

CFS 51 - ITEM III. Coordinated policy responses to the food crisis – the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023

23 October, Afternoon Session (15:00 – 18:00)

Chairperson

Good afternoon. Distinguished delegates let's begin. Please take your seats. We are now moving on to item III of our agenda. An element of relaxation and of joy, because now we have a new leader, who will take the reins of the Committee on Friday. May I remind you that this item III of the agenda has as its title "Coordinated policy responses to the global Food Crisis – The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023". This is an item for information and discussion. The reference document for this discussion is the report "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023" report.

The session will be divided into two parts. Part 1 will begin with the presentation with the presentation of the 2023 SOFI report by FAO Chief Economist Mr. Maximo Torero, followed by a keynote intervention by Michael Fakhri, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. Part 2 of the Session this afternoon will be an open floor discussion, where delegations and stakeholders will have the opportunity to make interventions on policy responses to the global food crisis and on advancing food systems transformation for the achievement of food security and nutrition. I count on your support in making sure that we keep to the time allocated for this session. Part of the success of this committee relies in its ability to facilitate dialogue and debate among all the parties. I hope that we can use our time wisely so that we can hear all voices. I now welcome Maximo, thank you very much for being with us, who will make a presentation. You have 10 minutes.

Dr. Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Thank you very much, it is a pleasure to be with you. What I am going to present today is the progress towards globally agreed targets for ending both hunger and all forms of malnutrition within the framework of SDGs and to expand and deepen our understanding one of the main drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition. This year we also present in our report the impacts on the rural urban continuum, and we look at urban-rural continuum as a whole. So let me first start with the key numbers that all of you already have seen. We look at the updated snapshot of the world which still is recovering from the global pandemic and now grappling with consequences of the war in Ukraine and repeated weather shocks, which continue to happen, and more conflicts as we are seeing and wars that we are seeing today. So the new normal of multiple crises has led to global hunger and food insecurity, to stabilize between 2021 and 2022 to a much higher level compared to the pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. And there are many places in the world which are facing serious and deepening food crises.

The global stability hides significant variance between different regions of the world and achieving SDG 2 is farther away than before and that also has affected, of course, the level of accessibility to healthy diets. 3.1 million people don't have access to healthy diets today and to many of the other indicators which are not on track like you can observe in the screen.

So this is basically the graph that we used to produce where shows one of the indicators, the SDG 2 indicator that we use to monitor hunger and prevalence of chronic undernourishment. And, as I mentioned before, global hunger has remained relatively unchanged between 2021 to 2022, but still it is much higher than before COVID-19 levels and is affecting around 9.2% of the world's population in 2022 compared to 7.9% in 2019. It is estimated that between 691 and 783 million people in the world face hunger in 2022. So the midpoint is 735 million people facing hunger, and of which 122 million more people suffer hunger between 2022 than in 2019. So the increase since 2019 has been of 122 more million people facing hunger in the world.

The economic rebound after COVID-19 has created some improvements and that's why we see some stability at the end. But again, this has varied region by region, being the worst affected up to now all the regions of South of Africa, also SIDS, especially the Caribbean Islands and the major improvements in Latin America, some parts of Asia which have improved significantly since COVID-19.

Now, this graph that I am showing to you is for me one of the most important graphs that we have in this SOFI. Because what we show is the projection to 2030. So if we look at the current situation by 2030, we will have 600 million people that will still be facing hunger by 2030. This is a 119 million more than in any scenario, where we don't have the pandemic or the war in Ukraine. So the dotted lines that you see in the bottom is a scenario in which we don't have the war, and we don't have especially the COVID-19. That would have meant that we would have 119 million people less in chronic under nourishment by twenty-three. What these tell us is that these two shocks that were completely uncertain have deteriorated a potential recovery that we would have expected if these 2 shocks that nobody expected would not have happened and that's very important, because it tells us that the trend could have changed this year, which did not in 2022. And the reason is because of these 2 enormous shocks. But the positive side that I see on this is that the agricultural sector and the agri-food system and the farmer work especially has shown to try to be resilient despite of these enormous shocks, and we were able to stabilize in 2022. So it's very important to understand this figure, because it tells us that if we don't have any more of these uncertain shocks, although we are living one more now, could have and could be in the possibility of turning the trend to reduction, which is what we need. And then the issues, how we can accelerate that process. So I perceive that there is an option to do that. But let's hope that we can do that, and it is feasible despite the new shocks that we are facing today.

This graph, what it tries to do is to look at the same countries where we have data for acute food insecurity. So we analyzed the same 48 food crisis countries in both global report on food crisis, which measures a short term, acute food insecurity and the state of food security and nutrition, which is basically what we measure in the POU (the undernourishment that I was reporting). And we see in both cases that for the most affected countries the trend is the same: a deterioration, and a worrisome deterioration between 2021 and 2022 for these types of countries. More than 1/5 people in these countries was facing hunger in 2022. So that is also telling us that the inequalities are increasing, and the countries which are in food crisis are also deteriorating the current situation, which means that we have to better target our efforts in seeing the results.

This graph shows the difference between different regions in the world. As I mentioned before, the performance was different. In the regions. Africa and Asia include all sub regions, and the Western Asia and North Africa aggregate is added for helping the 22 narratives.

So during the last year the lack of change in the global level had significant increases in some regions and sub regions, while progress was made towards reducing hunger in Asia and Latin America. As I previously mentioned. Hunger was still on the rise in Western Asia, the Caribbean, and all subregions of Africa, where there was an increase of 11 million people moving into chronic undernourishment.

Looking at Western Asia and North Africa, 2022 has increased the number of undernourishment people by 4 million. More than half of the total increase observed since 2019. So that heterogeneity also is reflecting this result.

Now, when we look beyond hunger almost 30% of people in the world nearly 2.4 billion, as it was mentioned early in the morning, lack regular adequate access to food in 2022, as measured by the prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity. This is capturing undernourishment and over nutrition also, as a result. As for hunger, 2022, no progress was made on the food insecurity at the global level.

And more women than men face moderate or severe food insecurity. And more people in rural areas than in urban areas also face this problem. Again, another indicator that inequalities keep increasing between men and women, and in the rural and urban situation.

While nutrition is specifically mentioned in SDG 2, it is central to achieve all of them, all the 17 SDGs. So steady progress has been made on some indicators, but the world is still not on track to achieve the 2030 nutrition targets.

There has been a steady improvement on stunting among children under 5 years of age and exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months of age, and some progress on wasting but low birthweight, and overweight in children under 5 have not changed, as you can see in this graph. So in more of the long-term indicators, we need to look carefully and try to resolve the problem.

So we have learned that in addition to building resilience against multiple crises, a mega trend such as urbanization has to be factoring in all our efforts of transformation, this implies that the growing connectivity across the rural urban continuum must be considered. We cannot treat urban and rural as two different things as discrete. We have to treat them as a continuum.

The report tries to make a significant effort with the data that we have available to assess what is happening in terms of these indicators, when we look at this rural urban continuum. What we find is that at the global level, food security improves as a degree of urbanization increase, and we are measuring the degrees of urbanization through catchment areas as an improvement in accessibility to infrastructure. A comparison of food insecurity in rural and peri-urban and urban populations, using a new international standard to classify areas by degree of urbanization shows that 33.3% of adults living in rural areas were moderately or severely food insecure in 2022 compared with 28.8% in peri-urban areas and 26% in urban areas. The only region where the food insecurity was higher in urban areas than in rural areas was North America and Europe.

Regarding malnutrition differences by rural and urban residency serve as an important alert. Stunting and wasting are higher in rural areas, while overweight is higher among urban children. The prevalence of stunting was 1.6 times higher, and the prevalence of wasting was 1.4 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and the prevalence of overweight was only slightly higher among urban children, 5.4% compared to in rural children, 3.5%. Meaning that the rural population is also consuming goods which are not just what they produce. They are also consuming goods which are part of the market, and are processed goods, which is affecting also the obesity and overweight in these locations. So when we do policies in these countries, we need to look at this also very carefully.

Urbanization is leading to rising and changing food demands and shifts in patterns of food supply, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia - the two regions exhibiting the highest urbanization rates.

The rural urban continuum in the report is comprised of 10 geographical segments that we were able to collect data starting from large cities where more than one million people live all the way up to rural areas, located two or more hours from the city or town. So again, the way we are looking at this continuum is looking at accessibility to major towns.

New empirical evidence presented in this report for 11 Western, Eastern and Southern African countries challenges the traditional thinking and reveals important food consumption patterns, including dietary convergence across the rural urban continuum. It calls into question the traditional notion that Africa's rural farmers largely produce their own food. Own production never becomes the main source for food and represents less than 37% of total consumption. The diffusion of processed foods, including highly processed foods, is already advanced in Asia and Latin America, but it is spreading quickly into Africa. In the same 11 countries analysis clearly shows a diffusion of purchasing of processed foods, including highly processed foods across the rural urban continuum. And this changed a lot the way we were thinking, and the policies that we need to be implementing also in rural areas and in this rural urban continuum.

This report, therefore, suggests that actions, policies, and new technologies, and consequently needed investments to overcome the challenges and seize the opportunities that urbanization creates to require a clear understanding of the interaction between agri-food systems and the rural urban continuum. Policy approaches need to leverage the progressivity of the connectivity between urban, peri-urban and rural areas through investments in infrastructure, public goods and enhanced capacities in order to increase access to affordable healthy diets and achieve food security and nutrition for everyone across the continuum, and not just for the urban people implementing these solutions require that the agri-food system, governance, mechanism, and institutions cross all sectors and administrative boundaries, and their reliance with national and local governments, local governments in particular, are fundamental

actors in leveraging multi-level and multi stakeholder mechanisms that have proved effective in implementing essential policies and solutions for making healthy diets available and affordable for all.

We have done a review and work through all the different SOFIs that we have been working in the past. So we have first important to look at the integration between humanitarian development and peace building policies. We believe that's the best way of moving out of these emerging situations so that we can increase resilience to the major drivers while ensuring affordability to healthy diets. Most of the areas that are affected today, and the crisis countries are because of conflict, slowdowns, downturns, and because, of course of climate change, and we know conflicts are going to continue sadly. So we need to find ways in which we can create and integrate humanitarian development and peacebuilding policies.

Also, we need to scale up climate resilience across agri-food systems. That's the way in which we could increase resilience of these households, and we could make them more prepared to be able to cope with the climate change that will affect in 4 dimensions. It will affect in extreme temperatures, in flooding, lack of water, but it will also affect the variability of the weather conditions, which makes more difficult for farmers to make decisions, and of course it will modify the way pests and diseases evolve, and that are the things that we need to be ready.

We need to focus on value chains so that we can contribute to the bigger supply of healthy diets. It's true that the world produces enough in terms of calories but is not producing enough food groups so that everybody can have access to healthy diets. And that's where we need to bring up the different financing agendas to assure that that will be happening. We need to protect households and value chains during economic slowdowns, finding ways in which we can make them more resilient to these slowdowns. And we need to address all the specific challenges associated with water management. The Conference of FAO was on water, and we need to keep working on the water issues, because that's one of the major constraints and challenges that we'll be facing in the future.

And finally, we need to look at the financing mechanisms, and how we can realign the policies and public expenditures, so that we can not only look into the potential repurposing discussion in terms of how we can move the support of agriculture to areas where proper incentives are needed, but also looking at different buckets, of financing, new financing, new mechanisms of financing, but also financing from the private sector, from nonprofit organizations and from all other mechanisms, the IFIs and MDVs in a coordinated way, so that we can tackle all these problems. All these interventions have to be gender sensitive, and we just produce a report on this. Looking at the role of the status of women in the agri-food systems, but due to the current demand dynamics

much stronger efforts are needed to address the structural problem that afflict the African continent, and efforts to build resilience on this continent needs to accelerate as much as possible. So, colleagues, I will stop there and thank you so much. But again, the transformation needs to start moving. But we need to be very careful on how we do it, so that we use our resources, which are very limited in the best possible ways. Thank you.

Chairperson

Michael, I give you the floor.

Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Human Rights Council

Thank you. Chair.

Hi, my name is Michael Fakhri. I'm the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food. That means I'm the eyes, ears, and good conscience for the UN system on all matters regarding hunger, malnutrition, and famine from a human rights perspective. It's my job to talk to and learn from everyone. I talk with governments, social movements, activists, businesses, journalists, students, and of course, international experts and international civil servants. I'm an active member of the CFS Advisory Board, and therefore my work connects me through three UN centers between Rome, New York, and Geneva, and I want to thank Gabriel for his hard work. He's really made my job a lot easier navigating these other spaces in the past.

Six months ago, I presented my report to the Human Rights Council on violence and conflict in food systems. The main causes of hunger, malnutrition, and famine are armed conflict and violence. Our food systems produce violence just like they produce food. My main policy advice to the Human Rights Council was that the CFS' 'Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises'. It's the best framework to use, because it is grounded in international human rights law and addresses the root causes of protracted crises.

Our food systems are producing, are going to produce more violence in the future, especially because of unilateral coercive measures, because of occupation, because of armed conflict and because of gender based violence. Also, while I was at the General Assembly last week, I, along with several other human rights experts raised the alarm and warned that food was being increasingly used as a weapon all over the world to starve civilians. Most acutely, it is being used to starve civilians in Gaza.

Of course, targeting civilians in times of armed conflict is a crime against humanity, but my mandate is food, and our mandate is food. I want to focus on this risk of genocide. We raised the alarm at the General Assembly. Unless the international community ensures a ceasefire and flow of humanitarian aid, there is a significant risk of genocide by Israel against the Palestinian people. To reduce the risk of genocide, I strongly encourage the CFS to pass a resolution reaffirming Security Council resolution 2417, which reduces the risk of genocide everywhere and that resolution strongly condemned the starving of civilians, and denial of humanitarian access being used as a warfare tactic.

The other thing about the General Assembly is that they asked me to provide them a report on how to recover from the pandemic and transform food systems, so that our food systems are more resilient to climate change and increase biodiversity. I delivered that report just last week and engaged in an interactive dialogue. My report is the culmination of three years bearing witness to the pandemic and food crisis. In that report I outline what can be done right now and what can be done in the future. In other words, based on consulting governments, experts, food producers, communities, and cities and rural areas all over the world for the past three years, I've learned from everyone, and I provided a detailed plan on how to recover from the food crisis and transform food systems. I wouldn't have been able to do that without a close relationship with the CFS and the HLPE. It is everyone's hard work here that has allowed me to provide this concrete plan to the General Assembly.

What I'm saying is, we know what needs to be done. And now the question is, how are we going to do it? This is what the right to food is about. The right to food and human rights more broadly allows us to identify shared values and enhance people's dignity. It provides a common framework that enables international cooperation and cohesion. What I told the General Assembly is that if they pass a strong right to food resolution this year, if they recognize that the right to food is the key way to transform national food systems, deal with the international food crisis, then I told them, the CFS is ready to put that political energy into action. The reason I felt confident to say that to the General Assembly last Friday is because I've been so impressed by the progress made at the CFS over the last year. The right to food is in the vision statement of the CFS. Most importantly, the right to food is a central feature of the draft MYPoW and it was the least controversial aspect of drafting the MYPoW.

Over the last 2 years I have seen more and more countries take up the right to food in their national and international policies. Moreover, since 2009, the CFS has produced a series of negotiated principles, frameworks, and guidelines that has given the world everything it needs to deal with the multiple crises at hand. It's time for the CFS to use its own tools and reinvigorate its mandate to coordinate at the global level.

