

United Nations Food Systems Summit – Pre-Summit Session

“Multilateral Policy Convergence for Food Systems Transformation; CFS and its Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition”

Monday, 26 July 2021 from 6:30-7:20 PM (Rome time)

CFS Chairman’s (Draft) Remarks

-- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY --

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Good evening, today we have a lot of hopes and ambitions in transforming food systems for better future and healthy planet. As the Chair of the Rome-based Committee on World Food Security (or CFS), the CFS offers its help to be part of solutions.
- We are here to discuss *‘Multilateral Policy Convergence for Food Systems Transformation’* with a focus on CFS and its Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.
- I emphasize the word “**Multilateral**” since this is so critical to our conversation, and so critical to the question of what this Summit can achieve.
- We all know we are far off from achieving our global food security and nutrition targets.
- This is unacceptable. We have to act with urgency, and together, to transform our food systems. Without this transformation, we will not achieve the SDGs.

- To be successful, the Summit needs to make use of existing institutions, and build on the experience, tools and resources that we have in place, including the CFS and its High Level Panel of Expert (HLPE). But, these institutions will also need to be strengthened and their resources re-prioritized.
- CFS is inclusive. It has nearly 130 member states, UN agencies and bodies, civil-society and non-governmental organizations, international research and financial institutions, private sector associations, foundations and others which come together to address the most pressing issues relevant to food and nutrition.
- CFS has a solid science and evidence-based model, where all of our policy products are informed by independent HLPE reports.
- In fact, the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food systems and Nutrition endorsed by CFS members in February were based on HLPE report #12.
- CFS produces concrete and relevant outputs. Over the past twelve years, CFS members have negotiated and endorsed numerous policy products.
- The recently endorsed Voluntary Guidelines are the ***only*** multilaterally negotiated policy tool at the intersection of food systems and nutrition. They address most, if not all, the issues being considered by the Summit. They need to be given the prominence they deserve in this Summit.
- No other platform can do what CFS does, but we can do even more with strong support from member states, the Rome agencies, and the UN system. The Summit could prompt the strengthening of CFS and its HLPE – helping it to move from policy development to national and regional coordination, implementation, and promoting accountability, as foreseen in its 2009 reform document.
- CFS will need to support countries, working with others in the UN family at regional and country levels to help those countries achieve their ambitions.

- The CFS, with its HLPE - its negotiated policy products like the VGFSN, and its genuinely inclusive and legitimate platform, should be a model for all countries and regions to replicate at all levels to achieve SDG-2 and other related goals.
- Now is the time for action to transform our food systems; CFS has the tools and the guidance needed to make this happen; let's use them!
- Thank you!