

BELGIUM

Speaker: HE Lieven De La Marche - Ambassador - Permanent Representative
FAO Hq - Rome, Monday 20 October (Tuesday 21 October) 2025
Speech on the occasion of 53rd CFS plenary session

Item 2: State of Food Security in the World 2025 (SOFI)

Madam Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

Belgium aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

The SOFI report confirms once again that food insecurity remains unacceptably high, with over 2.3 billion people facing moderate or severe food insecurity and 673 million suffering from hunger in 2024. As we know from the "Global Report on Food Crises," 80% of acutely food insecure people live in contexts of conflict and protracted crises. Famine has been confirmed in Sudan and Gaza. Addressing hunger therefor requires addressing these crises and their root causes directly. This requires, first and foremost, political will and a lasting commitment to diplomacy, international cooperation and solidarity.

Belgium joins others in commending the diplomatic efforts that led to the ceasefire in Gaza. We urge all parties to work towards a just and lasting peace based upon a two-state solution, a position we reaffirmed by joining the co-signatories of the New York Declaration in the margin of the UNGA this year. We renew our call for respect of international law and unhindered humanitarian access and stand ready to continue our humanitarian support to the Palestinian people and resume our development cooperation programs in Gaza. And of course we count on FAO, WFP and IFAD, to assess and respond to the impact of the conflict.

Belgium will continue to support Ukraine and urges prioritization of winterization efforts. We also remain engaged in fragile regions such as Sudan, Yemen, and Eastern Congo, supporting nutrition, agricultural resilience, and peacebuilding.

Belgium welcomes the focus of this year's SOFI report on food price inflation. The report clearly shows how global shocks like the COVID19 pandemic and Russian's war of aggression against Ukraine have triggered sharp increases in global food commodity prices and how these inflationary pressures have especially hit and continue to impact low-income countries. Belgium is deeply concerned by the disproportionate impact of food price inflation on vulnerable populations, especially women, children, and rural communities.

In addition to conflicts and economic shocks, climate change is the third major driver of food insecurity. We stress the importance of integrating food security into climate policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and look forward to progress in this field at COP30. Nutrition must be central to these efforts, especially in light of rising child wasting and anaemia among women.

To conclude, Belgium remains committed to investing in smallholder farmers, strengthening agricultural market information systems, and promoting responsible investment. We believe that food security is not only a humanitarian imperative, but a human right and a cornerstone of peace and stability.

Let us not succumb to the harsh logic of power. Let us prove, as our Prime Minister said at the UNGA 80, that the destiny of humankind is not to dominate or suffer, but to cooperate and prosper.