

Statement by the Republic of Belarus concerning the 169th session of the FAO Council

The Republic of Belarus considers it unacceptable and damaging to introduce political discussions into the forum of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. In this context, we call for the avoidance of any accusations both in the framework of discussions, and in the decisions of FAO bodies.

Moreover it is deliberately counterproductive to focus during the upcoming session of the FAO Council on just one of the sources of threats to global food security.

FAO experts have repeatedly proven in figures the continuing impact of the COVID pandemic on the unprecedented rise in food prices. It is clear that this impact will continue in the years to come.

In addition to the conflict in Ukraine, conflicts continue in Syria, Afghanistan and a series of other countries. Practically all the "hot spots" on the world map are sources of migration and centres of hunger.

Lastly, we believe it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the sanctions policy of individual countries and unions is causing irreparable damage to the global food and agricultural trading system. It suffices to recall the European Union's ban on the sale of Belarusian fertilizers and Lithuania's ban on the transit of fertilizers to seaports for our landlocked country. The disconnection of Belarusian and Russian banks from the SWIFT system makes it impossible to make payments and thus to sell the very food for which global need is growing rapidly.

Therefore, in order to genuinely address the problem, we should:

- 1) impartially analyse current threats to global food security;
- 2) develop clear and universally acceptable mechanisms to minimize the consequences of each of those threats.

We call once again for a responsible approach to the multi-faceted problem of hunger that humankind faces today. How well FAO identifies the threats and delivers the goals will determine the real fates of hundreds of millions of people all around the world. We suggest that opportunistic solutions are left to forums with a different specialization.