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Forty-fifth Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

Opening Session 15 October 2018

Patrick Caron HLPE Chairperson

Opening statement

Merci beaucoup monsieur le President,

Mister Chair, Excellency Ambassador Arvelo,
Mr Director-General of FAO, Jose Graziano da Silva,
Mr Executive Director of WFP, David Beasley,
Ms Vice-President of IFAD, Cornelia Richter,
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are at a crossroad in our fight for food security and nutrition. While hunger remains a critical concern as highlighted in the last SOFI and as recalled this morning, malnutrition now takes multiple forms (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity) with terrible health outcomes. This affects all countries, low-, middle- or high-income. Different forms of malnutrition co-exist within the same country, community, household and even individual. History has shown that malnutrition will not be “self-corrected” by economic growth alone. Instead, addressing malnutrition should be an explicit objective in national policies, programmes and budgets, in all countries, across sectors and scales. Through its publications, the HLPE has illustrated the critical importance of improving food security and nutrition for all, now and in the future, as both a necessary condition and a cross-cutting challenge, not only to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 (SDG 2), but also to achieve the whole 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This will require the involvement of many actors from the three spheres of society (public sector, private sector and civil society). The latest HLPE report on *Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs)* that will be presented next Thursday by Dr. Moraka Nakedi Makhura, the HLPE Project Team Leader, highlights the complementary roles and responsibilities of these different actors in our common fight. This report can help understanding better the contributions that MSPs can make to food security and nutrition, but also the limits of such collaborative arrangements and the conditions under which multi-stakeholder partnerships can fully realize their potential.

To address the multiple burdens of malnutrition, the HLPE calls for a profound transformation in our food systems in all regions of the world, implying a set of coherent actions at different scales, in different sectors and different parts of our food systems. There is already enough evidence to act. The short-term costs of action may seem high and decisions difficult to make, but inaction would be terrible, carrying with it an unacceptable legacy affecting future generations.

The findings and conceptual framework developed in the HLPE report on *Nutrition and food systems* released last year has already been used to inform strategic thinking. Just for example, the French National Institute for Agricultural Research adapted this framework for the sake of their strategic programming. I am sure that the CFS future voluntary guidelines on this topic can be a milestone and a significant contribution to help countries designing national integrated food security, nutrition policies.

10 years after the reform, CFS is at a crossroad. What kind of CFS do we want to advance the 2030 Agenda? How to make a difference for those billions of vulnerable people suffering from malnutrition and to ensure the right to food? How can science and all forms of knowledge help political leaders make decisions and look forward in an uncertain world? I am confident that the forthcoming HLPE report on agro-ecological approaches and other innovations, will help opening innovative avenues for sustainable development. I would like to take the opportunity to remind that a preliminary V0 draft of this report has been submitted to an open on-line consultation till the 5th November 2018. Your contributions are of course very much welcome.

As a result of its recent evaluation, the CFS is considering to engage in a four-year Multi-Year Programme of Work. I wish that the 2nd HLPE note on “*Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition*” released last year can fuel this longer-term reflection. As this note points out, “Food Security and Nutrition” is a powerful lens to approach sustainable development in all its dimensions.

Dear delegates, I thank you for your continuous attention and support. The HLPE has been designed as a unique nugget and it is an honour to serve the CFS as HLPE Steering Committee Chairperson. Please be sure of my renewed engagement to contribute with my colleagues to the global science-policy dialogue, with the view to ensure the best contribution from science and knowledge to fight hunger and malnutrition.

Let me thank also the scientific experts and stakeholders involved in the HLPE work around the world, the HLPE Secretariat for its continuous support, as well as the resource partners that support the HLPE through their voluntary contributions.

Thank you for your attention and I wish us a very fruitful week.