



**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON AGENDA ITEM II: STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD 2021, ITS POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND THE ROLE OF CFS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19**

Thank you Chairperson,

At the outset, as this is the last CFS Session you will chair, South Africa expresses its deep appreciation to you, Ambassador Thanawat Tiensin, for chairing this Committee in an inclusive and dedicated manner, whereby you competently steered the Committee to advance its work on food security and nutrition.

Chairperson,

The opening remarks by the UN Secretary- General and the Heads of the Rome-based Agencies and the Chair of HLPE Steering Committee are much valued for drawing attention to the hard work ahead of us to achieve the goal of eradicating hunger.

Within the context of the proclaimed UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016-2025, the successful outcome of the United Nations Food Systems Summit was a timely high level political event that drew attention to the fragmented food systems that require immediate action if we are to reach the goal of zero hunger by 2030.

The increase in the number of people suffering from hunger and the large number of those suffering from micronutrient deficiencies and the alarming increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity require that we not only strengthen, but also radically transform our food systems.

We cannot remain complacent and need to act in a practical and resolute manner.

South Africa also needs to undertake much work to address food security challenges.

Identified strategic actions to drive the food systems transformation, include the enhancement of sustainable local production for local consumption of safe, nutritious and indigenous foods and the promotion of integrated food systems policies, legislation, planning and governance.

The overall objective is to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food at national and household levels.

Transformation of the rural economy will advance food security, which is essential for growth, poverty reduction, employment creation and overcoming inequalities.

Raising the productivity of Smallholder Holder Producers is also a way of increasing local access to nutritious foods.

The Committee has rightly placed a focus on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment through the development of voluntary guidelines to enhance their contribution to food security and nutrition.

For Women to succeed in agriculture, issues such as access to land, financial services and support programmes are key elements to take into consideration.

In conclusion, let us not forget that sound nutrition is a basic human right and a prerequisite for the attainment of a person's full intellectual and physical potential.

Therefore, nutrition is not simply a service to be delivered, but is the outcome of a development processes in society and is an ethical imperative.

South Africa will participate constructively in this 49th Session of the Committee to facilitate its successful conclusion.

I thank you.