



COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Forty-fifth Session
"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

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**STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WORLD FOOD
PROGRAMME (WFP)**

Mr. Chairman.

Ministers.

Excellencies. Ladies and gentlemen.

It's a pleasure to be here for the annual meeting of the Committee on World Food Security.

The 2018 State of Food Security report shows we still have a mountain to climb to achieve Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals.

As Graziano said, the two main reasons for rising hunger rates are climate change and conflict.

At the World Food Programme, we see the human cost of these failures every day:

- Ten of our 13 biggest hunger crises are fueled by violence;
- And 80% of our resources are spent in conflict zones.

In just the past two years, the number of people around the world who are suffering acute hunger has sky-rocketed:

- From 80 million to 124 million - a staggering 55% rise.

WFP research, which we are publishing tomorrow, highlights the clear link between political instability and unaffordable food costs - which puts a basic nutritious meal out of reach for many millions of people.

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The results of WFP's Counting the Beans Index 2018 are truly shocking. It lays bare how conflict is driving up already exorbitant food costs for some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities.

Just think about this: in New York State, a basic plate of soup or stew costs:

- 0.6 percent of average daily income - around \$1.20.

In Northeast Nigeria, the same meal costs:

- 128 percent of average daily income – equivalent to \$222.05.

And in South Sudan, this basic plate of food costs:

- 202 percent of average daily income – equivalent to \$348.36.
- That's nearly 300 times more than in New York State.

These numbers are heart-breaking and outrageous. They demonstrate the hard truth that peace and affordable, nutritious food go hand in hand – we'll never achieve one without the other.

So we need world leaders to prove their commitment to Zero Hunger and invest in programs to reduce conflict and rebuild economies, allowing markets to thrive and communities to prosper.

I've seen the transformation that's possible when we do. I've seen WFP teams, all around the world, working with communities to turn arid land into fertile agricultural soil which can support crops and animals.

I've seen Food for Assets programs that have rehabilitated acres of land; created irrigation systems; built roads; dug wells – and supported communities to support themselves.

The Rome-Based Agencies, working together and partnering on projects out in the field, will do all we can to get zero hunger back on track.

We're committed to collaborating with each other and working with communities so they can become more self-sufficient and resilient. It's the only way we will ensure the families we serve have nutritious food for today - and new hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you.