

III. CFS and the SDGs (continued)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we all heard the different decisions and suggestions from the floor on how to tackle the Chair's summaries. I will very briefly remind everyone that for the longest time CFS has tried and succeeded in preparing reports that reflect what was discussed in plenary, what would be helpful for moving forward in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. When CFS has limited itself to just listing the names and titles of people speaking to us we have gotten an enormous deal of pushback and the members of the bureau present here today will verify, will give testimony if they so wish to the fact that for the past 12 months we have been complaining within the bureau about that limited approach.

About that lack of ambition, about simply listing names of individuals and not actually including or distilling what they said and the richness of the debate that followed. That said the plenary, of course, is sovereign and does not need to toe the line of the bureau. The bureau discusses these things and proposes to the plenary and then the plenary decides and in that vein the Chair, your speaker after having consulted with the legal office after having talked to a number of you including the Chair of the Drafting Committee about the best way forward proposes that in order to accommodate, as a compromise to accommodate all the interventions and all the aspirations that we heard that we proceed in the following manner.

You will all recall the draft summary that I presented yesterday were under Item 3, CFS sustainment and development goals, lessons learnt we would list the individuals that participated is smaller and the special rapporteur and the Assistant Secretary-General and the panellists and then we would do the following and I am going to read the line that I am going to ask that the Committee approves.

The Committee took note of the Chair's summary, which included the following points and that's it and then the Chair will provide a summary. It will be the Chair's summary not the Committee's decision, not the sacred texts, not the constitution or the law of anything, but the Chair's Summary and the Chair summarises Item 3 in the following manner. Of course, the Secretary tells me that I need to ask if that's okay because that would be the only decision taken by the Committee it to take note.

I will repeat it, 'the Committee took note of the Chair's summary, which included the following points' and that's the only thing being asked of the Committee to take note of the Chair's summary. The Chair's summary is prepared by the Chair. We have two delegations that wish to take the floor, the Russian Federation following by CSM, well they screen is getting filled with delegates wishing to take the floor. Let's start with the Russian Federation, please.

Russian Federation

Chairman, thank you for giving me the floor, I would like to start by thanking you for the fact that yesterday you were left no stone unturned in your attempts to find good wording and honestly speaking what you have just said is very close to reaching consensus in our opinion. At the same time before agreeing to any part of the text we would like to ask that you fully read out the full Chair's summary before we endorse it, thank you for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Russia, CSM, please.

CSM

Thank you, Chairperson. We would just like to say that I don't think we have time to be able to negotiate every single point of the Chair's summary. That has to be made very clear because we don't have enough time for that. We therefore believe that it would be important to leave the Chair's summary as an annex to the report and maybe rather opening a point for discussion of the points you have concluded, but simply noting what is being debated does not reflect the full wealth of proposals, comments and contributions made yesterday in this room because we heard the views coming both from the top table and from the floor.

I would just like to remind the Chairman of articles 9 and 10 of the rules of procedure of the CFS, which put the Chairman in a position to make his report and present it indeed as an annex to the report from the CFS and that does not mean that we necessarily need a decision. It would be a Chair's summary, as I say I refer you to articles 9 and 10 of the rules of procedure.

So take note I don't think it makes clear the legal basis on which the decision is being taken, I do not think this is the best way of going about it, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much indeed CSM. Could we have the screen back again please, we are looking at something else at the list of delegates? Could the screen go back to the speaker's list, please? The system is rebooting, the Secretary tells me that he could see the United States and Afghanistan had asked for the floor while the system reboots. The U.S. please, it is back on yes, we will have the U.S., Afghanistan, France and Hungary, U.S.

United States of America

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. While we certainly understand the Chair's desire that CFS has an ambitious plan for these committee meetings we do agree with our Russian colleague that it would be important for the entire Chair's summary to be read out and agreed to.

Furthermore though we note that if we start doing that for each and every session I fear we are going to get caught up in discussions about the content of the Chair's summary for each and every discussion and therefore take away from the nature of this as a forum to really talk about the ideas we are here to talk about.

Furthermore I have a question for the Chair and that is I noted in the previous session this morning on rural women that there were some Member parties here that were not able to make their intervention and I would ask how could a Chair's summary properly reflect the entire discussion if some interventions were in fact cut off, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, U.S., Afghanistan, please.

Afghanistan

Thank you, Chair. Chair, your summary must reflect the debate of the discussion that takes place in the plenary. If that is the case you should read it, but we should not discuss it because if we start discussing your summary here then we are subject to the Drafting Committee and that is not a good idea at all. So read your summary and let it go to the Drafting Committee, it is up to the Drafting Committee whether your summary fixed the debate or not. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Afghanistan, France, please?

