

The 48th Special Session of Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
Opening Remarks

by Thanawat Tiensin, Chairperson of CFS
4 June 2021, 09.30 a.m. (Rome Time)

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

It is my pleasure to join you today as Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security and to address you today at the opening of our 48th Special Session.

This session today will be one of three plenary sessions to be organized by CFS during 2021, reflecting the very unusual circumstances we all find ourselves in.

Despite the many challenges, delays and postponements of deadlines caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of CFS has never stopped and it has never been more relevant.

The Covid-19 pandemic has indeed underlined risks, fragilities as well as strengths and opportunities characterizing the global food systems.

The CFS policy recommendations on *Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, which we are here today to endorse*, contribute to preventing future shocks and being better prepared.

In fact, they underline the importance of fostering transition towards resilient and diversified sustainable agriculture and food systems, as well as the importance of integrating sustainability in its three dimensions: social, economic and environmental.

Last week, on 25 May, negotiations on the policy recommendations *on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches* officially concluded.

It has been a long and complex journey, which the Rapporteur, Ambassador Yaya Olaniran, has conducted in an excellent manner. He has been instrumental in avoiding deadlocks and helping us move forward in a spirit of mutual trust and collaboration.

These policy recommendations are timely.

In working towards the aim of achieving food security and nutrition for all, these policy recommendations tackle some of the key issues that are currently at the center of global debates around sustainable food systems, such as: the proper management and reduction of reliance on chemical pesticides and other agrochemicals, the importance of ecological alternatives to agrochemical use, and the reduction of economic, environmental, and social negative impacts, including externalities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to see that CFS and its membership continues to demonstrate its collective commitment to the vision of CFS by driving the policy shifts that are required to put us back on track to achieving SDG2.

And the CFS will continue to address crucial issues/ topics for food security and nutrition, and to ensure inclusiveness in decision making and policy convergence processes.

Today, in this CFS 48 Special Session, we expect the plenary to endorse the policy recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches and this moment marks another important step forward in the implementation of the CFS multi-year programme of work.

In the aftermath of this Plenary, the CFS will continue to bring forward the work envisaged for the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment workstream, as well as Youth, Data Collection and Analysis Tools, and Inequalities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to have the opportunity to have here the representatives of the RBAs - Director General Qu, IFAD Vice-President Ziller, and Deputy Executive Director of WFP Abdulla, - as a sign of the RBAs' commitment in supporting the work of the CFS.

Developing the policies and guidelines is half the job we still have the other half of the job - to promote their uptake and implementation, adoption and adaptation, of those policies at the local and national levels.

Business as usual is not an option, and we need your strong commitment, bold actions, innovative solutions and applicable strategies to put our food systems on a more sustainable path to achieve all SDGs.

[I consider] CFS policy products, including these policy recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, can be tremendous accelerators in our efforts to deliver on the ambitious, universal and inclusive 2030 Agenda.

Let me conclude by recalling an African proverb that says: “*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together*”. Today I would like to thank all of you for your time and commitment to CFS. Let us go far, let us go together.

Thank you.