We are in the midst of a food crisis that is getting worse every day, and climate change is the existential fight of our generation. Now is the time to use whatever tools we have at hand and work together in a multilateral forum that prioritizes human rights. To recover from the current food crisis with an eye to the future, states must face three issues. They must, 1. respond to the food crisis with a national food plan; 2. they must develop an international coordinated response to the food crisis; and 3, they must transform their food systems to make them more resilient to climate change and increase biodiversity. States must address all three issues as interdependent. If you do not cooperate, if you do not cooperate at the CFS and develop an international coordinated response, your national plans to recover from the food crisis will fail at the same time. How you respond today to the multiple crises at hand will determine your food systems for decades to come.

To understand the food crisis, we must appreciate that food is, that food systems are currently part of a global economy built on relationships of dependency and extractivism. To move past the food crisis, we must support and deepen our relationships based on care and reciprocity. We must build our economies around these relationships of care and reciprocity. What we learned in the pandemic is by taking care of our family, our friends, our neighbors, that's how people ensured that someone was always there for them in time of need.

So you know, the right to food is not just in the vision statement of the CFS, it's also in the constitution of the FAO. One of the FAO's purposes is to ensure humanity's freedom from hunger. This is different than zero hunger. Hunger isn't just something you measure. What we're talking about is freedom, freedom from hunger. That's what the right to food is about. Freedom from hunger means we should be working towards freedom from oppression, freedom from occupation, freedom from exploitation. By fulfilling the right to food and ensuring everyone is free from hunger, you will be able to create the conditions for peace. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much. Thank you, Special Rapporteur for sharing your insights. Distinguished delegates, we now move to part two of this segment, where we will have an open floor discussion on the crisis and transformation of food systems. Before I open the floor, I would like to remind all delegations to concentrate on the lives of the people suffering the greatest impacts of this crisis and on the responses that are needed at every level, communities, regions and countries. We must all listen to their voices in presenting our statements. For this session, as you know, there are four questions, which I encourage you to address in your statements.

First question: How is the current food crisis impacting people and communities in your country or in your constituency or organization?

Second question: Which context-specific policy responses are being implemented?

Third question: How do your country's or constituency's responses to the current food crisis align with food system transformation efforts?

And fourthly: What transformation efforts are needed at regional and global level to support your national efforts?

The protocol observed for the delivery of national statements is as follows. Firstly, we will hear statements from high-level speakers, Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Secretary of States and representatives of regional entities, whether live in person or via Zoom or through pre-recorded video messages. We will then hear statements from regional groups, delivered by Ambassadors or Permanent Representatives. And then thirdly, national statements delivered by Ambassadors or Permanent Representatives or other delegates. Without further ado, I would like to open the floor. First of all, I invite those who have not yet done so, to make their request for the floor.

And firstly I give the floor to the Minister of South Africa, followed by Brazil, Cuba and Egypt.

South Africa, your Excellency, you have the floor.

South Africa

Thank you very much. Chairperson of the session. I wish to stand on the protocol that have already been established when we started this meeting. It is indeed an absolute honor and privilege to be granted the opportunity to table our statement on this year's CFS fifty-first session, following the nomination of Ambassador Jezile as the next chairperson of CFS at the end of this meeting.

We've noted the report of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023. We've also listened carefully to the vision from right to food representative. Over the past three years the world has been caught in the eye of a storm of geopolitical conflicts, economic shocks, extreme weather, events, energy, challenges, and diseases. These have undoubtedly put tremendous pressure on our already fragile global

agri-food systems. Lessons learned from addressing food security during the peak of Covid and the national and regional positions we adopted for the Food Systems Summit should galvanize us towards addressing food security and nutrition. We have to cut against food protection, food protectionism, and ensure that we continue to affect structural changes to our food systems. We need to promote family farming, to also ensure international transfer of knowledge for sustainable production of adequate and nutritious food. We need to fix food systems, ramp up production and improve food supply chains to ensure that food inflation is kept in check. Social protection and safety nets to protect the vulnerable from shocks and stresses related to food insecurity are to be implemented. We need a person, and honorable delegates, to find holistic, systematic, and multi stakeholder driven ways to address food waste as one third of food produced is either lost or wasted. Our efforts towards resilience building are to be fortified allowing us the capacity to resist, adapt, and recover from the food security threatening hazards at a country level.

Chairperson, as you have asked us to do so, South Africa has developed an agricultural agro-processing Master Plan, which outlines a future strategy on how we will address the issue of food security, agricultural growth, and inclusivity. This plan has been developed by government, together with our private sector in the agri-business space, labor, and civil society, each outlining their commitments that will make this plan realizable. Concerted efforts on youth and women empowerment are at the center of this plan. So as deploying our research capabilities in developing innovative ways of production, taking into consideration climate change. In the past two years, the government of South Africa supported about 150,000 subsistence farmers bringing into production about 600,000 hectares under production. Policy interventions to ensure women's access to land aims to ensure that women can have surety of tenure in order to produce for their families and ensure market access for their goods.

We do, however, realize that at a country level at the region and globally, we need to work together. We need to utilize global instruments and funding mechanisms to address food security and nutrition with specific focus on women and youth. We also need to hold each other accountable for the commitments and pledges made towards food security. We need to have patient investment in our food systems that are innovative, that ensures that the model of funding from the private sector away from the traditional risk written tradeoffs. For instance, the G20 Summit of 2021 expressed the global ambition to voluntarily reallocate special drawing rights to the equivalent of 100 billion dollars for countries most in need. In 2022, the AU-EU-Summit agreed that I quote "African institutions in consultation with national authorities will be involved in the use of these SDRs to support the continent's recovery". But there is not much progress to date on this one. Of late, through the Nairobi declaration calls were made for better deployment of SDRs liquidity mechanisms to build resilience to climate shocks. Partnership, and partners in Europe, the Rome-based agencies and beyond, should support Africa in making international processes and finance fully supportive, not only of climate but also food security goals. These SDR mechanisms has to be urgently channeled towards the resilience of food systems and better food security in Africa. We need to strengthen the responsible investments in financing for food security and nutrition, as it has already been indicated in the report.

At a global system, we need to agree on collaborative governance for coordinated responses to address emerging global food crises. This need to be codified within relevant UN body guidelines and standards to avoid uncertainty and panic when shocks and interruptions actualize. We do not need to reinvent the wheel. We need strong institutional frameworks, public private sector partnership, research, innovation, monitoring and evaluation to address the threat of food security that all of us, indeed, will find ways of working together to address the problem of food security and nutrition. I thank you.

Chairperson

Thanks for your very clear messages on the key questions we raised. Thank you so much. Now, I would like to just remind speakers that ministers and regional representatives have 5 min allocated. I try to be very generous with the ministers very specially, and all others will have 3 min.

Also, you are welcome to take the floor to those. Deliver your speeches for interventions from the floor if you wish, so that we can accommodate more speakers and secure more time to do so. But you're more than welcome to join the pulpit if you wish. Now it is my honor to give the floor to the Minister of Brazil.

Brazil

Chairperson, Gabriel Ferrero, I do wish to congratulate you on behalf of Brazil and thank you for the work carried out at the helm of CFS. And please allow me to also congratulate our Chair, who was just elected, the permanent representative of South Africa, Ambassador Nosipho Nausca-Jean Jezile. I do hope I pronounced your name correctly, Madam. And I also wish to express our greatest wishes on your mandate.

Now it is with the greatest sense of responsibility that I come for the first time to represent my country at the Committee of World Food Security, CFS. Our delegation is quite hefty, and it has the, a former President of FAO, Professor José Graziano da Silva, who has honored us with his presence. Along with Minister Masedo from the General Secretariat of the President of the Republic's office and Minister Machiavelli, responsible for the agricultural development and our ambassador here at FAO, Ms. Barroso and her team, along with Elizabeth Mansiti, who is on the Council of Food Security and Nutrition and Valeria Burigi, who is also part of the team. And we bring to you a great embrace and greetings of President Lula. This presence of ours symbolizes renewed and firm confidence under the leadership of President Lula to your combat to your fight against hunger and poverty. And it also expresses our wish for peace. It symbolizes our full confidence in a multilateral system and in an open and inclusive debate, of which this committee is the greatest example to point out the best path forward.

The participation of civil society is of paramount importance to any program. One of President Lula's first measures after he took office was to reinstate the National Council of Food and Nutrition Security, CONSEA, the interagency chamber for food security, which now includes twenty-four ministries under the coordination of our Social Development Ministry as well as the national conferences with the involvement of the people. All of this had been dismantled by the previous government. Now without this social participation a government or an administration committed to moving backwards its established social policies and programs distorted at their purposes and place them at the service of electoral ends. It even put Brazilian democracy at risk. But this perverse project did not prevail. Democracy triumphed. Alas, it did drive up hunger and poverty and unfortunately my country went back on the hunger map, after having overcome the scourge back in 2014.

Now time is short here, Chair, so tomorrow I will give you greater details about this process and about how exactly we are going about rebuilding Brazil, so that we can once again eradicate hunger and combat malnutrition. I will do this in the course of event tomorrow in the Red Room at 01:30 in the afternoon in the company of our dear Professor José Graziano, who I am sure will be very proud to see the work that we have done, not just in FAO, but elsewhere as well. Now, you might remember that we created the Zero Hunger strategy, a strategy making history when the Professor was the Minister, 20 years ago in 2003, when Brazil for the first time was on the right path to eliminating hunger. Now, we indeed will present the food and nutrition security plan, named the Brazil Without Hunger Plan, which tries to continue the fight against hunger and multiple forms of nutrition with adequate and healthy diets, reducing inequalities and giving attention to the environment. We will talk about social protection, support for family farming, promotion of access to land, strategies to reduce loss and waste. And I already would like to extend an invitation to everyone to come to us tomorrow to attend the event, in which we are going to speak to you about the lessons that Brazil has learned.

For now, suffice it to say that Brazil has come back and indeed we are firmly committed to promoting the human right to adequate food, because this is a fundamental pillar of our policies to combat poverty and hunger and also it mandates us to be here and join hands to promote this human right around the world. SOFI 2023, the report has shown that we are still losing this fight and that we have not regained the ground lost to the pandemic and it is just not acceptable that over 700 million people in the world are chronically undernourished, not to mention any impacts of malnutrition and obesity and the predatory food systems that mar healthcare and the environment and not to mention the tragic conflicts that could have been avoided, the climate crisis that has led to catastrophes having led hundreds of thousands of people to fall prey to hunger.

In my country this crisis has strongly impacted the Amazon and the northeast of the region with droughts and the Southeast and South with floods and cyclones, like other parts of the world. Indeed I have been

saying that climate action needs to take into account people. There can be no climate solution if it is not fair and just. And here, Chair, Brazil wishes to work with you to strengthen the role of CFS, as an important body to promote international governance and fight against hunger and malnutrition. Now, for this we need integration and not competition. Indeed, we need to integrate with other processes underway in other for a with an integrated lens. CFS is so innovative and inclusive, it has involved women and youth, and it is promoting gender equality. Of course it is crucial for us to work together, but also to know what is going on in the world. Everything is indeed summed up in the guidelines that we have been working on, the Voluntary Guidelines. And we just need to allocate resources and knowledge and social technologies and practical implementation experience. And that is why President Lula at the last G20 summit in India expressed his intention during the Brazilian Presidency of the G20 to forge a global alliance against hunger and poverty. I assure you that this alliance once it is launched, won't be just for the G20, but for every country that wishes to implement or reenforce social programs with proven effectiveness against hunger and poverty. If here at this committee we already have formulated global guidelines, in this new alliance we hope to supply political momentum and financial resources and technical cooperation to put the direct implementation of such guidelines everywhere. Let me conclude with a reminder that hunger is a common problem. As Brazilian citizen Joao de Castro taught us and he was here at the Council at FAO years ago, he said and I quote "when a large part of the population doesn't eat, the other part that does eat, cannot sleep, because it is ashamed and afraid for those that are hungry." I am very excited to listen to continuing discussion and exchanges throughout this week. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much Minister. I was generous with Brazil. Less than Brazil's generosity with its delegation. Due to your hefty delegation, I considered that you deserve more time. Thank you for your leadership. Now I give the floor to the representative of Egypt for three minutes. Thank you.

Egypt

Thank you Mister Chairperson. Your Excellency, Gabriel Ferrero, Chairperson of the CFS, Excellencies Ministers, Excellencies Ambassadors and Ladies and Gentlemen. First of all, I would like to express my joy at this opportunity. I am indeed taking the floor at this 51st session of CFS. I would like to reassert that Egypt always has and always will support the activities of CFS. We have been in the CFS Bureau for two years in the past and we see how important this committee is as it strives to achieve zero hunger across the world.

Excellencies, Mister Chairman, let me remind everybody what food security means. In Egypt we believe that food security is of paramount importance. Food security was at the heart of the creation of CFS. Food security means that all people across the will have the ability financially, socially, logistically to have access to food, food that is nutritious and adequate to their basic needs. I would like to remind you of this definition very simply, because I would like to connect this to something else. We are surprised and shocked at seeing the world and the international community today standing by, watching, watching without doing anything, a humanitarian crisis unfolding, where more than two million people suffer in the Gaza strip. Today, collective punishment is exerted onto those civilian persons today, who have no access to food, water, medicine, electricity, whatsoever. The entire Gaza strip is deprived of all this. Violent pressures are exerted as well so that people today have to flee their homes, homes which have been occupied for generations. We are supposed to go forward, not backward. And here we are seeing this movement backward. Egypt has always worked in order to make sure that humanitarian assistance is provided, and the situation is similar today. We tried to get support and humanitarian aid to our Palestinian brethren. We never stopped trying to supply Gaza with his humanitarian support. However, Israeli shelling unfortunately prevents us from making humanitarian support reach civilians. And I would like to remind all of us of what Mr. Antonio Guterres today told us today. He is the Secretary General of the United Nations; he is the one standing above all of us today. When he visited the Rafah access point to the Gaza strip and he looked at this access point and he said: behind this access point, 2 million people suffer, they have no food, no water, no electricity. And this is why I would like to remind everybody

that we have loads of trucks ready to make the difference and this difference is between life and death. We want to call upon the international community to allow those trucks to cross the access point so as to provide relief to civilians. Mr. Chair, during a visit to the region WFP also said the same thing. We need humanitarian assistance to cross. So far only 20 trucks were able to cross the access points to Rafah into Gaza and this is not acceptable, we need more to be provided to people. From this podium, this organization, from this FAO we are all proud of, I would like to repeat one for time, this is not acceptable.

And by the way, this is a message that I would like to convey strongly, it is unacceptable as an international community to see water, food used as a weapon against anyone, from a humanitarian standpoint, from a moral standpoint, it is not acceptable. And one more time, from this podium, I would like to reiterate the request to make sure that humanitarian assistance crosses the checkpoints, the access points in Gaza. One more time, let me remind you of this. And let me also remind you of what the President of Egypt said, Al Sissi said that the Palestinian cause will never be solved, unless there is a fair solution.

Mr. Chair, today we hold the 51st session of the CFS and the timing is extremely delicate. Sustainable development is extremely important and food security today is at the heart of our discussions. The world is concerned about food security, because food security has been destroyed in the past, by the pandemic, by a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, by various climate-related events, etc. And today, we believe that the movement of goods and food items particularly has witnessed an increase in prices, which means today we have witnessed a hyperinflation in addition to all of this, according to the SOFI report. The situation is quite worrying and food security across the world is not in a very good place unfortunately. We only have seven years to achieve food security and we are very much behind.

