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**MS Swaminathan**  
**HLPE Steering Committee Chairperson**  
**Launch of HLPE reports**  
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Opening Statement, check against delivery

Thank you very much Mr Chairman, the Chairman of CFS, His Excellency Ambassador Olaniran, members of the Bureau of CFS, as well as the Advisory Group of CFS, other excellencies here, my colleague Maryam Rahmanian, vice-Chair of the HLPE, Mr Vincent Gitz, the dynamic Coordinator who has played a very key role in the development of our reports on time and also our two Team Leaders who will be dealing with these topics in detail: Dr Pierre-Marie Bosc and Dr John Wilkinson, I am grateful to them for coming here. Other ladies and gentlemen, I think the Chairman has already explained the purpose of this meeting, the origin of the HLPE, and what we have been doing since the HLPE was established in 2010. In 2010, as part of the reform process of the CFS a body was created, particularly to create synergy between science and public policy. I say that HLPE's main role is to generate synergy between science and public policy. How can science influence public policy, the best available science?

The HLPE is led by a Steering Committee of 15 members, serving in their own individual, personal capacities: they're not paid, they don't take any remuneration or compensation, they are eminent people giving their time free to this work. In addition to that, those of you who have been attending these meetings earlier know only too well that we have, in the Steering Committee, placed considerable importance to the process and preparation of the reports: not only the product which is in your hands, but also the process which has been used to prepare it. The process goes through very extensive consultations, today with electronic media it is possible to consult a very large number of people at very limited expenditure, what we call in our own language, the *invisible college of cooperators* all over the world, who are cooperating in studying our analyses, commenting upon them, so that before finalizing our reports, we first get the comments on the scope and on a V0 draft on our website, and we then get the views of some eminent peer reviewers. So there is an excellent

documentation about the process adopted by the Steering Committee; those who have not been able to see it earlier, please do study it: we are open to feedback and suggestions.

In the last three years we have presented, as was mentioned by the Chairman, 6 reports. The Steering Committee was constituted in October 2010 and in October 2011 we submitted 2 reports to you: *Price volatility and food security, Land tenure and international investments in agriculture*. All these reports are demand-driven, they were not suggested by us. They were asked by you: "These are the areas where we would like to have competent, technical, scientific advice". For example, *Price volatility*, those who were here in 2011 know the world experienced a food commodity price peak in 2008. Suddenly the prices of all commodities went up, largely in relation to the petroleum price and in subsequent years also price volatility was influenced either by energy cost or by climate variability: draughts, floods in many parts of the world including the United States, China and so on. So our *Price volatility* report is a very important one as it tackles how to minimize the impact of price volatility on food security. You may recall, FAO that year said that the number of malnourished people had gone up from 900 million to 1 billion, largely because of the escalation of the price of commodities, because the poorer you are, the greater part of your income goes to purchase food.

The second report on *Land tenure and international investments in agriculture*, was also asked for by you, largely because at that particular time there was concern about what was called "land grab": taking away good land particularly in African countries for the purpose of producing e.g. biofuels and so on. So the CFS was concerned about the implications of land tenure and international investments in agriculture. Those of you who have not gone through these reports, I suggest you do so as the arguments which have been developed are still relevant, particularly the *Land tenure* one is still very relevant.

In 2012, you have asked for *Food security and climate change*, because climate change was one of the important factors influencing price volatility and our main emphasis was: how to promote climate smart agriculture? How do you become climate smart under conditions of uncertain weather, more frequent draughts, more frequent floods and possible sea level rise. As you know, today there is a very serious concern about the possibility of sea level rise. The city of New York has sanctioned a very large amount of money in preparation for sea level rise, anticipating action to sea level rise.

The other report we presented in 2012 was *Social protection for food security*, which involves the *right to food* concept: how do you ensure UN Millennium Development Goal 1, so that everybody has enough food to eat? What are the various measures taken in different parts of the world and what did we learn from these experiences? Whether it is Brazil, whether it is India, wherever it is, what are the experiences?

India has for example a Food Security Act which grounds the right to food of the population.

This year we are presenting the two reports which you are today considering in advance of the Plenary meeting in October. The first one being *Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security*. Smallholders are the predominant holders, whether it is Europe or China, etc. China and India have nearly 50% of the smallholders of the world. How do we invest in them so that they become productive and also their own livelihood can strengthen? Food security involves livelihood security also. The other one is *Biofuels and food security*. These two will be introduced to you in detail by my colleague Maryam Rahmanian and the two chief investigators, so I won't go into them in this opening statement.