France

Thank you, Chairman. I really think we have to make the most of our discussions, we have a committee, which has to adopt a report, which we think should, in particular, reflect the decisions that have to be taken. So it should be a report from the committee, not simply the Chair's summary, which would be a more watered-down version.

So from my point of view to ensure that this is as inclusive as possible and because in AFO we have improved our working methods by presenting these summaries of discussions on the screen it allows us to be better informed, it allows us to see what is going to be included in the final report from the committee and to have a first probably quite quick discussion. Then we can leave it up to the Drafting Committee to finalize this, but I think it is important to be able to read this on the screen so that everybody knows what is happening. I do not think it is enough simply to have Chair's summaries. We, the committee, have to decide what we want to have included in the report. So that would be our proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, France, Hungary, please.

Hungary

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I agree with the points made by the Ambassador of France and in addition, I would like to have a point of clarification. The proposal you made refers to the Item 3 of the agenda or your proposal was a general one referring to each and every agenda item because we have different kinds of agenda items for information, some of them are for consideration, some of them are for discussion and some others are for decision. I don't think it would be appropriate to have equal treatment of each and every different type of agenda items. I would appreciate to have a point of clarification on this issue, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, the point of clarification for Hungary, what the Chair is proposing is that for Item 4, rather for Item 3 in particular and for all other items in which the committee is not making a decision to have a [unclear 1:10:56] stating, 'the committee took note of the Chair's summary, which included the following points'. Iran please, followed by Switzerland, Canada, Finland and Malaysia.

Iran

Thank you Chair for giving me the floor, also to your previous two speakers also here, I would like to request you to read again the Chair's summary. It seems it has to be followed by the Drafting Committee members in this committee. So it would be to request you to read it again, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Iran, Helvetic Confederation, please.

Helvetic Confederation

Thank you, Mr Chair. Thank you very much. We find your proposal is very reasonable as we are not talking as you now once again explained about decisions. We will just take note of the Chair's summary and therefore it is different than a decision, which of course would have had to have the endorsement by the committee, thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Switzerland for putting in clear language what I have been trying to explain from the beginning, Canada, please.

Canada

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. First we would like to support those who asked for the summary or the report to be available for us before we agree on it, but I guess I would like to follow up on a few questions for clarification because we also noted as part of the Drafting Committee that there was only one item for decision or two and the rest for information and discussion. We would like to know what would be different this year as opposed to previous years in terms of agenda items for information and discussion.

When we look at last year's report of the CFS when those items did not have a decision box there was a short summary of discussions that was describing the panel as well as the fact that the committee had discussed different issues without going into the substance and would like to know why this year there would be different procedures for all these agenda items that are for discussions and not for decision.

Recognizing that there was a lot of work put into the main item for decision, which is the multiyear program of work. So it doesn't undermine all the work we do, but I think the question that was asked by Hungary about the different status of the agenda items is quite an important one, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Canada. To respond to your point of clarification immediately it is what I have already explained. We are meeting for this 46th session to make two decisions. One of the multiyear programs of work, one of the amendments to the rules of the CFS and the other items such as Item 3, Item 4 and other items are for information not for the committee to make decisions.

So they are not open for negotiation because they are information items. The committee has been informed. So the committee takes note of the information received and the Chair summarizes that information. I hope that this clarification is satisfactory. Finland please, we need to... my question is, are we devoting the rest of the week to discussing this line, 'the committee took note of the Chair's summary, which included the following points' because this is what we are dealing with here. There are no procedural inconveniences here. The committee will be making two decisions during this week and Item 3, Item 4 and other items are not for decision, are information items.

I have a list of speakers that includes Finland, Malaysia, the Philippines, Argentina, Hungary, Germany and Mexico. I will, of course, give the floor to those mentioned and to anyone else wishing to take the floor, but please help me and help ourselves, help the committee. This is being webcast, this is why people all over the world are looking at us and saying this is why the U.N. doesn't work.

They don't know as much of the U.N. as we do here, they don't know what goes on in the corridors and in all the meetings, all the papers we need to read. All the meetings we have, all the conversations we have, all the texts and the emails and the breakfasts, the lunches, the dinners and the receptions in which

yes we have some of us a glass of sparkling wine in our hands, but we are working, we are discussing, we are conversing.

What they see is this and what they conclude by seeing this is, you know what, it is just a bunch of people talking and talking and talking while we go hungry, while we are malnourished and we develop diabetes and heart conditions and so on. We have to resolve this without doing a disservice to the CFS and to the U.N. and to the multilateral system. Finland has the floor.