Now Mr. Chair let me mention that we in Egypt have taken several measures to guarantee food security. There is for example an Egyptian initiative called 'Dignified Life.' It is an initiative considered extremely important in Egypt. It will cost us about 20 billion dollars over three years. It will change entirely the face of agriculture in rural Egypt, and it will improve the situation of more than 60 million people, which means about half the population of Egypt in 20 provinces. Thank you very much for your attention and apologize for having taken so much time.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished Ambassador. And now I would like to give the floor to the following delegations: Cuba, Nicaragua – on Zoom I believe, is that right? On the platform – to be followed by Colombia and Indonesia. Those who wish to come and speak from the podium, please let the Secretariat know, otherwise you are welcome to make your statements from your seat. Go ahead Cuba, please.

Cuba

Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, excellencies. We recognize that the main challenge before the international community is to eliminate hunger and poverty, to provide food security to a growing population, which in 2022 reached 8 billion people. As we are gathered here today more than 820 million people in the world are suffering from hunger. Women and girls account for almost 60% of this global population. It is a concrete reality that the main cause of hunger and poverty is structural, due to the persistence of an unfair and unjust international order.

In Cuba, food security and nutrition are a priority of the economic and social development policy. It is enshrined in article 77 of the constitution of the Republic of Cuba, which was approved in 2019. It recognizes that all individuals have the right to healthy and adequate food. We are presently working on the implementation of the law on food security and food sovereignty and nutrition, which is focused on decreasing our dependence on imports, enhancing production capacity, using more science technology and innovation and developing efficient and sustainable food systems locally. In spite of the great national efforts however, the greatest obstacle before Cuba to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda is the financial and commercial and economic blockade. It is the longest embargo in history and was imposed by the government of the US. And it was actually exacerbated without precedent even during the pandemic with the implementation of 243 unilateral measures.

At the same time, the inclusion of Cuba on the arbitrary and unilateral list of countries sponsoring terrorism makes it very difficult for us to engage in any financial transaction and having access to credit. We launch an appeal to put an end to the unilateral coercive measures that run counter to international law and that affect food security and the everyday life of our people.

The international community has the urgent need to intensify efforts to eradicate hunger and transform food systems. We need to make a transition from humanitarian emergency aid to a global model that promotes the sustainable development in the long-term for all. Chair, the time has come to back the efforts of developing countries in the area of technology transfers, external financing according to fair conditions, market access, capacity development and cooperation, triangular, South-South, North and South cooperation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Minister, representative of Cuba. I now give the floor to Nicaragua on Zoom and then through a recorded video message we will hear from Colombia. Nicaragua, Minister, you have the floor.

Nicaragua

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, good afternoon, distinguished members and guests of this Committee on World Food Security. I was telling you that this report that we are hearing today reflects once again for the fifth consecutive year we are witnessing what we are living in a world that is making a "not good" history for our generation. We see the commitments of the 2030 agenda and its goals in particular, the SDGs, very influenced by the combination that has existed between pandemics, climate crisis, global conflicts, inflation, rising prices, both energy and raw material prices, among other factors that present us with monumental challenges. Multilateralism is and will be the only option if we want to reverse these prospects.

Mr. Chair, food security is a central issue on our agenda, and it is the achievement of zero hunger in all our countries. That is why this Committee on Food Security faces enormous challenges, and what we are discussing here is of enormous importance to be implemented in each of our countries. In spite of the global context we are living in, our Government of Reconciliation and National Unity in Nicaragua has public policies, agricultural policies, and plans for production, consumption and trade in the process of development, sustained and trying to achieve important results to date in the eradication of hunger.

Nicaragua today produces 90% of its food. If we look back in history, it was a country with a deficit in food production, despite the fact that 52% of Nicaragua's territory is destined to food production. With public policies, especially the policy of producing more food, food with quality, with safety, the policy of productivity taking care of our mother earth, producing more food in less area, the policy of research and innovation, a policy that has allowed the development of forty research centers throughout the country, where technology is transferred to small, medium and large producers in the country. Nicaragua is now a country that also exports food, which contributes to food security in Central America and other countries in the world, and we have the challenge of continuing to contribute to food security and better-quality food. In Nicaragua we work with safe food, food that responds to native varieties, we do not work with genetically modified seeds, but we work with innovation, with important hybrids that generate productivity. Food security is one of the keys to grow in the world with love, with peace and with a development that life allows us to contribute as brotherly countries. Nicaragua invites today in this committee to join efforts, from science, technology, to unite knowledge, to integrate knowledge in the world to produce food that is of utmost importance for the population that exists today on the planet and for those who are also there in the future.

Finally, Mr. Chair, Nicaragua wishes to reaffirm its commitment to progressively advance in the fight to eradicate hunger in our population. We are confident that this Committee on World Food Security will, within its mandate, promote the development of voluntary guidelines and important recommendations, especially on policies that offer member countries options for combating poverty. Far from discouraging ourselves, we invite the Committee on World Food Security to continue advancing in these common

objectives that inspire confidence for a better world. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and we wish the new elected Chair a fruitful work. Best regards.

Chairperson

I would now like to hear the first of the video messages. It is a pleasure now to give the floor to Colombia. The next speaker after that will be Indonesia, then we'll hear a video message from Norway and then in the room Panama and Philippines. These are the next speakers on the list. I'd like to ask the Audiovisual services to now show the video message from Colombia.

Colombia

A greeting to all of the men and women at this great event today, I am Luz Maria Munera, Minister of Equality and Equity of Colombia. For Colombia it's a pleasure to greet the Food Security Committee and it is a pleasure to tell you, to tell this audience what Colombia is doing today, what Colombia wants to do and what Colombia thinks, given the problem of food security. Colombia wants to move beyond the term food security and wants to work together with its government, the government of change to talk to the world in all of its different languages about the concept of the human right to adequate food. For the fourth year in a row, governments around the world recognize that 258 million people are living in food insecurity. This situation has to change. And this is not just an issue of making sure that food gets to the table of each of the world's inhabitants, but making sure that there is access to food, access to adequate food, but also making sure that there is cultural respect in each corner of the world.

The government of Gustavo Petro and Francia Marquez to deal with this issue has already taken immediate action. The first of those was the creation of the Ministry of Equality, which allows us to reach each corner of the country where the afro-indigenous, indigenous population in general and women in particular has thus far not been able to give their families real genuine access to food. That is why we have created an investigation board, which tries to find out what the real conditions are and what the food conditions should be for Colombians. But above all, at the Ministry, what we have done is come up with a program called Zero Hunger. It aims to reach every part of Colombia and to show the entire world that we have been able to overcome hunger in Colombia. With this in mind and given the global reality that we see, but also given the reality on the ground in our country, we have decided to create a system, a system that is aimed at overcoming food issues in Colombia and gradually to ensure that the human right to food ensures that each Colombian has enough to eat, far and wide across the country. For this reason, the government of change, the government of Gustavo Petro and Francia Marquez, the Ministry of Equality, wants nothing more than to fight hunger with all of its force and to ensure that as Francia Marquez said, that dignity is commonplace.

Chairperson

Thank you very much Minister and thank you to the delegation of Colombia in the room as well for that video message. I would now like to give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Indonesia

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Excellencies, Members of the Committee, it is an honor for me to join this ministerial segment and contribute to the discussions. CFS is unique. As the foremost intergovernmental platform for food security and nutrition, CFS must ensure its inclusivity and listen to everyone, including when it relates to national context, capacities and priorities.

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023 highlights an alarming trend of concurrent multiple global crises. Amid the global food crisis we are facing today, numerous civilians, including women and children, are suffering as a result of the attacks in Gaza. In this opportunity allow me to once again reiterate that Indonesia strongly condemns the aggression of Israel against civilians in the besieged Gaza strip and the entire occupied Palestinian territory. Indonesia calls for the war and violence to stop

immediately to avoid further human casualties and to ensure unimpeded access to nutritious, safe, adequate and healthy food as well as the right to water and the right of development for all Palestinians. Nearly one in ten of us faced a lack of food last year. If these distressing trends remain unchanged, our world will not achieve the goal of ending hunger by 2030 (SDG2).

In this regard, allow me to highlight three key points on how Indonesia deals with such challenges: First, we acknowledge that the agro-food system is holistic, interconnected and multisectoral. It requires a comprehensive and coherent policy at local, regional and national levels through the involvement of all relevant agrifood system stakeholders. Indonesia's food system transformation, including aquatic and blue food, is directed towards a food system that is nutritious, inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient and built by local food systems based on local potential. In addressing the food crisis, the government of Indonesia focuses its efforts on protecting the most vulnerable, including family farmers and fishermen, through support for market stabilization and social protection.

Second, Indonesia has made significant progress in enhancing food security and nutrition in the last few years. We have maintained our food availability for 273 million Indonesians and increased their access to more nutritious, safe, adequate and healthy foods. We have managed to reduce the experience-based food insecurity prevalence and food inflation. In terms of reducing the prevalence of stunting in children under five years, we have decreased the rate to the lowest level in more than two years, from 24.4% in 2021 to 21.6% last year.

Thirdly, transformation of agri-food systems requires investment in research, data, innovation and technological capacity. We appreciate the support of various parties and invite more partners at the regional and global levels to collaborate more tangibly on the ground. From the production side, institutional strengthening, capacity building of farmers, to joint funding more should be done. One thing is by strengthening cooperation of the Rome-based agencies at local and at national level. Indonesia is ready to continue its collaboration with all CFS stakeholders and accelerate efforts to more sustainable and resilient agri-food system. I thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of the Republic of Indonesia for poverty and food security. Thank you very much once again. Now moving on, I give the floor to Norway through a pre-recorded video message.

Norway

Colleagues and delegates, it's a great honor to address you at this critical time of global food security. Hunger affects around 9.2% of the world's population and has been on the rise for many years. Global food systems are affected. We are still recovering from a global pandemic. Rising food and energy prices have been magnified by the war in Ukraine. Climate change and conflicts threaten food production and access to food globally. The poor are suffering the most. There is need for strengthened efforts at local, national and global level.

I would like to highlight some priorities for Norway. Firstly, promoting small scale farmers is a priority in Norway's development cooperation to end hunger. Solutions must build on farmers' needs and priorities. Family farming is also the backbone of agriculture in Norway. Secondly, it is important to include aquatic foods in our strategies. This is in line with the CFS recommendation on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. We are also promoting this through our leadership in the global action network with focus on sustainable food from the oceans and inland waters.

Furthermore, Chair, CFS is an inclusive platform for governments and stakeholders. We are working together on developing policies on world food security. Norway is committed to a human rights-based approach. The principles of the right to food and good governance should be integrated. The recommendations on CFS must play a leading role so that we can achieve food security and nutrition for all.

This year the voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment will be presented for endorsement. All around the world, women are a vital part of farming and fisheries. They engage in subsistence activities as well as commercial food production, processing and marketing. Yet women face greater limitations than men in accessing resources. According to a new report by FAO, closing the gender gap in food systems, the global gross domestic product would increase by 1%. Furthermore, Chair, Norway welcomes the analysis on urbanization and food security presented in the SOFI report 2023. By 2050, almost 7 in 10 people are expected to live in cities globally. In Norway, much of the best agricultural land is around cities and towns. Norway only has 3% arable land. One of our key political priorities is soil protection.

Policy coherence at national and subnational levels is important, and in this respect, I think the report makes very valid recommendation to summarize the figures on global hunger and calls for action at all levels. The recommendations of the CFS provide valuable guidance to our efforts.

I wish you all the best in the next coming days. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, thank you to the Secretary of State from Norway. I now give the floor to the following delegations: Panama, followed by the Philippines. Panama you have the floor.

Panama

Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, everybody. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of Panama to congratulate everybody on these great efforts that have been made by our Chair of the Committee and also to congratulate the Ambassador or the representative, who will take over as Chair.

In recent years, we have seen an alarming moment for food security around the world. We have seen shortages of resources, conflict, climate change and that has made the issue more difficult. I would like to stress the importance of strengthening the responses that are coordinated to guarantee food security, taking into account the data and reforms and reports on the issue, including this year's report. The report includes very alarming figures. Many people around the world are facing chronic malnutrition, including people who don't have access to adequate food. There is a lack of access to adequate food. This has a direct impact on health and on the welfare of people, but it also affects the economic and social development of communities and countries.

To face this crisis, it is important that we strengthen and come up with different levels of coordinated response at regional and at global level. We need better cooperation between government, international organizations and humanitarian agencies to address the underlying causes of the problem. This requires holistic policies that encourage balanced production of food as well as guaranteeing agriculture and access to basic resources such as water. At regional level, it is important to establish strategic alliances between countries in order to share knowledge, resources and best practices in the fight against food insecurity. This can include cooperation and exchanges on technology for agricultural production as well as ensuring trade in agricultural products as well as coming up with early alert systems. At local level, it is essential that we strengthen capacities of communities so that they can face food insecurity.

The government of Panama is working to support our stakeholders in this area, including programs for capacity building and education to promote sustainable practices. It is also important that we guarantee the situation for communities affected by food insecurity. We must listen to their knowledge and to their traditional voice. It is very important that we do this and incorporate it into effective policies and programs. In conclusion, this is a global crisis and requires a systematic and coordinated response. That's why we need this Committee. The data from this year's report show that there is any urgent need to come up with measures that ensure that people have proper access to nutritious food. A coordinated response at global, regional and local levels, can ensure that we can meet our objectives and that the problems with food insecurity are problems of the past. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much Panama. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Philippines.

Philippines

We note greetings to all participants and organizers of the fifty-first plenary session of the Committee on World Food Security. We note with concern the 2023 report on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, which presents that while there are encouraging signs of economic recovery from the pandemic, a decline in poverty and hunger is being tempered by rising food and energy prices. It is therefore prudent to address the drivers of rising food and energy prices.

The Philippines wishes to highlight key policy responses that we believe the international community needs to strengthen in terms of coordination and cooperation. First, keep trade transparent, predictable and fair. Second, address the threats of climate change working towards immediate fulfillment of obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the Paris agreement. Third, invest in boosting the productivity and resilience of agri-food systems, especially investing in research and development, technology and infrastructure for agri-modernization and improved access to food. Fourth, empower people, family farmers, fisher folks, women, youth, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups included to be food secure and contribute effectively to a food secure world and next, promote data and evidence-based policy making and program development. We note recent research showing that for every dollar invested in data, an average of 32 dollars in economic benefits are generated.

With regard to the presentation's focus on the issue of urbanization, we note the policies and solutions to leverage agri-food systems transformation for healthy diets across the rural-urban continuum and wish to share some efforts that the Philippines is doing in this regard. Our Department of Agriculture has spearheaded an urban and peri-urban agricultural program to improve production and supply of local, fresh vegetable products, reduce food miles, promote healthy living by eating more vegetables and to contribute to the local economy, social integration, and environmental stability. The President of the Philippines, who concurrently serves as the Agriculture Minister consolidated this program with the Department of Interior and Local Government so that the program can be implemented nationwide at the local level. The Department of Agriculture is also partnering with the private sector to build more urban agricultural sites nationwide.

The Philippines recognizes that achieving a sustainable food and nutrition security requires a whole of society approach with government utilizing multi-sectoral and multi-level platforms.

