

50th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

Opening Statement

By

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Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Thank you for all for coming to support the CFS – a special committee for food security, which, in line with the FAO Constitution and Basic Texts, is hosted by FAO since it was established.
2. This week's 50th Session of the CFS comes at a critical time as many drivers are increasingly challenging global food security and nutrition.
3. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report by FAO for 2022 indicates that as many as 828 million people were affected by hunger globally in 2021.
4. This is an increase of 46 million people since 2020, and 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Furthermore, around 2.3 billion people in the world were moderately or severely food insecure in 2021.
6. This is 350 million more people who suffer from over and under nutrition challenges compared to before the pandemic.
7. And almost 3.1 billion people could not afford a healthy diet in 2020 – an increase of 112 million from 2019 - reflecting the effects of inflation in consumer food prices due to the economic impacts of the pandemic,
8. As well as ongoing conflicts (including the war in Ukraine) and the impacts of the climate crisis have made this situation even worse.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. We know what we need to do – we need to do more and better.
10. FAO together with other UN Agencies, under the UN big family, are working to address these challenges, both short- and long-term, especially for family farmers, smallholder farmers and peasants in all parts of the world, and the most vulnerable communities.

11. We need to collectively maintain our focus on the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
12. And do all we can to put us back on track to meet these targets – especially those related to SDG2 and SDG1.
13. Following up on the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021, we must remain committed to urgently transforming our global and national agrifood systems to increase efficiency, inclusivity, resilience and sustainability, to accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs.
14. And FAO is honoured, at the request of the UN Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General, to host, on behalf of the UN wide system, to host the UN Food Systems Summit follow-up Coordination Hub.
15. The CFS has an important supporting role as a global multilateral policy platform,
16. And I am pleased to see for the first time so many stakeholders physically present in this Plenary Hall, as well as the large number participating virtually.
17. CFS is backed by the High-Level Panel of Expert's, Chaired by an expert from Switzerland, scientific reports and policy guidelines that contribute to advisory global management of food security and nutrition.
18. The draft *Policy Recommendations on Youth Engagement and Employment*, which you will discuss this week, will be key in engaging the youth, especially young women farmers and peasants, scientists and entrepreneurs, in global food security.
19. The *Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls' Empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition* will also provide support in achieving the SDGs and sustainable agrifood systems.

Dear Colleagues,

20. I wish to congratulate you on the 10th anniversary of the *CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries* – one of the most impactful CFS's policy tools.
21. FAO will continue to support the work of the CFS substantially, in close collaboration with IFAD and WFP.
22. Let us continue to work inclusively and collectively, with all stakeholders, to accelerate the path towards the SDGs through more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable agrifood systems,
23. To achieve the Four Betters as endorsed by the FAO Conference: better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life for all, leaving no one behind.

24. I wish you a productive session, with fruitful debate and impactful outcomes to the benefit of vulnerable people and farmers globally

25. Thank you.