

Committee on World Food Security (CFS) 48th (Special) Session

Non-official transcript of the remarks of H.E. Yaya Olaniran, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN Agencies in Rome, and Rapporteur of the policy convergence process on the CFS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGROECOLOGICAL AND OTHER INNOVATIVE APPROACHES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS THAT ENHANCE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Thank you very much, Chair.

Good morning, good evening in some parts of the world.

And thank you so much, that this date has come to pass.

And I stand on the agreed protocol, to save time, but I plead your indulgence from the beginning, as I may go slightly go over five minutes, because this is a day of rejoicing when we all consider all that has gone into this.

I want to thank the Chairperson, who gave us the key groove that that has brought us together, right now. That is: we combined what normally sounds impossible to go not too fast, but, at the same time, not too slow, but going together.

And, therefore, I want to really thank all of you.

When I accepted to take on the role of the Rapporteur of Agroecological and other Innovative Approaches, I knew it would be difficult, having followed what my predecessor and many of you had done.

However, I also know that, despite the obstacles that we would encounter, we have the added problem of the virtual form of meeting. But I never stopped believing that we would find a common ground, even at the most contentious issues, because it is not by might, it is not by power, but by the spirit of the Lord.

And we have come this far. I want to thank you all.

In my thanking, I want to thank especially the interpreters, because without them we would not be able to communicate, and they did an excellent job.

Overall, we have about 111 hours of formal negotiations, and the Friends of the Rapporteur meetings. 111 hours in a very very tight schedule for every one of us.

But for the job, it is what we have come to at this point, a great milestone. Nevertheless, this is only the beginning of what needs to be done.

I will not go over all the experts that have spoken before me, including our esteemed Chair of the HLPE, Martin Cole, the Director-General of FAO, the Vice-President of IFAD and my dear friend and brother, Amir Abdulla, of WFP.

They have put everything in context, and we have a document, by God's grace, that can lead us forward.

Now, because of the nature of this assignment, it would be good if I remind everyone of some of the terms and concepts that everyone in the negotiating team identified as problematic. Why am I doing this? Because my colleagues from the Secretariat and I felt that we must remind ourselves, and remind everybody, that implementing these policy recommendations and the preamble, many years to come, of where the dangers are.

The first one is food systems transformation, the 13 Agroecological Principles, digitalization, peasants' rights, women's rights, externalities, true cost accounting, ecological footprint, incentives, chemical fertilizers, pesticides and agrochemicals, marginalized people, short-supply chains.

On the downside, it is worth highlighting that, while we may not agree on the definitions or application, the terms and concepts highlighted above are part of the world we certainly live in. And pretending they do not exist, is not good to take them out of the way, to get away.

Referring to already agreed language as the only possible modality of negotiation is not going to help us either to address the challenges of the world we live in today.

On the plus side, it is noteworthy highlighting that there is intrinsic value in democratic debate. The CFS platform offers this unique space, and this space is to be treasured and defended, not to be taken for granted.

Let me, at this point, thank the interpreters once again, thank the technical focal points from FAO, WFP, IFAD and the CGIAR, and of course the consultant Maryam Rahmanian , a citizen of Iran.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You've seen the results of the negotiations. We've been told how important it has to be in the next stages of our development, particularly as it relates to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. We must do our best to keep our land as it has been given to us by Divine Father. And to allow today's population and future generations to live a healthy life and a healthy world.

I present the outcome of what we have with every sense of humility. Well, let me also say this: we got here because have people who worked tirelessly putting in everything. Why? Because those who do not change their minds, never change anything in life. They changed their minds, they aligned themselves with the current situation in the room all the time. There was no red line that cut us out.

Success is not final, failure is not fatal, courage continues. So, let us thank the Lord for his mercy and I want to thank everyone who has contributed, directly or indirectly, to this process.

I present the Report to you en bloc, for endorsement.

Thank you, Chairperson.