In October 2013 the Steering Committee will change. The present Steering Committee is completing its work this October and a new Steering Committee will be appointed soon and they will take over. Last year you had asked for two new reports: *The role of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture on food security and nutrition*; *Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems*. Both reports are very important. If you consider that 97 percent of the world's water is sea water while 1.5 percent is ice, only 1.5 percent is available to us, therefore fisheries, both marine fisheries and inland fisheries, and aquaculture are going to become very important in the future. *Food losses and waste* is also very important. I think we underestimate the contribution which prevention of food loss can make to food security. There are enormous food losses in the more affluent countries, but also poorer countries. Not only quantitative losses but also qualitative losses. Qualitative in terms of aflatoxins and myco-toxins in food, as a large amount of food insecurity comes from the inability to absorb the food already taken – as you know one of the important factors of food security is the correct absorption of food from the body.

So, in order to help the incoming Steering Committee, we have already initiated the work on developing the contours of these reports, appointing the Team Leaders and so on, so that the next Steering Committee can get on with the job immediately.

Now, as our Chairman Amb. Olaniran correctly said, there is a large diversity in this hall; variety is a spice of life we say. Diversity, not only biological diversity, but human, political diversity. All of them exist in the world. Under those diverse conditions, one size may not fit all and therefore what is important in our reports is to raise the issues. Raise the issues and show the pathway to addressing them. What will be relevant to one country may not be relevant to another because socio-political conditions vary, socio-economic conditions vary, agro-ecological conditions vary... there is a very wide variety, that is the beauty of our planet and CFS is wise to take into account such variability in its Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition. Amb. Olaniran, you have done an excellent job in terms of taking into account this variability.

Now, before I say few words of introduction on the two reports, I want to record our gratitude to the Governments of Australia, the European Union, France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Russia, Spain and Switzerland for their very generous financial support which has sustained us for the last three years, without which we could not have accomplished all of this. Although all the members of the Steering Committee are working without compensation, there is always a need for process support, including translation of the reports into all the languages and so on, therefore I want to acknowledge our gratitude to these donors and, on behalf of the incoming Steering Committee, I want to also say there is need for money for next year's work and therefore we hope that these donors and new donors will continue to support the work of the HLPE, which I said, its main task is to create synergy between science and public policy.

We hope that in the new Steering Committee there will be what we call continuity and change: there may be some old members and many new members: both are important. Continuity and change is the law of life and hence a Committee also has to follow this procedure.

Now let me say a few words about our two new reports. When we started this process, we had to develop our own procedures, how to do this work. Since it involves the production of several reports in parallel, from the very beginning we had to double-up all the procedures. How to do this work? We identified one member of the Steering Committee who has particular knowledge of the subject and requested that particular person to convene the oversight role of the Steering Committee, so that a bridge between the Steering Committee and the study team can be established, so that the study team knows what you want, so that they are not working in isolation: what did the CFS want? Why did they ask for this particular report? And so on. *Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security*, Dr Pierre-Marie Bosc will be presenting and *Biofuels and food security* by Dr John Wilkinson will be presenting, after Maryam Rahmanian makes a small introduction. The convener of the Steering Committee Oversight for *Smallholder agriculture*, Dr Alain de Janvry, who was supposed to come today, has devoted a lot of effort and would have taken part to this meeting with pleasure, but unfortunately other commitments prevented him. *Biofuels*, the convener of the Oversight was Prof. Igor Tikhonovich of Leningrad [St. Petersburg] of Russia who also was deeply involved in the work. We want to thank both these members who could not be here today for their own contribution. And also, as I said, the coordinator Vincent Gitz, has been the backbone of all this exercise.

The draft reports were open to electronic consultations and peer reviews, they were finalized at the meeting of the Steering Committee we held at Beijing under the auspices of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. I want to thank the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, for their very generous arrangements and generous hospitality, between 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013. It was a pleasure to work

in Beijing with very excellent facilities to complete our work. After that, the investigators have been working very hard incorporating the suggestions made at the Steering Committee meeting in Beijing and now they are ready.

Let me say a few words about the 2013 reports. I want to compliment you for choosing these topics: if you look at the 6 topics we have dealt with in the last three years, all of them are very relevant to sustainable food security.

#### *Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security*

A majority of farmers in the world operate small holdings, this is well known to you. Nearly 50% of them are in India and China. In dealing with these problems, we wanted to make a distinction between *smallholder* and *small holding*. Many times these two are considered to be more or less the same, synonymous. Small holding provides excellent opportunity for ecological agriculture, sustainable intensification. But a smallholder has a number of problems; problems arising from the risk return and the structure of farming. The cost, risk and return: the cost of production, the risk involved and the expected return; these are three major determinants of a smallholder's well-being and therefore, we have to address these issues of the smallholders in order to get the benefit of the smallholding, including management, a small farm management revolution.

