

## CFS51

### III. Coordinated policy responses to the food crisis – the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023

**DATE:** 23 October 2023

**TIME:** 10.00-13.00 (exact time to be advised)

**LOCATION:** FAO Headquarters, Rome

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Statement by Yemisi Iranloye, CEO, Psaltry International Limited, on behalf of the CFS Private Sector Mechanism

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, and esteemed colleagues,

On behalf of the Private Sector Mechanism, let me thank you for the opportunity to speak at this timely and important event.

As we meet today, the world is at an unstable time. Increased conflict around the world is causing increased uncertainty. As a result of the complexities around us, we continue to face challenges in our ability to deliver nutritious food and sustainable and resilient food systems. As a consequence, the world is moving further away from our collective goal of zero hunger.

In our efforts to tackle the impacts of these challenges, the Private Sector has advanced many initiatives and actions towards agrifood systems transformation. In spite of this, the 2023 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report (SOFI) has told us that 122 million more people faced hunger in 2022 than in 2019, before the global pandemic.

On the back of uneven recovery from the COVID19 pandemic, climate change, the ongoing war in Ukraine and now heightened conflict in several parts of the world, continues to negatively affect the world's agri food systems. The report also tells us that these factors, combined with growing inequities, keep challenging the capacity of agrifood systems to deliver nutritious, safe and affordable diets for all. These major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition are our "new normal" and that Urbanization is shaping agrifood

systems in ways we can only understand through a rural–urban continuum lens, encompassing everything from food production, food processing, and food distribution, marketing and procurement, to consumer behaviour. Due to population growth, small and intermediate cities and rural towns are increasingly bridging the space between rural areas and large metropolises. Hence, in our efforts to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in an urbanizing world, we can no longer operate on the traditional assumption of a rural–urban divide.

The Private Sector sees the agri food systems as part of the solution to the crisis we face and in this regard, has continued to generate investment and create jobs in the sector. All parts of the value chain, from farmers, fishers, processors, transport, from farm to fork are involved. Financial inclusivity in the agri food system leads to prosperity in both urban and rural communities. To unleash the potential of the sector for building resilient food systems private financing is not enough, we look to governments for increased collaboration for public private partnerships and de-risking for increased investments.

Mr. Chairman,

We know that innovation can transform the agri food sector and the Private Sector is the leading source of innovation in the sector, towards this end, we work with framers to use innovation to do more with less. A great example we found of this collaboration and innovation use is that has allowed actors like google and others in the Private Sector to provide software technology that allows food banks to link to grocery stores and others with food that might otherwise go to waste, and that excess food is being pulled into the food bank system where and when it is needed.

Mr. Chairman,

Harnessing the power of innovation is key to transforming the food system to achieve the SDGs, in particular SDG 2 on zero hunger. We look forward to increased collaboration with FAO and Member States in this regard.

In closing Mr. Chairman, let me say that the United Nations Committee on Food Security is an important platform that provides space for a diverse range of actors from the value chain to share their views and collaborate for strengthened partnerships in food systems transformation. We thank you for this opportunity and stand ready to work with you and all stakeholders on this common cause.

I thank you.