The Philippines recognizes that the new normal is challenging agri-food systems to deliver nutritious, safe, and affordable diets for all with the new normal of agri-food systems remaining highly vulnerable to shocks and disruptions as arising from conflict, climate variability in extremes and economic contraction. Indeed, we have no option but to redouble our efforts to transform agri-food systems and leverage them towards reaching the SDG 2 targets of zero hunger and food security, international engagement, cooperation, exchange, and action is vital for our shared success.

The Philippines stands ready to do our part and work with you all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative from the Philippines. And now I wish to give the floor to Ecuador to be followed by Mexico.

Ecuador

Good afternoon to all participants and greetings to those who are part of the Bureau and all the Members of the meeting today. It is important to take into account that one of the factors that have been taken into account is that the government of Ecuador since it's been in office has had the priority of combatting

hunger, especially for the most vulnerable and that is those who are the poorest and others. Now it is important to bear in mind that these realities come from certain regions of our country. There are households there are children both girls and boys that are affected directly in their households and it is important to get to know that situation, in households and in schools and in daycare center that have taken children aged between 0 and 3. On the first of June of 2021 we established the future childhood bonus or allowance, which benefits pregnant women and children under two years of age. This is an incentive that goes up to 50 dollars per month as an allowance and that includes also coupons up to 120 dollars that are received upon the birth of the baby and in the first and second year of life. It is really important, because this incentive has the aim to see to it that women who are pregnant can actually offer a better life to the newborns and the young ones under two. Now it is important however to register in the social registers so that children can have access to their identity rights as well as this coupon. This is why one of the conditions that need to be met for the coupon to be enjoyed for mothers to show up regularly at their medical checkups so that the children can benefit from this. We must always continue to strengthen health policies and nutrition policies. This is the reason why as of September we have witnessed quite a large number of people who are extremely poor, but who have been able to enjoy the coupons that I mentioned earlier, this childhood allowance. We have a total number of 6357 beneficiaries who have accessed this allowance. So for the government it is really important that for the first years of life both girls and boys enjoy good health and nutrition along with all the other rights, bearing in mind that the first years of life are the most important for any human being and that they define the future of individuals. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much Vice-Minister from Ecuador. And now I would like to give the floor to the Undersecretary from Mexico.

Mexico

Good afternoon. On behalf of the government of Mexico I would like to salute Mr. Gabriel Ferrero, Chair of the CFS. And I also wish to express our gratefulness for his extraordinary leadership of CFS characterized by inclusion, dialogue and search for possible agreements in order to make headway in the response to the global food crisis. Also I wish to congratulate the Chair recently elected Ambassador Nausca-Jean Jezile. I wish to congratulate as I said earlier, and I wish to insure her of the full support of our government. Also I would like to greet the heads of IFAD, WFP, the HLPE, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food as well as the Ministers, Vice-Ministers, heads of delegations and member countries of CFS as well as all the representatives of agencies and bodies attending this important session. I also would like to greet the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism. Please be ensured of our constant support.

I would like to reiterate the message of the President of Mexico, Mr. Andrés Manuel López Obrador to look for basic solutions at the root of the problem, not just emergency solutions, with respect to the exacerbation of the global food crisis. The way out here, he said, is not a conservative spirit, but the solution lies in transformation, in bold action, in transforming the status quo. Unfortunately, however, not only have we been unable to bring about the transformation of food system, but what prevails is the status quo and passivity and indifference in the face of the exacerbation of the global food crisis. We see that there is an increased food crisis, and this has fostered the systematic violation of human rights, and it has generated discontent, migrations and ungovernability. And at the same time, the obscene extraordinary profits of a monopoly of financial, energy and food multinationals increase year after year, crisis after crisis. This is why Mexico launched an appeal to the international community to come out of our conservative spirit and indifference and to come out with a sense of humanity and fraternity, the urgent need for basic transformation of global agri-food systems and the mechanisms of governance, recognizing at once and for all the total failure of the neoliberalist model and lack of a welfare state.

What is it that we have done in Mexico over the last five years of the current administration to build a model that is an alternative to the failure of the neoliberalist agri-food model? Well, first of all, we have decided to build a welfare state, leaving behind the neoliberalist model. And we are guided by the principle that we need to give priority to the poor for the good of all, with no privilege, no waste, no

corruption in government, separating the economic power from the political power, exercising fully our national sovereignty and practicing the principle of peaceful co-existence with all countries in the world. Secondly, our government has assigned a priority role to land acclamation and food self-sufficiency, leaving behind the neoliberalist model of dependency and neocolonialism proposed by the countries of the global north. Food sovereignty and energy sovereignty are the two pillars of our national sovereignty policy. Thirdly, we have encouraged a new agri-food policy based on the following tenets: 1) food self-sufficiency; 2) priority attention to small-scale producers and farmers; 3) agri-ecological transition with no transgenic agents, no glyphosate and no pesticides; 4) healthy and affordable diets. And that is why among other things we adopted in 2020 the front of package labelling. And 5), we are completely redirecting subsidies to the countryside. Now 100% to our subsidies are allocated to small-scale farmers, who account for 85% of production units. Furthermore, we established six priority programs to reclaim our land and for food self-sufficiency with an annual amount of 3 billion dollars, of which 2.5 million is allocated to farmers, with the inclusion of women and indigenous peoples. And also, we established so-called well-being products for over 6 million beneficiaries in local communities. 6) Our government has fostered a cooperation strategy with different countries in order to get to the root of problems like migration, poverty and food inflation. Here are some examples: social investment in programs, building the future of young people in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Belize and Cuba. 2. We have undertaken an initiative with the government of the US to invest in development to combat migration at the root. 3. Our President met virtually with Presidents and representatives of 11 Latin American countries in April of 2023 to discuss food inflation, and yesterday in the city of Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico we held a meeting with the heads of state of government of Columbia, Haiti, Cuba, Venezuela, Belize, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama. Of course the representatives of said nations in order to agree on set action to tackle the phenomenon of migration. Our government is showing that it is possible to coordinate policies to guarantee food security with a transformative approach by tackling the causes at the root. Looking at human rights and the principle of cooperation with further development for justice and peace.

Finally, we respectfully call upon countries to embrace international law and the main principles underlying the establishment of FAO and the UN to guarantee the human right to food, but especially to guarantee the most fundamental right of all, which is the right to life and peace. Therefore, we launch an urgent appeal to intensify diplomatic action that will lead to a ceasefire in Gaza, thus putting an end to the genocide of the Palestinian people and open diplomatic solutions for the recognition and co-existence peacefully of two states. Food security globally requires diplomatic solutions to achieve peace and food aid. We do not need weapons or munitions to feed the war. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, dear Undersecretary. We are now going to close this part of our session with Germany. Is Germany in the room? With the delegation of Germany to be followed by France with a video message.

Germany

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Excellencies, colleagues, ladies, and gentlemen, we have come together in times of multiple crises in times of wars, conflicts in times of immense human suffering. In these days, in particular, our thoughts go out to all the people affected by wars, by terrorist attacks, and to all the people who are short of essentially everything. The most recent SOFA report sadly provides a clear forecast. There is a close link between crises and hunger. The effects of Russia's war against Ukraine alone have caused 23 million people more worldwide to go to bed hungry.

We therefore need a strong CFS. In order to keep malnutrition and undernourishment at bay, to achieve the transformation toward sustainable food systems. After all, the CFS breathes life into the human right to adequate food, gives a voice to the most vulnerable, the most affected among us and serves as an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform that develops solutions for food security with a solid, democratic, and multilateral foundation. And it is the only body that initiates rule-based policy approaches for food security. I would therefore like to use this opportunity to thank you, Chair Ferrero, for your important and dedicated

work over the last two years. You were successful at making the CFS more visible and bridging the gap between Rome and New York. You successfully strengthened the coordinating role of CFS in fighting for food and fighting the nutrition crisis. You ambitiously led the CFS in very trying times, and we are now presenting a convincing roadmap for the years to come.

In the future, all stakeholders here at CFS must be fully committed to improving the CFS links with Rome-based agencies with the UN General Assembly as well as other international fora. It is incumbent upon us all to take the financial, political, and substantive support of the CFS seriously, to strengthen the CFS and to bring its policy products to the attention of a broader public. I therefore welcome the ambitious and complex CFS policy products, the voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition and the CFS policy recommendations on strengthening collection and use of food security and nutrition data and related analysis tools. Let us accept these products as a good compromise and ensure that the CFS remains capable of taking action. Drafting these products has certainly made one thing clear: multilateralism is by no means easy. But it is possible, and in times of crisis such as these, indispensable. Whether we take action or not, will determine if and how we can make a difference and fight hunger. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much Madam Secretary of State of Germany for your kind words. Now we are going to listen to a video message by France.

France

First of all, I would like to express my full support to the statement made by Spain on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Once again this year, the 2023 report of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World alerts us and invites us to take vigorous and urgent joint action. Indeed, hunger and malnutrition continue to increase in Western Asia, the Caribbean and Africa. The multiple and repeated crises of the last years have undermined food systems, increased production costs, caused food price inflation, and had a serious impact on the most vulnerable populations.

In this inflationary environment, it is important for everyone to resist to the temptation of export restrictions. On the contrary, it is essential to maintain commodity flows, in order to avoid an increase in market uncertainty and price volatility. France strongly condemns Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its people as well as Russia's decision not to renew the Black Sea agreement and its repeated attacks on Ukrainian production and storage infrastructures. Since the beginning of this war, France, along with the European Union have been working to support the continuation of agricultural activities in Ukraine and to enable Ukrainian agricultural products to supply world markets; and to contribute to the food security of the most vulnerable countries.

The climate crisis, which is a long-term crisis, is also here, and its deleterious effects are plain for all to see. We need to take action to ensure that COP28 next December recognizes and encourages the responses that food systems can provide to meet the challenges of climate change and food security and nutrition simultaneously. We must make an active commitment to the agro-ecological transformation of food systems so that they are resilient, sustainable, carbon-neutral and low-input.

If we want to achieve the Agenda 2030 SDGs and eliminate hunger and malnutrition, it is essential to tackle the issue of inequalities, and I am therefore very pleased that the HLPE has taken up this subject. I am looking forward to the result of your work on this subject with great interest. I have no doubt that the Committee on World Food Security will succeed, on this issue as on the other important issues it has dealt with in recent years, to provide ambitious recommendations for all its stakeholders, governments, civil society, the private sector, research and international organizations. The CFS has demonstrated its ability to deliver guidelines and recommendations, which are the fruit of collective intelligence and open dialogue, enable coordinated action.

I would like to welcome the latest results from the CFS after the adoption of recommendations on food systems and nutrition and on youth in recent years, this week we will be adopting the recommendations

on gender equality and women's empowerment and recommendations on data. These issues are of particular significance to me. I've launched a major project in France, the pact and law on agricultural policy, which focuses on renewing the generation of farmers, men and women. The challenge is to support the major transitions underway to meet the challenges we face as well as society's expectations, while providing an incentive framework for new generations of men and women so that they can give meaning to their profession and earn a decent income from their activities.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate the French government's commitment to food security and nutrition and its support for the CFS as a key institution. France is mobilizing, having hosted the 1st global meeting of the School Feeding Coalition last week in Paris, by committing to the 13th replenishment of IFAD, for which it will host the final consultations with Angola; and by putting the fight against malnutrition at the forefront of the next Nutrition for Growth Summit, which it will be hosting. I thank you for your attention and wish you fruitful debates.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, thank you, France for your statement. And I am being told that there is at least one more statement from a high-level speaker. I apologize and give the floor to Sweden.

Sweden

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I want to declare that Sweden fully aligns itself to the statement of the European Union and its 27 Member States to be delivered by Spain, including with regards to the situation in the Middle East. So, listen on that later. We would like to thank the Rome-based UN agencies as well as UNICEF and WHO for the excellent 2023 social report and the Chief Economist of FAO for its equally excellent presentation.

This year a SOFI report reaffirms the stark truth. We already knew that the world is far off track when it comes to reaching SDG2 and the goal of zero hunger by 2030. It must be regarded as a collective failure of humanity that as many as 691 to 783 million people are estimated to have faced hunger in 2022. 691 to 783 million people. The sheer scale of suffering and misery behind those numbers beats imagination and, worse still is that the future ahead looks equally bleak with 600 million people projected to be chronically undernourished in 2030. 600 million people. That is a projected 23 million people more than in a scenario in which Russia hadn't launched its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. As we heard before 23 million people. We strongly condemn Russia's blatant violation of the UN Charter, which have had terrible consequences for global food security, and have been further worsened by Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, a decision for which, in the words of the UN Secretary General, the most vulnerable, will pay the highest price.

Mr. Chair in these times of crisis, multilateralism and coordinated joint action is indeed as important as ever. That is why Sweden, together with Zambia, goes to the side event on taking action on global food insecurity during the UN General Assembly High Level week, the last month. The side event featured presentations by WFP and FAO and served to build joint understanding on challenges to global food security and to explore how international cooperation can contribute to addressing them.

Sweden is also invoking the talk and recently announced additional support of 21 million dollars to WFP's immediate response to the food crisis in multiple countries. This brings Sweden's total support to WFP this year to about 122 million US Dollar. In addition, Sweden continues to be one of the top contributors to FAO and IFAD respectively. Lastly, Mr. Chair, please be assured that Sweden is a strong supporter of the CFS. We recognize its important role in leveraging its convening power and inclusive platform to coordinate effective responses aimed at addressing food, insecurity, and a progressive realization of the right to adequate food. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, Secretary of State, and once again my apologies for having overlooked your request to speak. Before we move on to the next segment of our session, we will take statements from regional groups that will be headed by permanent representatives or ambassadors. I would like to know if there are any ministers or secretaries of state who are here in attendance physically or virtually, who have not yet spoken, but would like to do so at this point in time. I recognize the distinguished representative from Tunisia. Of course, you can come up to the podium, if you so wish.

Tunisia

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honor that I stand before you in this honorable institution to thank kindly the Committee on World Food Security for the work done and I also would like to take this opportunity to address a message to us all.

Food security cannot be dissociated from water security, which is extremely important in a context in which climate change continues to have a heavy impact on food security through the great variability, which affects yields and production. Variability doesn't only happen from one year to the next, but even within the same year we have great variability. That is why I would like to share with you an example that we had, which is a recurring drought for the fourth consecutive year, which has greatly affected yields and especially grains. Now why am I alluding this issue? Because several countries that we represent find themselves in this situation in which what is at stake is the model, which is focused on imported commodities, vegetable oils, imported sugars, grains and other, in an environment that is extremely volatile and that is affected by international markets, insecure supplies. That is why we need to reflect on global solutions that can provide the certainty to these supplies, so that the most vulnerable countries will be entitled to a sustainable and certain supply.

Another important challenge that we would like to confirm is climate change. This too is related to water and that is because people in our country are called upon to improve their productivity, but soil and arable land needs to be improved. This cannot of course not be divorced from the need to improve our natural resources, and this is the reason why our aim in our country was to opt for an inclusive and resilient sustainable agricultural system, which will enable young people and women specifically to have access to markets, to funding, land and technologies. And it is in this framework that capacity building is crucial, along with a better access on the part of these people to food secure sources. We hope to be able to continue to support the deliberations of this Committee and we do wish to continue to collaborate. Although there are encouraging results, we still have a long way to go. And I wish the Ambassador or South Africa, that was recently elected to be the head of this Committee, I wish her full success.

