition requires transformation of food systems, making them more sustainable.

The question is on what basis? Evidence and neutral science can offer the solution. An overall assessment of all food systems is indispensable, including assessment of their positive and negative externalities, particularly the hidden costs. These hidden costs are enormous, and can be quantified, as we could see it in the latest SOFI 2020 Report. This True Cost Accounting can and should be the basis for redirecting subsidies to promote sustainable solutions, including incentives for the production and consumption of pulses, as you Mr Chair highlighted in your introductory remarks this morning. I appreciate your comments also as Chair of the International Steering Committee of the International Year of Pulses in 2016 and World Pulses Day last year. Great thanks to Ambassador of Argentina as current Chair, for the invitation on Friday. I will definitely attend.

All in all, science-based policy incentives should guide decisions of all stakeholders to transform their food systems and make them more sustainable.

Mr Chair, As the SOFI 2020 Report states, for many people healthy diets are often not available, accessible, or affordable. We should make it clear: affordability does not simply mean cheap food. We wish to remind all of us that the economic dimension of sustainability is strongly linked to the subsidies and policy incentives provided by governments. If true costs of food are calculated, fresh, nutritious food, produced locally by smallholders, would be competitive.

Hungary remains committed to implementing these VGs, including reducing food waste and food loss. Our targeted national programs draw the attention of the people and food chain actors to the importance of preventing food waste, as well as providing practical advice to those concerned. We would be happy to share details of our programmes.

Finally, I wish to draw attention to the fact that the UN Food Systems Summit represents a momentum and a huge opportunity to develop sustainable and resilient food systems. We wish to reiterate our encouragement to the FSS Secretariat and in particular the Science Group, as I have done it in my capacity as member of the FSS Advisory Committee, to better rely on the widely recognised expertise of HLPE and the voluntary guidelines and policy recommendations of the CFS. This would ensure that the just endorsed CFS VGFSyN feed in the process of preparations and follow-up actions of the UN FSS.

Dear Friends and Colleagues, This CFS 47 is my last CFS session, I will retire on the 1st of April. I wish you all the best in your future work, and I am confident that you will make sure that CFS will help make our world better and more sustainable.

Thank you, Mr Chair