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Rome, 18 October 2019

To all members, participants and observers of the Committee on World Food Security, and to everyone willing to contribute to the eradication of hunger and all forms of malnutrition:

As my tenure as CFS Chair comes to a close, I write this letter to convey my gratitude for the trust and support I have received from member States and other stakeholders.

I also wish to share three observations.

One thing I found, starting with my own country's experience, is that Human Rights-based policy recommendations emanating from CFS are being widely adopted and implemented, and they are having positive impacts on the ground, bettering people's lives.

A second fact borne by evidence is that the main drivers of the rising number of people suffering from hunger and malnutrition are the climate crisis we have created and the wars we have unleashed.

As the ravages of a changing climate and armed conflicts push waves of migrants within and across borders, we find ourselves intensifying the disasters we engendered, as we continue burning fossil fuels and trading in weapons. That is to say, the world is enacting policies against hunger with one hand, while exacerbating the causes of hunger with the other. This is morally unacceptable and politically unsustainable.

A third learning from the perspective of Committee Chair is that CFS must continue living up to its promise as the foremost inclusive global platform for food security and nutrition.

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Inclusiveness, which is the first guiding principle of CFS reform, was not a one-off event that took place ten years ago. Ever-expanding and effective inclusivity is what gives strength and vitality to CFS and, crucially, is what bestows legitimacy upon the policy guidelines and recommendations we produce.

An inclusive CFS is a relevant CFS. An exclusive CFS, given past experience and the magnitude of the challenges we face as we fail to keep up with the 2030 Agenda, would be disappointing and damaging.

Yesterday, our 46th plenary session decided to amend the structure of the CFS Bureau's Advisory Group, for the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme to become permanent members of that consultative body.

It is opportune, then, to put forward a call to action so that the widest possible range of entities consider submitting their expressions of interest to join FAO, IFAD and WFP in the CFS Bureau's Advisory Group. As I prepare to finish my term, I am making this open call for expressions of interest. Time for sending these submissions (to cfs@fao.org) is of the essence, as a decision on the appointment of the Advisory Group for the 2019-21 biennium is expected to be taken before the end of this month.

As I hand over the Chair to Thanawat Tiensin from Thailand, I recommit to the founding principles and aspirations of the Committee on World Food Security, and ask all of you to place in him the trust and support I have received.

The hungry and malnourished, most of whom are women and children across the so-called Global South, cannot wait. Because we know of their suffering, and being aware that everyone of us —each in their own way— can make a contribution, we must take decisive action. And we must act now.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mario Arvelo Caamaño".

Mario Arvelo
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to FAO, IFAD and WFP
Chair of the Committee on World Food Security