Chairperson

I thank the distinguished representative of Tunisia. I now give the floor, I understand Saudi Arabia would like to take the floor. Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

Saudi Arabia

Thank you. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I salute you and may the blessing of god be upon you. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers of this 51st session of the CFS and I would like to thank the Chairman in particular. This session is held at a particularly crucial moment, where the world faces a host of climate-related and food-related challenges. Today we need more than ever for this organization to lead us, to lead us efficiently towards sustainability, while building on our advantages and by allowing us therefore to become feeders of the world.

Today across the world we need to remember that we have natural resources, we have good locations, we have national resources, we have human capital, we have potential, we have the possibility to export, we have the possibility to invest in agriculture, which means that we can do it. Ladies and gentlemen, excellencies, today we have common challenges, and we face them together. We know that recovery,

sustainable recovery requires collaboration. In order for us to continue improving at all levels, we need to work together while guaranteeing the import of new technologies, we need to improve productivity, increase investments in agriculture, particularly in smart agriculture and we need to build on our comparative advantages. We need to focus on productivity, on rural areas and on sustainability. We need to adopt long term solutions in order to face the problem of food shortages across the world. Furthermore, we need to work on a comprehensive legal system that would protect agriculture. We also need to work on eliminating all obstacles on the movement of food items across the world. I would like to pinpoint to the role of investment. Investments are important and the private sector in this is of paramount importance, because the private sector will provide the economic and logistical support. It will allow for supply chains that work seamlessly and allow for food items to be available on international markets with acceptable prices.

Ladies and gentlemen, in this regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has to change its systems and particularly its supply chains and food systems. It changed them so as to make more food available to people and if we are to guarantee success, we decided to do the following: First of all, we increased investment in agriculture by about a 1000% over the past couple of years. We have also increased agricultural loans, which means that today we provide about 7 billion Saudi Rials in terms of loans to smallholder farmers in order to support them. We were also behind the elaboration of a strategy for sustainable food systems. We worked also on increasing our livestock and we invested in aquaculture. Last but not least, I would like to reassert the fact that Saudi Arabia is a privileged partner to the CFS. We stand ready to work on fighting hunger across the world and we stand with you to fight the challenges that lay ahead. We pray to god that he may grant us success in our endeavors, and we hope that collaboration among all of us will lead to sustainable food systems across the world. Thank you and may the blessing of god be upon you.

Chairperson

I thank the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia. If no other speaker at ministerial or vice-ministerial level would like to take the floor, I now move on to the list of requests for the floor of representatives from regional groups or regional entities. The first on my list is Spain on behalf of the European Union.

Spain

Distinguished Chair, I am honored to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement. Let me first reiterate the EU statement of the 15th of October that condemns in the strongest of terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks. We strongly emphasize Israel's right to defend themselves in line with humanitarian and international law and call for the protection of all civilians at all times and the immediate release of all hostages without any pre-condition. We also reiterate the importance of the provision of urgent humanitarian aid and of safe and unhindered humanitarian access and stand ready to continue supporting those civilians most in need in Gaza in coordination with partners.

We congratulate FAO on this excellent presentation on behalf of the five UN agencies involved in drafting the SOFI report and for the detailed information provided in it. We are relieved that food insecurity has not increased in certain regions since 2021 and has improved in Asia and Latin America. However, we remain deeply concerned about increasing hunger in Africa, Western Asia and the Caribbean. The worrying food security picture results from multiple drivers, including climate change, socio-economic disruptions and rising conflicts. The data presented today in line with the 2023 mid-term review of the global report on food crises reconfirm that we remain off-track to achieve SDG 2, with projections that show that there will still be almost 600 million people suffering hunger in 2030.

Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has exacerbated global food insecurity and has increased market instability. We acknowledge that in a scenario with no Covid-19 and no war, those projections could have been reduced by 119 million, 23 million of whom would be free from hunger by 2030 if Russia were not waging war against Ukraine. Russia's decision to terminate the Black Sea Grain

Initiative followed shortly by attacks on Ukraine's Black Sea and Danube ports increases global market instability. Fragile environments and people in most vulnerable situations, notably women, girls and people with disabilities are the most affected. We recall the need to avoid food export restrictions, which exacerbate food price volatility. In an increasingly volatile environmental and political landscape, soaring food, energy and fertilizer prices and inflation deepen inequalities and affect people's access to healthy and nutritious foods, resulting in a significant increase in food insecurity. The EU and its members will continue to support all efforts to stabilize food markets and to support countries and populations affected by food insecurity. We continue to strengthen the Solidarity Lanes, which have enabled the export of 49 million tons of grain, oilseeds and related products from Ukraine since May 2022.

We need to address the root causes of food security, deliver effective responses to climate change, conflict and inequalities, strengthen coordination, policy coherence, market transparency, social protection, rules-based trade and food systems financing and to consolidate the humanitarian development and peace nexus in order to transition to more sustainable food systems and to get back on track to achieve the targets of the Agenda 2030. We have earmarked 18 billion EUR up to 2024 for food security and nutrition and we will further support the transformation of food systems of partner countries under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework.

We welcome the SOFI report 2023 on urbanization and the recommendations to strengthen the urban-rural continuum towards smart, circular and inclusive development. We recognize the central role of the CFS as the foremost intergovernmental multi-stakeholder platform for food security and nutrition in coordinating effective responses in strengthening national policies to achieve SDG 2 and interconnected SDGs across the 2030 agenda. Chair, we commit to supporting the uptake of CFS policy recommendations and guidelines and to foster the realization of the right to adequate food. We stand ready to further engage with the CFS, while thanking you Chair for your valuable commitment.

Chairperson

I thank the distinguished representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union. I think another speaker at Vice-Ministerial level has asked for the floor, if I am not mistaken, I think it's Ukraine. Could you confirm? Yes. A video message for the representative of Ukraine and apologies once again.

Ukraine

Your Excellency, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it's a great pleasure for me to be part of this event. I would like to greet all participants who are sitting in the plenary hall, and all who are watching this video, and everyone who believes that in the 21st century there must be no famine anywhere in the world, like we in Ukraine do believe the right for food should be a fundamental right of every human being, on every continent. Food security is among the highest priorities, both for Ukraine and for many international organizations that help countries to establish food systems and develop their own agribusiness. This means that the world needs more cooperation to stop the aggression that ruins the food market, to stop any state that disrupt food supply chains, blocks seaports, destroys the port infrastructure and raising fear of a famine.

Unfortunately, as a result of systematic attacks on the Danube River ports and Black Sea ports, blocking of seaports by the Russian Federation, the export of Ukrainian grain to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe was reduced by almost 3 million tons per month. We launched a temporary sea export corridor from our ports, and we are working hard to preserve the land route for grain exports. Even in these difficult conditions Ukraine is ready to remain a guarantor of global food security. We have always been and will always be, a responsible participant in global food market relations, operating transparently and predictably. Ukraine has already harvested 52 million tons of crops. Out of this year's estimated 79 million tons of crops.

Ukraine welcomes the continued concerted efforts of the international community as well as the Committee on World Food Security to put global food security at the forefront of their activities. In turn, during wartime the President of Ukraine signed a decree of national priorities for the transformation of food systems in Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has developed a plan of actions for its

implementation. Such national priorities cover following areas: health and nutrition, ecofriendly production, resistance to market instability, food availability for all groups of the population. Additionally, Ukraine set itself the following goals: long term supply of food, predictable trade, coordination of humanitarian aid. And I express my gratitude to everyone who is implementing the grain from Ukraine humanitarian initiative with us. This certainly gives an additional impulse to Ukraine in transforming the food system to promote the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Dear participants our productive work and resistance to the aggressor are the key to the stability in the agricultural sector of each country. Therefore, I wish you a fruitful discussion, and thank you for your attention.

Chairperson

I thank the distinguished representative of Ukraine and once again apologies to Ukraine for that error. Now moving on. We are still with representatives of regional groups. Who would like to take the floor? Now, I don't have any representatives of regional groups asking for the floor. Therefore, I will begin with the list of requests for the floor that we have here, beginning with the delegation of Argentina, followed by China and the United States. Argentina, you have the floor.

Argentina

Thank you very much, Chair. I would like to begin by thanking you for your work and above all for your stewardship in achieving consensus at the beginning on this meeting. And of course we think that this week will be a week of success as we reach the end of this process. So, I thank you. I would also like to recognize the work that's been done by the Chief Economist, Maximo Torero, in preparing the SOFI 2023 report, which once again presents us with a scenario full of challenges for food security and nutrition.

During our speech in the plenary, we mentioned that there is a context of a perfect storm, the international community and the multilateral system are being challenged by the tragic realities of hunger and thus they are called on to guarantee that in a world of such abundance, people have access to healthy food and all of them have that access. We said that last year and this year that imperative still waits to be fulfilled. The SOFI report shows us that between 2019 and 2022, the number of people that suffer hunger around the world has increased by 122 million, 9.2% of the population therefore has been affected by this misfortune. At the same time we are going through a very serious situation when around 735 million people suffering hunger and more than 300 million cannot have access to a healthy diet. In simple systems we still haven't recovered from the catastrophic effects of the pandemic and the goal of zero hunger seems every further away.

In parallel, from a regional point of view, the report also suggests that in Latin America, 83 million people suffer severe food insecurity, while 284 million are in a situation of food insecurity that is moderate. This is with the concentration of populations in urban and peri-urban areas means that pressure is increasing on the availability of food and the affordability of food. This is all happening in a very difficult context. I recognize that within our region SDG 2 represents a challenge, inequality and asymmetry is deepening, despite the fact that some countries in the region have already been able to recover in economic terms. The phenomena of food insecurity and nutrition are multifaceted in principle. Nobody has escaped from the stress effects from the aftereffects of Covid, the impact of climate change, external debt burdens in developing countries, barriers to international trade and of course conflicts, to name just some of the catalysts of this situation. Of course not all of these issues can be addressed here. But as we understand it, it is right to refer to them. But we must refrain from using this platform to discuss political questions, which belong rightfully in other fora. We have said this before, and we say it again now.

It is therefore clear that to overcome this multifaceted range of factors, it is essential that we establish a coordinated response and policies that are coordinated among other things to ensure that we guarantee greater sustainability of our agro-food systems. Defense against extreme volatility of food prices is important as is resilience of local, regional and global value chains. FAO and the World Food Program have generated positive initiatives, which for example have contributed for example to stabilizing international markets and promoting the flow of agricultural products as well as initiatives to address the issue of urban and peri-urban agglomerations. In addition, for a such as the G20 have collaborated in

establishing measures to overcome the structural causes of the phenomena that have an impact on food insecurity. And the regional mechanism designed by the UN Secretary General has also provided a positive contribution in this area. There is still much to be done. But from our point of view advances in coordination should continue being encouraged through collaboration with the members. This is to say that national governments, because they are the people who know the necessities and priorities that they have. In conclusion, President, we need to ensure that we have proper food trade at international level – this is essential – so that we have the transformative power of global value chains, we can encourage comparative advantage that we can ensure that we have proper supply of healthy food. In order to do this, it is essential that we deal with the technical barriers to trade and distortion creating subsidies that disturb our food systems and make them inefficient and also harm our environment.

In conclusion, I would once again congratulate FAO on their work in coordination the responses to food insecurity and at the same time to ratify the commitment of my country, Argentina, to provide healthy food to the world through our agro-food systems that are sustainable. I would also like to mention the synergy between and coordination between member states, which is key for the multilateral systems through the relevant fora and that can help reverse hunger throughout the world. I am sorry for going over my time and thank you very much indeed, Chair, for your work to achieve consensus this morning.

Chairperson

Thank you very much to the Ambassador from Argentina. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of China, followed by the United States and then Finland. I am perhaps being too generous with the time, so I'd like you to please keep to the 3 minutes, if you can.

China

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, good afternoon, everybody. First of all, China wishes to congratulate to the South African ambassador on becoming the Chairperson-elect of the CFS. And also, we are fully confident in your leadership for the next two years. We also thank you to the current CFS Chairperson on your past two years of excellent work. This election given fully to the principle of regional rotation is and we fully commend this.

We notice that in the 2023 edition of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report currently there are over 735 million people suffering from hunger. This is an increase 122 million on 2019. Many regions of the world are sinking deeper and deeper into food crisis. Achieving zero hunger, no poverty faces a long and tough road ahead. China is of the view that the main reason of the current severity is not lack of supply, but a result of regional conflicts, economic downturn, extreme climate events, trade protectionism and other factors overlapping with each other. Effective response to risk and challenges requires combined efforts from all countries and an integrated policy approach.

China calls on all countries to support FAO, one of the most important specialized agencies within the UN. CFS should play a greater role in leading our response to food security challenges, following its function as an inclusive intergovernmental platform focusing on its own responsibilities and play a role in agricultural research. Uphold a free trade system with the WTO and its center and promote a fairer agricultural trade order. Build a supply chain system that is safe, stable, open, efficient, inclusive, mutually beneficial and win-win. Deepen mutually beneficial cooperation between all sides for North-South cooperation, South-South and triangular cooperation to promote food security, rural development as well as poverty reduction together. Last year, China put forward a global food security cooperation in eight aspects. China is willing within this framework to continue to strengthen dialogues and cooperation with all sides and uphold global food security with international society and make our relentless efforts. Thank you.

Chairperson

I thank the distinguished delegate of China and I now give the floor to the United States followed by Finland and Belgium.

United States of America

The SOFI report makes clear that the world continues to face unprecedented global food security challenges. A perfect storm, as was noted by our colleague just a few moments ago. Commodity shocks, natural disasters and climate change, conflicts, supply chain issues, rising energy and input costs. They've all driven up the cost of feeding people around the globe. Two data points stand out from this year's SOFI report in 2022: nearly 2.5 billion individuals, largely women and people in rural areas did not have consistent access to nutritious, safe and sufficient food, and more than 100 million more people faced hunger compared to 2019. Chair, we cannot address the world's needs in the same manner that we have done over the past 20 years. Business as usual, will not help us meet the unprecedented needs that the world is facing. Nor will it help us achieve the sustainable development goal of zero hunger by 2030.

Innovation holds the promise of a food secure future through new and innovative approaches. In collaboration with farmers, the private sector, and other countries we can improve agricultural productivity to nourish people and the planet.

Gender equity and equality are also essential in agri-food systems. Women make up 43% of the agricultural workforce in the world, and agriculture is a major source of income for women. Investing in women isn't just the right thing to do, it's also the smart thing to do. The CFS voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment provide valuable guidance on how to advance gender equity in agriculture, and we look forward to their endorsement by this plenary later this week.

The United States strongly encourages Member States to increase their food security-related contributions to the UN agencies. We are proud to be the leading contributor to improving global food security and reducing hunger. The United States provided over 13.5 billion dollars in food security assistance in the past year with more than 7 billion US Dollars going to support FAO, WFP and IFAD initiatives.

In this year alone, the United States co-launched the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate, AM4C, an international call to increase investment in climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation to mitigate climate change and adapt agriculture for the future. We partnered with the African Union and FAO to launch the vision for adapted crops in soils or VACS as part of USAID's feed the future initiative. VACS seeks to improve agricultural productivity and nutrition by developing diverse climate-resilient crop varieties and building healthy soils. And last month, on the margin of the UN General Assembly, the United States and Norway launched the financing for agricultural, small and medium enterprises in Africa fund, a first loss fund that will make investing in these businesses less risky and thus draw on the private sector investment we need to build more resilient food systems.

