



**STATEMENT BY DR. GABRIEL FERRERO, AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY OF SPAIN, TO
THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY**

Madrid, 10 September 2021

Distinguished Members, Participants and Observers of the Committee on World Food Security,

It is my pleasure to address you through this written statement and introduce my candidacy to the position of Chair of the Committee on World Food Security, put forward by the Government of the Kingdom of Spain through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, on the 10th of August.

Since the Government of Spain announced its willingness to present this candidacy at the FAO Conference in June and successively in other high-level fora, I have had extensive exchanges with many of you, including the Chairs of the Regional Groups, Member States representatives, UN agencies and bodies, civil society organizations, private sector companies, philanthropic organizations, members of the High Level Panel of Experts of the CFS and former delegates and representatives of the Committee.

These close to one hundred conversations in different formats have allowed me to listen carefully and learn from your points of view, concerns, and visions. We have had the opportunity to discuss the challenges around global food security, nutrition and food systems dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have discussed extensively the ways forward and the opportunities to speed up the transformations needed to fulfil the 2030 Agenda on its integrity through the advancement of SDG 2 and inclusive, resilient, equitable, sustainable and healthy food systems. We have exchanged views regarding the role the CFS has played in the past and should play in the future to fulfil its mission; the lessons learnt since its reform and its evaluation process in 2017; the challenges the Committee faces; and the ways of improving, not least after the UN Food Systems Summit.

I have seen an emerging consensus around several important issues, which serves as a powerful basis for speeding up progress in the coming years. First and foremost, I have seen the unambiguous conviction of all to do whatever it takes to achieve the vision of a world free from hunger and malnutrition, where the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved on time. While we may diverge on some of the ways to reach our ambition, we are all fully committed to international solidarity and cooperation. While we have nuances on the pace needed, we all agree that business as usual is not an option.

I have seen broad convergence on the analysis of the critical situation that world food security and food systems are facing, but also on the opportunities and potentials ahead of us. We are witnessing a critical moment in achieving our shared goal of a world free from hunger and malnutrition. If the progress towards SDG 2 was not satisfactory before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact has severely aggravated the prospects. The pandemic has added to climate change and natural resource degradation, conflicts, persisting poverty and inequalities as core drivers of food insecurity.

Despite this enormous challenge, we all agree that it is possible to end hunger and malnutrition. By doing so through inclusive, sustainable food systems and healthy diets, we can harness the potential of rural communities and territories, creating decent jobs and opportunities for youth, empower women and girls, preserve and restore biodiversity, soils, forests and ecosystems and achieve our climate goals.

We agree that the moment is now; that the coming years will mark the difference for decades and this needs boldness, commitment, dedication and the mobilization of means of implementation, so that no country is left behind: financing (including ODA and domestic, public and private), technology transfer and capacity building.

Congruently, I have seen a strong sense of urgency, as well as a willingness, to make the CFS a more effective and responsive body that serves as a centre of gravity of global collective efforts towards the achievement of SDG 2, contributing to the rest of the SDGs. We have learned much since the 2009 reform. While we all build on what we agreed on the 1996 and 2009 World Food Summits, on the ICN2 process and of course on the process that led us to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many sense that more needs to be done and that we have little time to do so.

We share that the CFS plays—and will need to increasingly play—a pivotal role in transforming food systems for the progressive realization of the Right to Food, as the most advanced and inclusive global intergovernmental platform. Just as the CFS was created and reformed to respond to global shocks and crises, many of us see the CFS stepping up reinvigorated and adapted to the new challenges ahead of us. The CFS offers what no other existing international platform does: an inclusive multilateral space where countries, stakeholders, Rome-based Agencies and other key parts of the UN System come together to share, learn, deliberate and achieve consensus on complex systemic issues for achieving food security and nutrition, providing also a knowledge-governance interface that is open, transparent and participatory.

We have learned what we need to improve. We know that the 2009 Reform has not yet been fully implemented—particularly on what has to do with the impact of its work at the regional and country levels—and that this fact limits the CFS to fully unfold the potential of its mandate. I have heard about the difficulties faced by many countries and the different constituencies when participating in the Committee, and how overwhelmed our teams in capital and in our missions sometimes are. I have heard how this compromises our connection with our capitals, risking leaving behind an important number of contributions. I have seen deep concerns about this trend undermining the inclusivity of the Committee, as well as the need to do all in our hands to build trust and open to new key constituencies. Resources and means for the functioning and support of the Committee are also constrained, and not as predictable and stable as needed.

The CFS is at a crossroads. The challenges are complex, but the momentum created by the Food Systems Summit is a unique opportunity. I have no doubt that the CFS will chose the path of facing these challenges, adapting to the new circumstances and stepping up as the leading intergovernmental governance body for reaching zero hunger and malnutrition. Acknowledging the boundaries on its mandate, building on its strengths, recognizing its limitations and the lessons learned—including through the 2017 independent evaluation—the CSA must adapt to the new times, be more incisive and unleash all its potential, while doing so without extending its scope or overloading the already exhausted capacities of our teams.