Finland

Thank you very much, Chair. I believe that the U.N. needs to stand for accountability and transparency. In order to ensure satisfactory and meaningful outcome of the discussion I think it would have been very good if the members would have the possibility to make comment on the Chair's summary and I think that would have ensured the transparency and inclusiveness of our discussions with the key functioning for this global platform.

I believe that our working methods should be in accordance with the potential and ambitions of this committee. I find it unsatisfactory that our comprehensive and wide facing discussions that have taken place this week and will take place this week are now refused to a simple taking note of concise summary, but I do want to recognise that we need to move forward.

We want to be pragmatic and within the spirit of collaboration and cooperation we make a suggestion that maybe we go along with you this time, but for next year we need to be very clear on the procedures and we need to discuss this story and we believe that we can discuss this also with the new Chair, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Finland, Malaysia, please.

Malaysia

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to share your views and support your position on the fact that we should only look at the major decisions being made by the committee. I think if we were to discuss on all aspects of the information process here the process will take long. So in order for us to quickly go forward with our work I fully support your assumption that we should look only at the decision-making mechanisms and let the Chair, his own good judgement, of course, I am sure he will be able to include all the necessary points and observations raised during the information process, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Sir. The Philippines, please.

Philippines

Thank you, Chair and also in the spirit of moving on as signified by other members although the Philippines is also eager to see what the content or if there is any revision from the summary that you read out yesterday because as we mentioned we have some comments or some reactions to that.

It seems that at this time as you mentioned there are other bigger items and decisions that we have to make therefore in the spirit also of pragmatism and flexibility that has been demonstrated by other delegations I think for now we could go along with what you are proposing, but as you mentioned perhaps in the future it would be easier or it would facilitate the things if the procedures are clarified beforehand.

In fact, in fairness in the provisional agenda it was mentioned that there is a summary that is going to be forwarded to the Drafting Committee however it was not that clear whether it is the Chair's summary or even the Moderator's summary because as you would recall the moderator also gave a summary of that and perhaps members are expecting something closer to that.

That is why the reactions, but as of now in order for us to save time and for us to move on I think we can go along with your summary and as you mentioned let us put this in the perspective of not really making a big thing out of it because we have several things to attend to, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Bigger fish to fry is what you mean, yes that is very true. Thank you, Philippines, Argentina, please.

Argentina

Thank you, Chairman, good morning everyone. My delegation is flexible on this point, but we would like to highlight what was said by the delegation from Switzerland, which is very clear. The difference between a Chair's summary and conclusions from the committee I think that was a very clear proposal.

If we have a Chair's summary basically his expression from the point of view of the Chair. So that is not necessarily a report has been agreed upon it is just a summary by the Chairman of the way they saw the debate. So to say that the committee note of this, well it's more I think we have seen this on other occasions as well. The correct thing would be for the committee to take note and that would be included in the body of the report and then in the annex you would have the Chair's summary.

So in the report, all we have are those points, which are agreed upon, but then in the annex, we would have the Chair's summary, which is not necessarily agreed upon by the committee, it is the Chair's view. I think that would allow us to be more efficient. We could talk about trying to agree on conclusions about the debate that would take a lot of time if we do not have a basic report.

So we would support your proposal and we would say that your proposal should go into the annex, but in the body of the report we would say that the committee took note of the Chair's summary on this item, which is included in the annex to this report, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much indeed Argentina for that very useful proposal. On the list of speakers, I have Hungary, Germany, Mexico, Cuba, Finland and Cameroon. Two of those delegations have already taken the floor in the course of this debate, but anyway that is the speaker's list I now have before me from the Secretary. So Hungary has the floor.

Hungary

Chair, sorry for taking the floor again and thank you for your clarification. I would just like to say that you mentioned a couple of times that CFS is the foremost inclusive committee and for me the inclusiveness means either give the opportunity for the Member States, members of the CFS to make comment or give them the possibility to have their views reflected during the Drafting Committee discussion.

These are the ways and not just copy and paste because they should have a meaningful and substantive discussion there, but anyway for the sake of saving time I fully support the proposal made by Finland to

go along with your proposal right now and also as reflected by Philippines and others and we can accept it and we can turn back to this issue later, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, I will very briefly tell you and tell everyone that the agenda we have for CFS 46 has been negotiated for a full year at the level of the bureau and the bureau is composed of 12 core members and 12 alternates and the Chair and bureau members are supposed to tell the regional groups what transpired in every bureau meeting and the bureau outcomes are published in the website.

Then they are transmitted to the advisory group and the bureau meets with the advisory group, which is comprised of the non-State actors before every bureau meeting. So every single member, participant and observer of the CFS is supposed to have been through their bureau representative and the advisory group members to have been following up since 30 October 2017 that's 103 weeks that this is the procedure we were going to follow at plenary.