Chair, as recognized across the UN system, the SOFI report rightly highlights how the devastating effects of Russia's illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine, now in its twentieth month, continue to exacerbate global food insecurity and our collective ability to address these numbers and stem growing global hunger. Russia must end this war. And it should do so immediately. Additionally, as others have, we call on Russia to rejoin the Black Sea Grain initiative and allow grain and food to reach people in need around the world. Russia's unilateral suspension of the initiative has disrupted food shipments, raised grain prices for those who can least afford it, and increased food insecurity. If Russia does not rejoin the agreement, it is responsible for increasing food prices, food scarcity, and hunger around the world. Chair, we will save our rights of reply for the disinformation, accusations, and false narratives put forward by several members for the end of this discussion.

But finally, I'd just like to say, the challenge of global food insecurity is daunting but never hopeless. Let me just repeat one part of that. Global food insecurity, that's what we're talking about here today. As many of our colleagues have so eloquently said earlier, we must work on this issue together. Working together, we can provide farmers, ranchers, foresters, and fishers, the tools to become productive, more resilient and more sustainable producers working together to share knowledge and build coalitions. We can enhance global food and nutrition security and working together, we can create more resilient, inclusive, and productive food systems which are critical to making progress towards the sustainable development goals and realizing the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much. Thank you very much indeed, distinguished representative of the United States. I have been told that we are connected now with Guatemala, and we have the Vice-Minister. I am very glad to give you the floor, Sir. I hope you can hear us and please go ahead.

Guatemala

Good afternoon, to you in Rome, and good morning to those that are here in Guatemala. Yes, I can hear you fine, I hope you can hear me?

Good afternoon, everyone, Mr. Chairman, CFS Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero, distinguished representatives of all member countries of the UN system and non-governmental organizations, dear guests, good afternoon and good morning for those who are here in Guatemala. For my country it is a great pleasure to be here at the 51st Session of the Committee on World Food Security, which allows for a discussion on strengthening on coordination in order to address the food crisis and moving forward together in order to devise strategies and mechanisms.

Guatemala is facing challenges to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in all of its forms. Nevertheless, the state is working to achieve the transformation of agri-food systems so that they can become more efficient, more sustainable, more inclusive and more resilient. We have indeed adopted a national food security and nutrition policy, the aim of which is for the population to have access to healthy food and better healthcare. In addition to this, the transformation should involve small-scale farmers to a larger degree, and they should become part of the value chain to generate greater incomes and give impetus to the local economy. Family farming plays a prominent role in the economy of our country, and it accounts for about 10% of GDP and it provides employment to 1/3 of the economically active population in the country. We have therefore made more investments, facilitating processes and providing technical assistance as well as helping all farmers in the area of agri-food and hydrobiological activities. We want family farmers to improve their livelihoods.

We have analyzed certain issues. We want to increase the stock of basic grains and we have called upon certain family farmers to supply the state in order to fend off future emergencies. We are also trying to improve the productive capacity of farmers and animal husbandry, because we are one of the countries that are most vulnerable to climate change. And that is why we have introduced agricultural insurance to provide coverage to our farmers against weather risks. We have increased irrigation and have therefore improved production and provided also capacity building in order to increase the nutrition and food security of the people of Guatemala. And through our crusade as we call it, we have strengthened food systems by providing food rations that are balanced and culturally relevant. Guatemala is facing major challenges and is up against many risks, but we are sure that we will be able to forge ahead with the support of important partners like FAO, WFP and IFAD in Guatemala. And we invite you to continue this joint work, certain that we will be able to find a way out and that this will be a win-win for all involved.

To conclude, I would like to express the fact that Guatemala is a country that promotes peace, and it launches an appeal to use diplomatic ends to put an end to conflicts and wars that are ravaging entire populations, in addition to exacerbating the adverse consequences to the rest of the world, particularly when it comes to food security. Only together will we be able to face these major challenges, on the basis of solidarity, international cooperation and joint work. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you, Vice-Minister. And thank you for being patient and overcoming the connectivity issues. I now would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Finland, to be followed by Belgium and then New Zealand, who will speak in representation of the South-West Pacific area. Finland you have the floor.

Finland

Thank you, Chair. Excellencies, fellow delegates, first of all, Finland aligns itself fully with the statement made by the European Union, including the statement on the situation in the Middle East. I will, in addition, make the following four points. First, we have strongly condemned Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine from the beginning. The world is still recovering from a global pandemic and is now wrestling with the consequences of Russia's war of aggression, which has dramatically aggravated the food security crisis.

Second, food insecurity affects women more than men in every region of the world. A positive sign is the slightly narrowing gender gap in food insecurity at the global level. Gender equality plays a significant role on this plenary's agenda as well. Finland sees advancing gender equality as a central element of our response to the ongoing food crisis. In the early 20th century, Finland itself was a poor rural country with small family farms and large landless populations. Gender equality became a key development asset for Finland, and women contributed to the growth of our economy by becoming eventually about half of the workforce. We are looking forward to the discussion on the voluntary guidelines, which the members of this committee have reached together after long and thorough negotiations.

Third, I would like to emphasize that innovations and digital solutions can transform food systems sustainable, inclusive, and resilient. Finland welcomes the policy recommendations on leveraging the use of data. Bringing data in the hands of farmers enables better decisions and digital services can improve value chains and provide access to digital payments. Digitalization can also bring solutions to benefit women and girls in rural areas, including women and girls with disabilities.

Finally, in food systems, both private and public sectors have roles to play, initiating and implementing major changes requires collaboration and joint efforts of governments, civil society and private sector actors, close coordination of all relevant sectors, stakeholders is vital. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you distinguished representative from Finland. Now I give the floor to Belgium, to be followed by New Zealand and Iraq, representing the Near East.

Belgium

Mr. Chairman, distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, Belgium aligns itself with the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the European Union, and its 27 Member States, including the statement with regard to the situation in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the 2023 SOFI report reaffirms again that we are not on track to achieve the zero hunger objective by 2030. The ongoing global food and nutrition crisis rooted in structural issues, such as climate extremes, economic downturns, combined with growing inequalities, are pushing us off track to meet the SDG 2 targets. Furthermore, the intensification of conflict in several parts of the world especially Russian's war of aggression against Ukraine, causes a pertinent and increasing global food insecurity, as indicated in the key messages of the SOFI report. Belgium advocates for coordinated solutions through multilateralism to tackle these global crises affecting all aspects of food systems, agriculture and nutrition. And we envision a stronger global governance for a rights-based regulation of our food systems. SOFI also rightfully focuses on urbanization and the challenges linked to the rural urban continuum. Belgium is pleased that the CFS will take up this subject in its new Multi Year Programme of work. In that context, food system transformation is key.

In recent years, the three regions in Belgium have elaborated sustainable food strategies that have food systems transformation as a basis. Belgium has also launched a protein strategy to offer new economic opportunities for the whole agri-food chain from production to consumption. In addition, the Belgian development cooperation policy gives particular attention to food systems transformation. Some examples of our commitments are the fact that Belgium takes part in the school meals coalition, and the agro-ecology coalition promoting both healthy and nutritious food in schools, and a more sustainable way of producing food.

Furthermore, achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls in the context of food, security and nutrition has always been a high priority of the Belgian development cooperation. We therefore strongly support the endorsement of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines at this 51st plenary session.

To conclude, Belgium remains committed to continue working together with the CFS and all stakeholders involved to increase its efforts to facilitate solutions to the unprecedented global food crisis. We would like to thank the outgoing chair, Mr. Ferrero, for his valuable engagement during the past 2 years and we wish the new CFS Chair, Mrs. Nosipho Nosca-Jean Jezile every success in her endeavors. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished delegate of Belgium. I now give the floor to New Zealand representing the regional group, to be followed by Iraq. And I was just informed that Cameroon will speak representing the Africa group. New Zealand you have the floor.

New Zealand

Thank you, Chair and New Zealand will be speaking on behalf New Zealand. Can I carry on? It's not a regional statement. Shall I carry on?

Chairperson:

I am sorry, I think we need to give priority to the two statements of regional groups, if you don't mind. So I'll give the floor to Iraq, representing the regional group and then I will give you back the floor, New Zealand. Iraq please.

Iraq: [speaking in Arabic]

Chairperson

Excuse me, sir, I don't hear the interpretation working. Is it working in the floor? No, right? Sorry, unfortunately, for some reason, technical reason, the interpretation is not going through the system. So, if we just may ask your indulgence for waiting for a couple of minutes, and I will go back to you as soon as possible. Thank you.

Iraq

Yes, I would like to take the floor on behalf of the Near East and North Africa. I would like to first of all congratulate South Africa, the ambassador for having been elected as Chair, the new Chair of this committee and this on behalf of our entire regional group. And Mr. Gabriel Ferrero we congratulate you on your Chairmanship throughout these two years.

This meeting is actually taking place in a very critical time. The population of Gaza is suffering, because of the violation of international humanitarian law and the military, soldiers are actually targeting civilians in hospitals, mosques and churches. And there are over 300 thousand refugees in Palestine and many in Gaza and today they are unfortunately subjected to all kinds of violations of human dignity and of course blockade. As regards FAO, we would like a consensus to be reached on a roadmap to an end to the targeting of civilians and to allow access to immediate humanitarian aid, knowing that Gaza has always depended on humanitarian aid from the very beginning. We would like to also recognize the right of Palestinians to dignity and have the right to care. We need to work hand in hand, and we need to work together to bring about food security and peace as well as the wellbeing of people throughout the world. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you to the representative of Iraq. I now give the floor to Cameroon, representing the Africa group, if I understand, to be followed by New Zealand.

Cameroon

No chair, thank you. You know, this paper is submitted for information and discussion. We are not presenting a regional statement at this point, if I may inform you. But we would like to come back later for national statements.

Chairperson

Okay, of course. Sorry I didn't have the right information. Sorry about that, Cameroon. Then, New Zealand. Thank you for your patience, Jennifer, go ahead.

New Zealand

Thank you, Chair. Patient I will remain. Thank you. Excellencies and colleagues, the statistics of the SOFI report are deeply concerning. And we know that key drivers, such as climate change and underinvestment in agriculture are crucial. We also know that the role of conflict in food insecurity is complex both as a cause and a consequence. Conflict is still the biggest driver of hunger with 70% of the world's hungry people living in areas afflicted by war and violence. Around two out of every three of these people are going hungry primarily because their country is in conflict and war. At the same time, lack of access to affordable and nutritious food or productive agricultural resources, such as water or land can create political instability and spark social unrest. Countries with developing economies and weak governance that are major food importers face the greatest risk of instability. Preventing and resolving conflicts remain integral to fighting hunger and addressing food insecurity. New Zealand remains committed to combating food insecurity all around the world in which we remain deeply concerned about the alarming increased rates arising from the current crisis in Israel and Gaza, Russia's brutal war against Ukraine, the recent earthquakes in Afghanistan, the consecutive droughts in the horn of Africa, and so many others around the world.

Using the strength of the diverse food and agricultural stakeholders in this committee, from governments to the private sector to civil society, we must do all we can to use the levers at our disposal to stem the growth of inequalities and conflict, and search for a more peaceful and sustainable world. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, New Zealand. On my list of requests we now have the Republic of Korea, to be followed by Belarus and Uzbekistan. Republic of Korea, you have the floor.

Republic of Korea

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The Republic of Korea wishes to express its sincere appreciation to FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO for their collaborative effort in preparing the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023 report. While the report indicates that global hunger has remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2022, we remain concerned about the worsening food crisis in various regions across the world.

The deepening global food supply crisis presents a significant challenge also for Korea, a nation heavily reliant on food imports for most crops, except for rice. In response, the Korean government has been implementing policies aimed at addressing the further crisis. These policies include bolstering food self-

sufficiency and enhancing our response to climate change. We also believe it is imperative to focus on urbanization, a major mega trend, which is the central theme of the 2023 SOFI report.

Urbanization is progressing swiftly worldwide, and it is time to challenge the conventional notion of the rural-urban divide. Instead, we should work toward a sustainable food system from the perspective of a rural-urban continuum. The Republic of Korea, having undergone rapid industrialization and urbanization in a relatively short time, is faced with the accelerated aging of its rural population and the widening quality of life gap between urban and rural areas. To address this, the Korean Government provided subsidies to encourage young farmers to settle in rural areas. We also support diverse distribution routes that bridge the urban and rural regions.

In addition, the Republic of Korea launched the K. Rice belt initiative, an agricultural ODA project in July. The project aims to share Korea's experiences in agricultural innovation. Presently, 10 countries are participating in the project, including Sub-Saharan African nations with high rates of urbanization. This initiative is not merely a funding project, but an endeavor to share and promote Korea's experience and expertise in rapidly achieving industrialization and agricultural innovations. It is anticipated that these projects will help improve nutritional standards in various regions.

The Republic of Korea is committed to continued collaboration with a wide range of partners, and is eager to make a meaningful contribution to more resilient and sustainable food systems, enhancing food security in the face of rapid economic, social and environmental challenges. I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Korea. If I may give the floor to person before 6, when we'll take a ten-minute break just to energize ourselves. I'll give the floor to Belarus, please go ahead.

Belarus

Thank you very much for giving me the floor, Mr. Chairperson. Distinguished members of the CFS, I will be brief, and I just wanted to focus on one global problem that we need to fight. At the outset, I would like to remind you of the following. Just over the past several months, the following events took place. The UN Food Systems Summit in July 2023, where we discussed access to fertilizer, and we discussed unilateral punitive measures. In Samarkand in September 2023, we also highlighted the importance of unfettered access to fertilizer to ensure sustainable food production and to ensure global food security and nutrition, especially in developing countries. In October 2023, the UNHCR adopted a resolution, human rights and unilateral punitive measures. It states that the Council is astounded by the negative impact of unilateral punitive measures that affect the right to life, the right to health, the right to medical care, freedom from hunger and the right to sufficient quality of life, food, education, labor, housing and the right to development. Now the UN GA is also discussing a draft resolution proposed by Cuba and G77, which discusses unilateral punitive coercive measures as a way of suppressing developing countries. And it is only at the CFS that we are not discussing this problem. It is only in this committee that we are voting on the inclusion in the report of information on discussions on unilateral coercive measures that took place. It is only here in some strange way, the draft working program saw the disappearance of our discussions of the impact of these measures on food security, even though those five countries proposed these discussions, and it was supported by civil society. It is only here among the 36 side events we didn't manage to find the time to organize an event on this topic.

How is this possible? How is it possible that a UN body that is directly responsible for food security remains silent on one of the main reasons for global hunger. Ask the developing countries how much did their harvest decrease, because they were unable to access fertilizer. This is caused only by countries using unilateral coercive measures. How long will this continue? I seem to have the impression that the global west is not interested in solving the problem of hunger, but constantly fighting hunger, fighting hunger why? Because, when a person is full, when he has eaten his full, it is very hard to convince them to participate in a revolution. As the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food has said, hunger is being used today as a weapon. Just look at the level of food in Belarus and you will understand immediately

why the attempt of the West to organize a color revolution several years ago was a complete failure. When the CFS has a new Chairperson, I hope that it will once again become a platform for really fighting hunger and malnutrition in the world. I hope that at the session we will speak categorically against unilateral coercive measures, especially those concerning food and fertilizer. Thank you for your attention.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Belarus. Just a couple of quick remarks on the part of the Chair. This committee of course deliberates and exchanges opinions on this issue. I think that's clear. It is another matter however for it to resolve with or without a vote a resolution on this matter. I believe it is right that we recognize this. But what I can say is that there have been a 146 requests and offers to organize side events. The rules for priority are clear, they are even published on the website since February, if I am not mistaken. And the 36 side events that we can hold fall under these criteria that ensure that there are participants of different types, a diversity in terms of mechanisms, different countries. And those have been given priority. I am sure when it comes to the next requests for side events, if you wish to put forward another proposal, with support, and the need of course to have that support. And it is difficult of course to have your proposals approved, because of the competition. Then I am sure that that will happen. Of course, all the side events apply with those criteria and we seek to ensure that that remains true. With those comments I would like to take a short 10 minute break. We will resume at 16:15 with the statement by Uzbekistan, whose name I took down. As soon as we come back, I would like to invite the CFS' mechanisms to take the floor, right after Uzbekistan. The mechanisms have the full right to take part, they have the right to take the floor and therefore as is common practice, I would like to invite the mechanisms to take the floor and then we will conclude with our list of speakers.