The functioning of global, regional, national and local food security and food systems largely resembles a complex ecosystem of institutions and actors, public and private, rather than a centralized, hierarchical chain.

My vision is for the CFS to fulfil its current mandate, being *the centre of gravity* of the collective global effort that is necessary to achieve SDG 2 and, given the multiple interrelationships with the rest of the SDGs, of the 2030 Agenda as a whole in the Decade for Action. This is an effort that will be required from all fronts, **where the CFS is to be the intergovernmental and inclusive platform for policy deliberation, recognition of the different interests at stake and points of views, conflict resolution and consensus building at the global level. Moreover, the CFS is to be the connecting platform where countries share their national strategies, exchange experiences and review progress on a voluntary basis, effectively connected with and feeding into the broader follow-up of the 2030 Agenda at the High-Level Political Forum. A CFS serving the space where the commitment and initiatives from multiple actors and constituencies can connect and build synergies, to enhance impact on the**

ground. A process where the CFS proactively contributes to connecting the various intergovernmental bodies involved in the global governance of sustainable, food systems, food security and nutrition. A CFS that provides an updated and reinforced knowledge-governance interface through a strengthened HLPE, connected to peer science-policy interface mechanisms in other interlinked issues.

I propose to consider five levers to make this happen: interconnection; impact; inclusivity; innovation; and initiative.

First, **interconnection**: strongly **reinforcing the interlinkages of the CFS with the rest of the intergovernmental governance bodies in the fields of, *inter alia*, health, climate, biodiversity, desertification or nutrition.** I experienced how different global fora, thematic agendas and UN System mandates may be connected, and can converge on an integrated framework, during my service in the UN Secretary General's Executive Office for some years, accompanying the negotiations of the 2030 Agenda and supporting on the framing of SDG 2. The CFS shall not extend its mandate, but rather foster an appropriate connection of the different issues, from the food security and nutrition perspective.

Second, **impact on the ground, in all countries, advancing Phase II of the 2009 reform, so that the CFS stimulates and accompanies, upon-request, country-led and regional efforts.** With the leadership of FAO, WFP and IFAD, and building on the momentum of the national preparatory dialogues for the Summit on Food Systems and on existing processes, the CFS would serve as the intergovernmental space for connecting **country-led strategies towards food security and sustainable food systems.** This would also shed light on the tremendous value of CFS policy products when adapted to national contexts, will incentivize their use and will reinforce existing multistakeholder and multisectorial platforms in the field. As a senior government official, I have experienced how complex intergovernmental, multistakeholder and multilevel coordination for aligning national strategies with global policy frameworks is. In the last four years, I have led the Spain 2030 Agenda Implementation Plan, the Spanish Joint Global Response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Spanish Plan for Universal Sharing of Vaccines. All were adopted with the support of Parliament, the Autonomous Communities, Municipalities and the multistakeholder consultative platforms. I hope to bring this understanding of the complexities of national processes to the CFS.

Third, **improve inclusivity, empowering countries with fewer capacities in Rome to fully participate in the Committee processes, as well as facilitating the participation of civil society, the private sector and the UN system while broadening the space to ensure that other key stakeholders and groups can engage.** In an environment of shrinking resources and overloaded agendas, it is of paramount importance to ensure that all countries have the opportunity to be heard. On the other hand, the mechanisms for the representation of civil society and the private sector before the CSA have shown in recent years to the international community how a meaningful participation of key actors can function in an intergovernmental committee. It is time to reflect on ways to broaden participation and improve inclusion. Thus, ways of engaging with emerging key stakeholders such as parliamentarians, local authorities, universities, youth, women, family farmers and others, would be explored.

Fourth, **promote innovation by strengthening the knowledge-governance-policy interface.** With the update and strengthening of the scientific network of the High-Level Panel of Experts, its capacities, resources, independence, functions and connections would be improved. As a scholar—and a university professor for years before working on the ground in several countries—and after at the policy-making side, I understand the rationale of both sides and I am used to navigating the complexities of this interface.

Fifth, **catalyse the diverse global initiatives and help to bridge the gap between strategies and means of implementation.** The CFS has a proven record of convening power. Through a myriad of side events to the CFS Plenaries, it has been capable of bringing together a rich and diverse array of initiatives of different nature and scope. As a country senior official, as well as a UN senior professional, I have convened, moderated, participated

and enjoyed many of these events. A more strategic steer of these convening powers through extensive networking on behalf of the Committee—as well as wide-encompassing knowledge of the landscape—could be explored to better align efforts, connecting processes and galvanizing impact. On the other hand, the CFS may also further stimulate connections between country-efforts and means of implementation—as the African Union Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) has successfully shown—while making full use of, *inter alia*, the CFS Principles for Responsible Investments in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests.