We do not have a proprietary plenary; we do not meet with the 1875 delegates present for this session to go over the preparations. That is the bureau and the advisory group and all Member States are welcome in bureau meetings. You yourself Sir have been participating in the bureau as an observer. So the point is that everybody knew or is supposed to know, everyone is supposed to know that there is going to be a Chair's summary and that the committee will not be making a decision on these items.

Now there are only two decision items for this plenary for this week. Again we are taking now time from the next agenda item, which is food disease and malnutrition. The most ambitious endeavour the CFS has ever embarked on and we are stealing time from that item a substantive item for combatting hunger and malnutrition. Germany, please.

Germany

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am a bit surprised about the tone and the heat of this discussion and if I may say so most of the time you spoke. I do not really understand why it is such a problem for the sake of inclusiveness, transparency and also open discussion to follow the example of the FAO Council and throw display the new suggestions for a Chair's summary at the screen.

Contrary to FAO Council we would not negotiate here resolution language or decision language it would just be an exchange whether you captured the discussion and the comprehensive manner. I think this is a discussion, which is legitimate, which is in no way a waste of time and given the fact that if I am not mistaken we are the masters of the committee and not the Chair.

It would be absolutely appropriate to have this discussion. So I would still repeat what I think my Finnish colleague had suggested yesterday that you have the privilege to draft the summary and we put it on the screen and then we discuss it and then we amend it if necessary and otherwise we sign it and that is it.

If that is not acceptable then we should not change anything compared to the procedure of the past and we will take it up with your successor then for the next CFS. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Germany. I would say that I do not pretend to be the master of anything. We once took a vote in my home as to who is going to be the boss and I got zero votes and the other party had two votes. So I am not the master of anything and certainly I am not the master of the CFS. As you said correctly Sir, it is the membership of the CFS that is the one and only master here. Mexico, please.

Mexico

Thank you, Chair. I understand that this is a Chair's summary and I would just like to suggest that if the summary of the Chair could better reflect the points of discussion and I would like to with all respect suggest that in the Chair's summary we could include three very important points that were discussed yesterday.

One referred to the elimination of unilateral measures where countries impose things on other countries that limit the enjoyment of the human right to the access of food and hinder the rights of citizens and populations. The second point is that this committee calls on the Secretary-General of the U.N. in planning the international summit on food systems in 2021 that we include the active participation of the CFS and finally that this committee suggests that we promote international development treaties as one of the main measures to fight against the causes of hunger and food insecurity around the world.

These are suggestions so that your summary better reflects the debate and discussion of yesterday and this committee can take note with more confidence and this is a suggestion that I make with all due respect to you Chair for you to include these things in your summary. Thank you.

[1:31:12]

Mexico

Thank you Chair. I understand this is a Chair's summary, and I would just like to suggest that if the summary of the Chair could better reflect the points of discussion. And I would like to, with all respect that suggest within the Chair's summary we could include 3 very important points that were discussed yesterday. One referred to the elimination of unilateral measures where countries impose things on other countries that limit the enjoyment of the human right to the access to food and hinder the rights of citizens and populations.

The second point is that this committee calls on the Secretary-General of the UN, in planning the international summit on food systems in 2021, that we include the active participation of the CFS.

And finally, that this committee suggest that we promote international development treaties as one of the main measures to fight against the causes of hunger and food insecurity around the world. These are suggestions so that your summary better reflects the debate and discussion of yesterday and this committee can take note with more confidence. And this is a suggestion that I make with all due respect to you Chair, for you to include these things in your summary. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mexico. I'll now give the floor to Cuba to be followed by Cameroon and Afghanistan. That's the end of the list of speakers. After that the Chair will make a statement so that we can finish this item. Cuba you have the floor.

Cuba

Thank you Chair. Good morning everyone. As we all know in the multilateral forum, we are all members, and we are committed to the 2030 agenda. The agenda of the committee and its 46th session endorsed our item 3 on CFS and sustainable development goals, lessons learned. We take note that in

item 3 it says that the final report would include a summary of the debate, which would be given and then included in the report.

What we are asking for is that in the Chair's summary, we have a reflection of everything that was suggested in this debate in item 3, and also in other items. In particular the issue of economic sanctions and how they affect a number of member states. This was raised and I support everything that was said by Mexico. And it's very concerning that the documents of the committee don't really reflect, truly reflect, the themes and items that concern their members. We would like to record the committee is inclusive and it should be inclusive. We agree with this and we would like to have an inclusive report of the various items discussed during the debates.