23 October, Evening Session (18:00 – 21:00)

Chairperson

Thank you. We will now continue with the list of speakers who have requested the floor. The list is still long. I would like to just remind you that at 9 pm we can finally relax and enjoy our evening together with those chefs that the delegation of Brazil has cordially organized with a cocktail together at 9 PM. I hope to see you all there. Now let's resume with Uzbekistan, to be followed as I had announced with the CSIPM and the private sector mechanism. Uzbekistan you have the floor.

Uzbekistan

Thank you, Chair. Yeah, it's difficult to focus, because we need to be at home, but we are at work. So, thank you for your patience, and look forward for Brazilian cocktail. Dear excellencies and distinguished delegates on behalf of Uzbekistan delegation I would like to express our sincere gratitude for presenting the report the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023, which is the result of the joint work of the FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. We appreciate that this year's report examined the latest updates of the food security and nutrition situation around the world as well as focused on megatrends, such as urbanization, which has ultimate impact to our agri-foods systems transformation.

I would like to share two points in my presentation. It's development within our country and the regional perspective. Last month, building on the previous year's huge positive experiences, Uzbekistan adopted the development strategy, Uzbekistan 2030, which is in line with the SDGs.

Over the past six years, poverty in our country has been halved thanks to the policies aimed at improving the living standards of our people. We are pleased to note that observations of the SOFI report, which supports that food insecurity situation in Uzbekistan was improved as well as achieved on track on stunting and wasting targets of the SDGs.

Going further, we plan to reduce the poverty in the country to 7% by 2030. The new strategy aims to increase productivity and profitability in agriculture attracting 15 billion US Dollars of investment into the sector as well as introducing resource-saving technologies. Nevertheless, crises of climate change, loss of biodiversity and environmental contamination are severely affecting the sustainable development of our country. While Central Asia is facing with the Aral Sea tragedy, the region is becoming one of the most vulnerable parts of the world in face of the climate change. Our new strategy focuses on addressing those problems through transition to a green economy and the use of renewable energy sources.

Dear participants, I went through the SOFI report. To my surprise it seems that the report considerably weakened the voice of global alarm about the acute food insecurity in Afghanistan, where more than 23 million people are in the largest scale of hunger, more than 50% of the population. Leaving Afghanistan again alone with own problems would be great mistake. We believe that humanitarian aid to the Afghan people should not be reduced in this regard. Last month, President of Uzbekistan, at his address to the UN General Assembly, called upon the international community to put appropriate mechanisms to utilize Afghanistan's frozen international assets.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize our commitment and readiness to continue fruitful dialogue and partnership with all stakeholders, members and international organizations to achieve the SDGs. I thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Uzbekistan. It is a pleasure for me now for the first time today in plenary to give the floor to the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism, to be followed by the Private Sector Mechanism. You have the floor.

Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism (CSIPM)

I will be speaking Portuguese, just to represent our linguistic and cultural diversity. Thank you very much, Chair. I would like to congratulate the representative of South Africa for her election. It is encouraging to see a woman be elected to such a significant role in terms of global governance.

In terms of our session and its leading questions, the CSIPM, which is a diverse and pluralistic mechanism made up of 11 sectors and 17 sub-regions from all over the world, would like to express its solidarity with the people of Palestine. We would like to call for peace and for building solutions based on dialogue. The civilian population cannot keep having their rights violated and dying. It is necessary that we halt the upsurge of attacks and pressures so as to guarantee the humanitarian assistance necessary for the provision of food, water and a dignified life. As we have done in the past, we would like to say again, that food cannot be a weapon of war. However, we see this situation worsen. Food has been used as an instrument of torture, oppression and for demeaning treatment. There are many parts of the world where conflict has worked to the detriment of the realization of the right to food. Our message as the CSIPM to the CFS is that peace should be the way forward in order to eradicate hunger and thirst. And that the CFS now has a better opportunity to promote in a coordinated fashion the right to food as an instrument through which to respond to multiple crises.

We have also gleaned from our active listening processes that there has been a rise in debt, an increase in the concentration of power and land by corporations. This is the cause of inequalities that are also on the rise and which our debates have identified as the root cause of these crises. We should also note that inequalities have historical and structural causes. Efforts are still insufficient for us to overcome sexism, the patriarchy, racism, xenophobia and sexual violence, gender-based violence and violence against physical diversity. Our communities and territories have fed back the sense that urgent measures are needed, concrete and pragmatic measures, so that we can live free of hunger and thirst. Recognize the challenge that we have in understanding the interdependence in food systems. However, while a few benefit, many more go hungry.

We in the CSIPM believe in the importance of dialogue with other civil society and indigenous peoples' for advancing the fight in these aspects of global governance so that we can strengthen the coordination approach that offers integrated responses that are deeply impactful and based on the right to adequate food. We would like to call general dialogue of how to incorporate this year's Multi-Year Programme of Work and how we can advance a corporate responsibility framework in this democratic forum, which clearly distinguishes between human rights holders and duty bearers. At a time when multistakeholder-based approaches are gaining ground, we would like to mention Orisha Amalou from our worldview, who represents healing and care. It is time that we fix our policies so that our existence as an ethical project for civilization can be based on full, rich life. I'll give the floor to my colleague Musa, for a greeting to the elected Chair.

Thank you very much, Chair. If you could permit us, please, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to the new Chair of the CFS. She's a great fit for the job, and we want to congratulate her on behalf of the CSIPM, the Africa CSIPM. We would pray for her for god to give her the strength to carry on the work from where you stopped. She, is a very good person for this particular job. We want to further clarify that she would do a lot for the CFS in the future. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much distinguished representatives of the CSIPM. It is now a real pleasure and honor to give the floor to the private sector mechanism.

Private Sector Mechanism (PSM)

My name is Luemi Cirolói, CEO of Saltri International on behalf of private sector mechanism. Mr. Chair, your Excellency, and esteemed colleagues, on behalf of the private sector mechanism, let me thank you for the opportunity to speak at this timely and important event and recognizing the role of all the mechanisms in the work of CFS.

As we meet today, the world is at an unstable time, increased conflict around the world is causing increased uncertainty. As a result of the complexities around us, we continue to face challenges in our ability to deliver nutritious food and sustainable and resilient food systems. As a consequence, the world is moving further away from all collective goals of zero hunger. In our effort to tackle the impact of these challenges, the private sector has advanced many initiatives and actions towards the agri-food system transformation.

In spite of this, the 2023 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report has told us that 122 million more people faced hunger in 2022 than in 2019, before the global pandemic. On the back of unseen recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and now heightened conflict in several parts of the world continue to negatively affect the world's agri-food system. The report also tells us that these factors, combined with growing inequalities, keep challenging the capacities of agri-food system to deliver nutritious, safe, and affordable diet for all. These major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition are now our new normal. And that urbanization is shaping agri-food system in ways we can only understand through a rural urban continuum lens, comprising everything from food production, food processing and food distribution, marketing and procurement to a consumer's behavior. Due to population growth, small and intermediate cities and rural towns are increasingly bridging the space between rural areas and large metropolis. Hence, in an effort to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in an urbanizing world, we can no longer operate on the traditional assumption of a rural-urban divide. The private sector sees the agri-food system as part of the solution to the crisis we face and in this regard has continued to generate investment and create jobs in the sector.

All parts of the value chain from farmers, fishers, processors, transport from farm to fork are all involved. Financial inclusivity in the agri-food system leads to prosperity in both urban and rural communities. To unleash the potential of the sector for building resilient food system private financing is not enough. We look to government for increased collaboration for public-private partnership and de-risking for increased investment.

Mr. Chair, we, Mr. Chairman, we know that innovation can transform the agri-food sector and the private sector is the leading source of innovation in this sector. Towards this end, we look, we work with farmers to use innovation to do more than less. A great example we found of this collaboration and innovation used is that is, that that has allowed within the private sector to provide software technology that allowed food banks to lend to grocery stores and others with food that might otherwise go waste and that excess food is being put into the food bank system where and when it is needed. Mr. Chairman, harnessing the power of innovation is key to transforming the food system to achieve the SDGs, the particular SDGs on zero hunger.

We look forward to increasing collaboration with FAO and Member States in this regard. In closing, Mr. Chair, let me say that the United Nations Committee on Food Security is an important platform that provides space for a diverse range of actions from value chain to share their views and collaborate for strengthening partnership in food systems transformation. We thank you for this opportunity and stand steady to work with you and all stakeholders on this common cause. I thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much representative of the Private Sector Mechanism for your remarks. We will now continue with our list of requests for the floor. I have, in this order, the request from Switzerland, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia and Thailand. Switzerland please, you have the floor.

Switzerland

Mr. Chair, excellencies, distinguished delegates, Switzerland condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas against civilians in Israel. It recognizes Israel's legitimate concern for national defense and security. Switzerland, however, also recalls that the civilian population must be protected at all times and that international humanitarian law must be respected. Switzerland welcomes the opening of the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza on the 21st of October. The passage of first convoys which humanitarian aid is a first important step.

Mr. Chair, the sources of food insecurity remain multiple, interconnected and mutually aggravating. Acute crisis triggers can range from armed conflict, climate change and extreme weather events to economic, downturn, structural injustices and discrimination of women, young people, and smallholder farmers. The analysis of these triggers always brings us to the key parameters of our food systems deficits. Among these are dependence on non-renewable resources, chronic malnutrition, lack of resilience to climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation. Access to and availability of nutritious and healthy food from sustainable food systems is further challenged by rising prices of food, energy, and fertilizer, inflation, debt distress and the consequences of armed conflict. In this context of persistent shocks and crises, Switzerland is convinced of the need to further accelerate food systems transformation towards more sustainability, locality, equity and resilience, including through agroecological approaches.

Second, connect this holistic longer-term vision with a strengthened development humanitarian peace nexus approach, and third, enable women, youth and marginalized groups to participate in these processes. Effective coordination and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders, including the CFS, the Rome-based agencies and the IFIs is key. We should also ensure the involvement of organizations and stakeholders with specific knowledge and commitment for gender-related issues and for those of vulnerable population groups.

CFS policy products as well as other international instruments contain most elements pertinent to the right to food and other human rights in the context of food systems. But there is still a big gap in the awareness and the implementation of these standards, a lack of accountability and policy coherence at national and global levels. For sustainable transformation, we need to improve the linkages between rural and urban systems. We are convinced that this will improve the livelihood of rural people, and we see in the rural urban interlinkage an opportunity for local processing and supply of nutritious and healthy food that reduces environmental impact.

Switzerland has actively supported the CFS as the main intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platform even before its reform. The committee must continue to play a key role in promoting policy convergence and coherence by providing voluntary guidelines and policy recommendations for food security and nutrition and for more sustainable food systems. We recognize that the current multiple crises can only be solved collectively. Mr. Chair, Switzerland stands ready to continue to work with the CFS and the HLPE and all its stakeholders to make SDG 2 and sustainable food systems transformation a reality. Let me conclude by congratulating the incoming chair of the CFS and by thanking you, the outgoing Chair for your efforts in these particularly challenging last 2 years. Thank you for your attention.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Switzerland. Next Italy has the floor, to be followed by Kuwait and Malaysia.

Italy

Thank you very much, ministers, distinguished panelists, dear colleagues, distinguished representatives of the civil society indigenous peoples and private sector mechanism. Italy fully aligns itself to the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the EU and its Member States. Nevertheless, I would like to add some brief remarks in my national capacity, and to that purpose I will continue my intervention in Spanish.

Chairman, first and foremost, I would like to thank you for your leadership in the last two years. You have put in tireless efforts with a view to finding solutions to the crisis we are facing. At the same time, I would like to congratulate the Chair-elect of the CFS, Ambassador Jezile of South Africa, and ensure you that you will always be able to count on Italy's support. SOFI 2023 has once again confirmed that global food insecurity now affects 58 countries and almost 260 million human beings, many of whom are vulnerable people and children. Food insecurity is not something we can tackle by decree, we must work together, civil society, the private sector, international organizations, must all work together with reciprocal will and urgently. Due to Covid-19, the climate crisis and the brutal aggression of Russia against Ukraine, the last

years we have seen the fragility of food systems exacerbated. It is time that we be brave and try to find measures to transform our agri-food systems.

The smallholders that work in rural areas in challenging conditions are at the heart of our focus. With the support of FAO and IFAD we must guarantee their access to credit, valuing sustainable measures and indigenous production. We therefore believe that the CFS' work on data is essential with the view of achieving comparable and reliable data. Science, innovation, information, the exchange of technology will help us produce food for all in a sustainable fashion. We know that we are lagging behind in terms of achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2030. However, we shouldn't be discouraged, we should feel more resolute in using the resources we have that are limited and in working effectively.

Italy plays an active role tackling inequalities, food scarcity and climate change. Italy's commitment to these issues has been for decades and has taken shape in an even broader fashion through many initiatives from the Food Systems Summit stocktaking moment and the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September all the way to the President of the Republic's, the honorable Sergio Mattarella's, participation in the World Food Day on the 16th of October. I am proud to confirm the recent formal accession of my country to the Coalition for School Feeding. Italy fully reiterates its commitment with the international community to the fight against hunger for a fully equal world. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Italy. Thank you for your kind words. Kuwait, you have the floor. To be followed by Malaysia.

Kuwait

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. At the outset we would like to add our voice to the Near East representative, in addition to Egypt, Indonesia and Mexico. Mr. Chairperson, we are talking about multiple crises, and we have a huge one in Gaza, under the occupied forces. It is nothing unfortunately. There is a great amount of paradox, Mr. Chairperson. The rapporteur Fakhri spoke about the situation in Gaza and if you would like to know how to use food as a weapon and how to punish collectively people, I would advise to see Gaza and to visit Gaza. I would like to ask the organization and the CFS in addition to the various organizations, the ICC, the Council, all of them talk lengthily about humanitarian crises. Are you ready? Are you efficient? What are your plans about what is going on in Gaza today? Do you have any intention of addressing the food insecurity and the deliberate famine in Gaza? As we have the largest prison on earth in Gaza, we have 2.2 million Palestinians, half of them are children, without food. Just for your information Mr. Chairperson and to my colleague the representative of the EU. In Gaza, people are writing the names of their children on their bodies, so that they can recognize them under the debris. So unfortunately, this is self-defense today.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Kuwait. Next, I would like to give the floor to Malaysia, to be followed by Thailand.

