

USG STATEMENT:

- Thank you Chair.
- We express our appreciation for the work of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment and acknowledge the hard work and effective leadership of the co-Chairs of the OEWG.
- We would also like to express our appreciation for the CFS Chairperson's efforts to advance this workstream in the past several months.
- Gender equity and equality and empowering women and girls is more urgent than ever. At this critical moment when the world is on the brink of experiencing unprecedented levels of global hunger, we need to remember that the multiple roles women play across the food system - on and off the farm - put them at the critical nexus of food security, nutrition, and resilience.
- When women have equal access to land and other inputs, their yields can improve by 20-30 percent, feeding up to 150 million more people.
- As women's incomes rise and as women have greater control over expenditures, child nutrition improves through improved diets and health care.

- Households in which women are empowered tend to be more resilient to shocks and stressors, such as economic downturns and climate change.
- Simply put, when women have the tools to succeed, they reinvest in their families and communities, creating a multiplier effect that promotes global prosperity and stability.
- However, we also see that any time a crisis strikes or conflict emerges women and girls are most likely to bear the brunt. Once again, because of the compounding effects of the COVID-19, climate change and Russia's war in Ukraine, it is a perilous moment for women and girls around the world - including millions who live in rural areas and earn a livelihood in food systems.
- When resources are scarce, entrenched power imbalances mean that women have a tougher time growing and selling crops, running small businesses, accessing health care and education, and simply living their lives.
- Getting enough to eat has become more difficult, too. As budgets shrink, women frequently act as 'shock absorbers', eating less to leave food for others in their household. In 2021, at least 150 million more women than men were experiencing food insecurity, and the gap is growing.
- As we respond to today crises, our efforts can build the resilience of the world's women farmers to respond to shocks tomorrow; promote food systems that are inclusive and equitable and benefit and empower women in all their diversity.

- The United States believes that these Voluntary Guidelines will provide concrete policy guidance based on good practices and lessons learnt on innovative gender transformative solutions, promote partnerships, foster greater policy coherence and spur accelerated action by all stakeholders at all levels.
- The United States therefore strongly supports the continuation of this workstream and wishes to see negotiations restart in the near future.
- We must remember that we agreed to include this workstream in our program of work and that we have been able to reach consensus on roughly seventy-five percent of the document already.
- Resolving the issues we still face and completing what we started is essential to the integrity of the CFS. We call on all CFS Members and stakeholders to join us in re-committing to the process so that at next year's Plenary, this session can be one of celebration as we endorse the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. Thank you.