I propose to bring this vision to life **without increasing the workload for the missions in Rome** or overloading the current Multi-year Program of Work with new products—as it already includes policy consensus processes in critical issues such as gender equality, youth, data or inequalities.

Rather, I would exercise a proactive chairmanship to **strengthen relationships**, connect the dots and make full use of all the formal and informal spaces the CFS may provide. I would strive to connect the CFS with the rest of the intergovernmental bodies, the UN family and country-level processes, initiatives and efforts. **First and foremost, working synergistically together “as one”, in full alignment and in full reciprocal support with the Rome-based Agencies.**

If elected, I would have **full time dedication to the chairmanship based in Rome, while serving as Ambassador at Large for Global Food Security of Spain**. Not having to share the burden of the Spanish Permanent Representation to the RBAs or bilateral affairs, it is my hope that the devotion required to the Chair on the next biennium may be ensured and increased, while guaranteeing full independence from national interests.

Conscious of the need of stepping up to the challenge and willing to contribute to our collective effort, the Government of Spain has decided to offer an Ambassador at Large as a candidate to the Chairmanship of the CFS that.

I have been deeply honoured by the request made by my Government to step aside from my previous responsibilities as Director General for Sustainable Development Policies to put my capacities and previous experience in the Executive Office of the United Nations Secretary General at the service of the mission of the CFS.

Back in 2009, I led, within my government, the global response to the food price crisis that resulted in the CFS Reform. I have led my country’s delegation in multiple CFS Plenary sessions and represented the United Nations Secretary General at the CFS Advisory Committee in the years I served at the UN. I believe that I can chair the Committee successfully for the next two years. With your support, I will put all my effort and skills at your service; hence, at the service of those we serve first: the people that suffer the deprivation of access to nutritious food, experience poverty in its multiple dimensions, lack of respect to their rights and the threat of climate change—foremost women, girls, indigenous peoples and many of the producers that feed the world.

It is with a spirit of service to its members and those they represent, of commitment to its mission, of humbleness, and with full certainty of the need to be bold at this critical juncture that I hope to receive your trust, and kindly request your support in this collective endeavour.

Gabriel Ferrero de Loma-Osorio

Ambassador at Large for Global Food Security

Kingdom of Spain

*/ Annexed:

- Resume in English
- Official Letter of appointment by the Government of the Kingdom of Spain

GABRIEL FERRERO Y DE LOMA-OSORIO, PH.D

AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY, SPAIN



Resume

Currently serving as **Ambassador at Large for Global Food Security at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation** of the Government of Spain. Former **Director General for Sustainable Development Policies** from 2018 to 2021. In this position, he has been lead author and strategist of the 2030 Agenda Implementation Action Plan of Spain, coordinating the Spanish Voluntary National Review at the High Level Political Forum. Lead author of the Spanish Cooperation Joint Response Strategy to COVID-19 pandemic.

He served in the **Executive Office of the United Nations Secretary General** from 2011 to 2017, including as **Coordinator of the UN Secretary-General High Level Task Force on Global Food Security** and as **Team Leader of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Food and Nutrition Security** from 2016 to 2017, based in Rome. In this capacity, he was representative of the UN SG at the Advisory Committee of the Committee on World Food Security and at the Steering Committee of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program. He was part of the Milano Group on Sustainable Food Systems convened by UN SG Ban Ki-Moon in 2015 and made seminal contributions to linking ending hunger, poverty and climate-compatible sustainable food systems.

Senior policy advisor on sustainable development to the UN Secretary General's Special Advisor for the Post-2015 Development Agenda Ms Amina J Mohammed from 2012 to 2016, leading on food security, agriculture and food systems, financing and climate change. Renowned as being part of the team facilitating the process leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, he was instrumental on crafting Ban Ki-Moon's Zero Hunger Challenge and SDG 2.

Before joining the UN, he was **Deputy-Director General** of Development Policies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Spain from 2007-2010, leading on Spain's global response to the global food crisis. He coordinated the 2009 Madrid High Level Meeting "Food Security for All" and substantially contributed to the reform of the Committee on World Food Security. In this position, he was lead author of the 2009-2012 Spanish Cooperation Master Plan and was instrumental on the set up of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, the UN Fund for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the "Spanish Fund for Cooperation on Water and Sanitation".

Full time Professor of Development Theory and Planning at the School of Agricultural Engineering and Environment at the **Technological University of Valencia UPV** (2000-2007) and Director of its Development Cooperation Centre (2004-2007). He founded and coordinated the Development Studies and Applied Ethics Research Group, his research and practice focuses on Sen's Capability Approach, development methodology, climate and sustainable development.

An engineer by training, he holds a **nationally awarded Ph. D on development planning and management**. He is author or co-author of more than 50 publications including journal research papers, books, book chapters and op-eds with a focus on rural development, climate and development effectiveness.

With **field level experience** at project, program and policy levels on agriculture, rural development and renewable energy, in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Morocco, and Argentina, he has been advisor to national and subnational governments, social movements and NGOs on rural development planning, management and sustainable development policies.