So while smallholding is ideal for ecologically sustainable crop intensification, a smallholder suffers from several constraints like access to technology, credit, insurance, and assured and remunerative marketing opportunities. They are absolutely essential for a smallholder and in general for any farmer, small or big: at the end of the day, when you have produced the goods, you need a market.

Our report calls for a new deal to small farmers, small holders, which will make them ecologically and economically sustainable. The scope for enhancing the contributions of smallholders for their own and national food security through a small farm management revolution: how do you give the power and economy of scale to small producers? This is a great question: the small producer, the power and economy of scale, like a large agri-business, how do you give that power? This is why a management revolution is necessary.

Let me take one example from my own country: the dairy sector in India. 40 years ago, we were hardly producing 20 million tonnes of milk. This year, our farmers, mostly women, 75 million women have produced about 130 million tonnes of milk. They own only 1 buffalo, 2 buffalos, 1 cow, 2 cows and so on. You see the power of small producers to take the country to the top of the world in milk production. This is largely because of cooperatives, both at the production side and at the post-harvest side, like feed and so on. So let us not underestimate the role of the small producers, smallholders in producing more, in a more sustainable way and also in ensuring food security. This is largely because of the mobilization of the power of group cooperation through cooperative societies at the production and marketing level. The

progress in milk production is largely because of the technological and organizational empowerment of women. You will find in our report that engendering all these programmes for smallholders is exceedingly important, because in the smallholders' family farm essentially the women play a very critical role, both in the production side and the post-harvest side, and therefore, it is important to have appropriate empowerment of women including provision of basic gender-specific needs like "crèches", day-care centres, health care centres and so on. A large number of support services are needed for rural women who are in agriculture: they think of it all in urban contexts, but in the rural context the kind of gender-specific support services which are needed, particularly "crèches" and day-care centres are not there.

The report on smallholders is relevant to the ongoing work, as you mentioned Sir [addressing HE Amb. Olaniran], of the CFS on *Principles for responsible agricultural investments*. You have undertaken a process on *Principles for responsible agricultural investments* and you will find our *Smallholder* report very useful to you, those who are engaged in this exercise. You will find it very useful.

Also 2014, next year, has been designated by the UN as the International Year of Family Farming. FAO is making large preparations for emphasizing the role of family farming during the next year. This report, our report on smallholders will be very helpful to you in developing your national programmes and for the implementation of the ideas which led to one year being called "International Year of Family Farming", in other words to revitalize family farming. A majority of family farmers are smallholders and a very large number of them are women.

### *Biofuels and food security*

Now let me say a word about *Biofuels* before I end. Biofuel production has increased 5 times during the last decade, from less than 20 billion litres per year in 2001, to 100 billion litres per year in 2011. In other words, it's a sort of leap-frog in terms of biofuels. The challenge is how to achieve a win-win situation or a win-win balance between food and energy security. Both are important: energy security is important, food security is important, how do you develop a method by which you can have a balance so that one is not at the expense of another? So that food security is not at the expense of biofuel production and biofuels are not at the expense of food security. This is a win-win for both, and that is where you will find the report very interesting: it deals with various issues, connecting them. The report indicates the criteria that may be used by governments for harmonizing their action plans for food and energy security. These criteria are very important and I think our principal Team Leader will mention them. Land use plans which will help to achieve such harmony are important; land use planning is exceedingly vital. Building mechanisms such as maintenance of minimum food stocks is important to withstand to food price spikes and so on.

The first generation biofuel technologies depended on the use of food crops, as for example sugarcane in Brazil and corn in the United States. The second generation biofuels depends upon agricultural cellulosic biomass, the straws... the various kinds of biomass which are good sources like crop residues or the use of marginal lands for the cultivation of jatropha and similar products. The 3<sup>rd</sup> generation biofuels is largely technology. The technological frontiers have been opened up and involve the use of algae, micro-organisms. People like Craig Venter believe they can solve the problem of energy by some kind of genetic modification of micro-organisms and so on. So the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation biofuels will be based on science and technology and I hope they will receive enough support. We have mentioned all 3 generations: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, all these biofuels should receive support. New technologies including recombinant DNA technology are likely to play an increasingly important role in the development of biofuels which will *complement and not compete* with food security requirements, that is most important.

Finally Mr Chairman, I hope the forenoon and the afternoon sessions will throw light on the way forward both with reference to the New Deal for Smallholders and on methods of feeding and fuelling the future. The US has a very interesting programme called *Feed the future*. I have used "feeding and fuelling" the future, this is going to be the greatest challenge before the CFS.

Thank you Mr Chairman.