We should work cooperatively, collegially, and we should not be holding up the work of the committee. The UN comes into question here, and we are called upon to solve the problems of today's world but we have here negotiations and through peaceful negotiations and discussions we can make the United Nations an organization that meets and respects the Charter of the United Nations and respects human rights.

We support the proposal made by you, that the committee take note of the Chair's summary, but we would like the summary to include the concerns raised in relation to SDG 2, which is very important for millions of human beings that should not be left behind. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Cuba. Cameroon, then we will finish with Afghanistan. Cameroon you have the floor.

Cameroon

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, and I know it could be hard some time, but I think it's all about the UN, we are used to that. Let me, first of all, congratulate the bureau and the Secretary for producing document CFS 2009/46/F.2/REV2, and I wish everybody can look at that document right away. It's the guide to CFS 46.

When I was coming here this is a document I had read meticulously, and I knew exactly what we were supposed to do after every agenda item. And let me quote what was said, what is said in the state of food security and nutrition in 2019, its policy on nutrition in the context of securing the world goals. It says a summary of the presentation and a discussion will be forwarded to the drafting committee for inclusion in the final part. For me it was clear this discussion here ought not to have taken place, Mr. Chairperson, because for each agenda item there is a conclusion that says, what is going to be taken care of.

Now I understand that many people want to add things in what has been said, probably this time, Mr. Chairperson, probably we might continue the discussion with the next Chair. If this is not now time that we made available for voting, to members as we proceed. So that could be another way out to avoid some of these discussions. But I want people to read again that document, because it's clear enough. So, we knew the game before we came. So, it's for me now a bit difficult to understand why we are holding this debate in the first place. For each agenda item we knew what was going to be said. But you know I understand perfectly the appetite for members to discuss your summary, which is another element. But today, I think this CFS, really, we can avoid that, and probably open the discussion with the next CFS Chair. Thank you, Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Cameroon. Had I been on the floor I would have made an intervention probably using the same words as you did just now. Now Afghanistan please.

Afghanistan

Thank you Chair. Not a prolonged discussion. Your summary must develop the gist of the discussion on all items, whether it's for decision or for consideration or for information. Anything that we discuss here must be reflected in the report. If your summary reflects the discussion here, that's fine by me. But there is no such thing as Chair summary. The Chair summarizes the discussion. It doesn't make its own report. It reflects the gist of the discussion. So, I think that point was quite clearly made by Finland, by Germany, and now by Cameroon. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Afghanistan. We have an addition after I said that I was going to be closing the list of speakers, but for the sake of inclusiveness and transparency I'll give the floor very briefly to the US.

United States of America

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to note there are some members here raising political issues that we feel are better addressed in other UN forums. We are afraid that by raising some of those issues here that could affect the collegiality and efficacy of this body. We support our colleague from Germany's statement that if we are going to have the Chair do a summary it should be shown on the screen, it should be discussed, it should be amended, and it should be agreed to by everyone here. Alternatively, we could move back to the procedure used the last time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, US. I disagree that a Chair summary needs to be negotiated. No one came to this session of the CFS thinking that we were going to be negotiating the information items, because we would have had a totally different discussion. A totally different exchange with the panel if we had thought about that. I certainly and I've been following very closely the workers of the CFS for the past many years including as Chair, I never expected that a summary would have been submitted to a process of negotiation. A comma here, a comma there, a word here, a word there, shade of meaning, not at all.

So, my proposal from the Chair is this. And this should come as no surprise to anyone dealing in multilateral affairs in multilateral diplomacy. I'm going to be calling for a Friends of the Chair group to agree on a way forward. I will be presenting a Chair's proposal, taking into account everything we have heard in the past few minutes. Taking into account, the opinion of the legal office and we will consult them again in light of this discussion. And we will be meeting in the Caribbean lounge that is just outside of these doors to my right, to the left of the floor. We will be meeting there and who will be joining. We will not start a conversation because we will never end, about the process for the Friends of the Chair. It is the Friends of the Chair, that means that everyone is welcome.

What I would like given the size of the Caribbean lounge here next door, I would propose that bureau members representing all regional groups should attend and if others from the region wish to accompany them, they will also be welcome. But we cannot have 1875 individuals next door. So, I expect bureau members and perhaps 1 or 2, perhaps 01 or 2 accompanying delegations and hopefully one individual per bureau member and one individual, for the 01 or 2 that will accompany the bureau members from each region.

Hopefully we will have all 7 regions represented and they will hear this group of friends of mine, will hear the Chair's proposal for a way forward for item 3, 4 and the rest of the items that are for information for this session of the committee. Thank you.