Malaysia

Thank you, Chair. Malaysia is alarmed by the reality and challenges ahead of us that have been reported in SOFI 2023. Malaysia acknowledges that the world continues to face the unprecedented catastrophic levels of food insecurity and a significant need to reverse this trend toward sustainable and resilient global food systems.

In Malaysia, we spared no efforts to ensure national food security and nutrition, and COVID-19 pandemic appeared to have a silver lining in raising the importance of urban farming in Malaysia. In support of this, Malaysian government allocated 11.3 million dollars for the community farming, which is an urban farming

initiative that helped low-income households reduce the cost of living by producing food products either for their own consumption or for sale. In advancing towards sustainable agricultural practices, Malaysia has established organic farming projects and initiative by the area farmers organizations towards the farming community to increase awareness of Malaysians towards consumption of organic agricultural products by supporting food production projects that adopt sustainable practices while improving the capacities across a range of skills such as food quality and safety, processing and nutrition to name a few.

Malaysia has put in place a plethora of efforts towards elevating the livelihood and smallholder farmers and food producers and further tracked the investment of more diverse demography, such as women and youth, for their inclusive, meaningful, and participatory involvement in food system value chain. In response to the demand and needs of youth, Malaysia has introduced young Agroprom program to provide in-kind contributions to participants.

Malaysia ensures its commitment to improve the nutritional status of its population through the national nutrition policy of Malaysia 2021 - 2030. One of the enabling strategies is to sustain food systems for healthy diets, where Malaysia is committed to ensuring food is accessible and affordable for the nation and encouraging consumers to make informed food choices. These include the healthy school meal program and food basket program. To increase inclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and reducing stunting among children under five years old, community feeding program has been implemented to ensure full accessibility under five that resides in the remote areas.

Chair, like we have demonstrated our continued support during your chairmanship, we would like also to renew our commitment and readiness to work constructively with the incoming chair, with all stakeholders, including the CFS and HLPE processes to contribute to the development of food systems solutions regarding the national context needs and priorities. Thank you. Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you, distinguished representative of Malaysia for your statement, and I will give the floor to Thailand, followed by Kenya, Australia, and the Syrian Arab Republic, remotely. Thailand you have floor.

Thailand

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thailand welcomes and appreciates the insights and recommendations presented in the 2023 SOFI report, which highlights the global challenges surrounding food security and nutrition that needs our collective efforts to be overcome. The latest reports an alarming increase in the number of people facing hunger. Our journey toward food security remains challenging. And this outcome emphasized the needs of our continued collaborations and commitment to advance food security, and nutrition in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. Chairperson, Thailand strongly believes in the importance of encouraging Thai farmers, the majorities of which are smallholder farmers to adopt and use innovative technologies in agriculture and to implement precision farming. We believe that the technologies can help them better manage natural resources and production costs, increase productivity and create value added products leading to the transformations of sustained agri-food systems.

In this regard, we have adopted by us circular and green economy model known as the BCD model as a sustainable growth strategy to strengthen the agricultural sector in Thailand. We are encouraging farmers to repurpose agricultural waste to create value and generate additional income. We also encourage renewed focus on quality standards of agricultural products and on the GAP certification. We are also working on the identifications of indicators for carbon credits from the agricultural sector.

Mr. Chairperson, as the world's leading agriculture and food producer and exporter, Thailand is aware of the importance of providing food to people who are suffering from hunger worldwide. We are dedicated to supporting the multilateral trading system to be transparent, predictable, open, and fair. We believe that such a system can facilitate the trade of agriculture and food products thereby improving food security, and nutrition for everyone. Last, but not least, we are ready to contribute to helping countries in need and

to stopping hunger. Our goal is to ensure people can access and afford safe and nutritious food and bring healthy diet and global food security for all. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much representative of Thailand. Kenya now has the floor, to be followed by Australia.

Kenya

I thank you, Chair, for giving me an opportunity to give views on this very important subject. Indeed Chair, the SOFI 2023 report portrays a dim picture, and we affirm the urgent need to redouble and better target our efforts. Otherwise, our goal of ending hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition in all its forms by 2030 will remain remote. As indicated in the SOFI report 2023, intensification of the major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition - conflict, climate extremes, economic slowdowns and downturns and growing inequality, which often occur in combination - continue challenging our efforts to achieve the SDGs. There is no doubt that these threats continue requiring the world to be steadfast in building resilience against them.

We advocate that attention should be given to important mega trends that must be fully understood when devising policies to meet the SDG2 targets. One such is urbanization. Chair, we take note that as the world is urbanizing, food demand and supply are changing rapidly across the rural-urban continuum, challenging our traditional thinking. My country, Kenya, is dealing with multiple effects and impacts related to climate change and rapidly increasing population as well as rapid urbanization. To address this, we have developed 9 flagships that serve as the core of our 10-year agricultural sector growth and transformation strategy. These flagships draw on our status of agriculture today, a rigorous and thorough review of data, lessons from global best practices and also our local realities. The actions inherent in these flagships abode as ambitious. They will help us to transform our agriculture sector in Kenya, drive 100% food and nutritional security and ensure food is affordable, especially for those most in need.

Chair, further, the government of Kenya has rolled out the bottom-up economic transformation agenda better known as BETA, which is targeting activities and sectors that have strong impacts and leakages in the economy, with agriculture taking the lead. This is expected to lead to job creation, competitiveness, improved household welfare and agricultural productivity.

We recognize and appreciate that the SOFI 23 report identifies policies, investments and new technologies to address the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that urbanization brings for ensuring access to affordable healthy diets for everyone across the rural urban continuum. As I conclude, Chair, allow me to extend congratulations to the Chair-elect, our Excellency Ambassador of South Africa, and to you outgoing Chair for your leadership and stewardship at the helm of the CFS for two years, a period that we have witnessed many challenges to the agri-food systems. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you, thank you, dear, thank you, Kenya, and thank you, dear Anthony. Your support as a vice chairperson of this committee has been, goes well beyond the agreement on the data policy recommendations. You chaired magnificently. So thank you once again, Anthony.

Now we'll go to Australia, followed by the Syrian Republic remotely, and then I will go to Chile and Singapore. Australia, you have the floor.

Australia

Thank you, Chair. Australia is deeply concerned by the current state of global food security and nutrition outlined in the 2023 SOFI report. Recognizing ongoing challenges from the pandemic, conflicts and climatic events, amongst others, the data highlights that the global community needs to renew our collective effort towards achieving zero hunger. While SOFI shows that progress has been achieved in

some subregions, our collective challenge is to ensure that we learn from these approaches and others to address increasing hunger in other regions.

Acknowledging the role that conflict plays in exacerbating food insecurity, Australia condemns Russia's weaponization of food, including its termination of the Black Sea Grain initiative and attacks on Ukraine's agriculture and export infrastructure. This continues to destabilize global food markets and hurts those most in need.

As noted in the report, climate change is compounding food security threats, placing increasing pressure on agri-food systems worldwide. This is of particular importance to the South West Pacific region, where the tangible effects of climate change are keenly felt. It is therefore important that FAO ensures a regional approach supported by data and analysis to fully assess the challenges and to support practical place-based solutions.

Australia recognizes the mutually reinforcing relationship between free and open trade settings, agricultural productivity growth that reduces environmental impact and enhance global food security. With that in mind, Australia promotes an outcomes-focused commonsense, no one size fits all approach to sustainable agriculture, which, 1) supports economic, environmental, and social outcomes; 2) acknowledges the diversity of circumstances between countries with respect to production types, geographical differences, climate and ecology; 3) is underpinned by transparent science and risk-based policies and regulations; and 4) supports the role of trade and the multilateral trading system, including transparent, predictable, open, and fair markets.

Australia reiterates our strong opposition to the trade-distorting and environmentally harmful agricultural subsidies. Data shows that such support is growing globally with wide-reaching negative repercussions for farmers, the environment and food security. Australia recognizes the significant opportunities from repurposing agricultural subsidies into research and development to improve environmental outcomes, enhance productivity and address food insecurity.

Alongside short-term drivers, the long-term shift towards urbanization also continues to have deleterious effects on food affordability and agricultural land utilization. In the Pacific, urbanization is happening three times faster than the global average. This rapid trend is contributing to shifts away from traditional subsistence agriculture towards increasing food importation leading to large and vulnerable peri-urban populations with high levels of food and nutrition insecurity. Australia is working with our regional partners towards a food supply that is adaptive, diversified, nutritious, and accessible.

Further, Australia notes the continued gender disparity in food insecurity with more adult women than adult men being moderately or severely food insecure. Addressing food insecurity requires a global approach to eliminate social barriers and inequities, which limit access to food. Australia is committed to achieving gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment as well as promoting the rights of first nations people globally to achieve food security and nutrition.

Finally, Australia greatly appreciates the important role of the FAO in leading global efforts, including statistical work to monitor hunger hotspots and its technical advice and assistance to boost agricultural production and improve the sustainability and resilience of agri-food systems. We recognize the important contributions towards food and nutrition security played by FAO's standard setting bodies including Codex Alimentarius in setting food safety standards that help deliver safe and nutritious food and the International Plant Protection Commission in delivering international standards to control and prevent the spread of pests in plants and plant products and ensure biosecure and productive agricultural systems.

I conclude to reiterate that Australia is working to implement practical policies to improve food security at home in our region of the Southwest Pacific and internationally, demonstrating commitment to global efforts to reverse the trajectory work constructively with stakeholders and eliminate hunger.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Australia. Next if technology is still with us, I would like to give the floor to the Syrian Arab Republic through Zoom. Go ahead please.

Syrian Arab Republic

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Firstly, I would like to thank the efforts made by the Rome-based Agencies in coordination with governments and other international organizations to provide support to countries and people to fight hunger. We thank you Mr. Ferrero for your leadership, we congratulate you on your steering of this committee in the past two years. We also take this opportunity to thank her Excellency Ambassador of South Africa for her election as a chair.

I would like to add my voice to the statement on behalf of the Near East and North Africa as well as Kuwait, Mr. Chair. The biggest surprise of all was to hear some delegations talking about self-defense by killing women and children in Gaza, despite all that was broadcast on channels regarding the destruction of buildings. These countries pretend that this is done in the name of self-defense. Over 5000 people were killed in Gaza, at least 2000 of them were children. We cannot speak about food security in the world without referring to the barbaric attacks of Israel on Gaza. It's a war where no values are observed or respected, no international law is abided by. Killing indiscriminately women and children from the Palestinian people, everywhere in Palestine. This is a genocide crime. This is a collective genocide that is condemned. The occupier imposes a criminal siege on the people of Gaza, depriving them of their basic rights in life, food water and medicine. The siege is not just a war crime, it is war against humanity. Israel continues in this way, not only in Palestine, but also against Syria last week. Many attacks befell Aleppo and Damascus airport in full and flagrant violation of international law. All countries should stand against this aggression by Israel, and we should all condemn how lightly Isarel deals with international legitimacy and laws. We stand fully against the displacement policies imposed by Isarel on Palestine. We should all call for the cease of aggression and to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance without hurdles.

Many important points were mentioned in the report. We also have to add that terrorism, occupation, unilateral coercive measures should be considered as main drivers to the situation of food insecurity in the world. In Syria, the government deploys every possible effort to reach a good system to produce food and to boost agriculture. Yet, we suffer from the occupation of our land from named countries violating the international law, the humanitarian law and working on the exploitation of our resources in terms of land and water, stopping and cutting the drinking water supplies from Syria. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you distinguished representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. I will now go to Chile followed by Singapore, Japan, and Burkina Faso also remotely. Chile.

Chile

Chile is concerned to see the implications of the last State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World that shows alarming figures for hunger and emphasizes that food insecurity more drastically affects those people who live in rural areas, highlighting a greater prevalence of stunting in children living in these areas. For many years biomedical researchers in Chile have emphasized that child malnutrition, given that it interferes with cerebral growth and intellectual development, produces unequal damage to people and makes it impossible for countries to advance socially and economically.

Women and girls are more severely affected by hunger and malnutrition. Women, who provide 50% of the food produced in the world represent 70% of people who suffer from hunger. Faced with this landscape, we feel that a special focus should be placed on rural, peasant and indigenous women's action as reproducers of life and nutrition and as actors who engender food sovereignty and food production. When we have women, morality and indigeneity as factor, when they come together, they interact and leverage each other. Therefore, the effects are much larger than the sum of their parts. We share the conclusion of the report in saying that they promote food and nutrition security interventions.

In terms of policies, measures and investments need to be guided by greater inclusion and participation on the part of women, in all their diversity as well as a greater understanding of the urban-rural continuum and agri-food systems. I would like to share this with you. This year, faced with the water crisis, the national irrigation body made available a fund for women farmers in a special competition. Women

farmers were invited to present projects to guarantee their own place in the process, given that the state is trying to diminish this barrier through a gender lens on a daily basis. Chile celebrated the Day Against Hunger and Malnutrition in June. We have achieved great success in this area. We would like to celebrate the success of the summit and the recommendations that were agreed upon at the summit. I would also like to congratulate the outgoing chair for his leadership and insure the incoming chair of our unflagging support. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished Ambassador and thank you very much on behalf of the CFS for the focus placed on these issues by your country and for the Parliamentary Summit held in your country. Now Singapore has the floor followed by Japan and Burkina Faso.

Singapore

Let me begin by thanking the CFS for organizing these important plenary sessions. Indeed, global developments, such as COVID-19, global tensions, and climate change have heightened food security challenges worldwide. Among the broad messages of findings from this year's report, urbanization, which affects agri-food systems from farm to fork is timely. It doesn't just affect how people consume food in the urban rural continuum, it actually takes workers away from rural area on the farms. It is therefore important to help farms to become more productive and enhance their productivity. So urban food system of growing food close to city, where people live, reduces the need for long distance transport of food and reduces food miles as well as food loss. So, by leveraging on technology and innovation, such as climate control systems, these urban food solutions can be highly productive and climate resilient. So as a small city state, Singapore, with limited resources, we have to leverage our innovation and productive urban farm solutions to grow more with less. In this regard, we invest in science and tech through R&D grants, as well as a support farms to help them transform to more productive and climate resilient farming systems.

In addition to strengthening the agri-food systems, food trade and supply chain connectivity are also important to ensure food security while connected supply chains ensure more reliable and efficient flow of food and agri-inputs supporting the entire food supply chain from production to consumption. This is particularly important for small countries with limited natural resources to grow food locally. Given the challenges we face today, the CFS remains an important platform for all stakeholders to work towards global food security. In this regard, Singapore is committed to working closely with CFS and Member States on innovative solutions for sustainable and resilient food systems. I thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Singapore. I now give the floor to Japan.

Japan

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, excellencies, distinguished guests. Japan would like to extend my sincere appreciation for the dedication of Dr. Gabriel Ferreiro as the Chair of the CFS and congratulate Ambassador of South Africa to be elected next time chair. We also thank the Secretariat of the CFS and its high-level panel of experts, where Professor Aki Kosova, a Japanese expert, serves as a member of its steering committee. Japan highly commends the work of the CFS for showing essential guidance as well as tangible results in an effort for achieving global food security.

According to SOFI 2023, in terms of global hunger population, no significant improvement was shown in 2022. In addition, improvement of global household incomes and food access after the recovery from COVID-19 was offset by massive negative impacts of Russian invasion of Ukraine and the price hike of food and other commodities. Japan once again reiterates that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been causing a tremendously negative impact on global food security. As we face the global food

security situation, which continues to be had, building sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems is essential from a medium to long term perspective in order to achieve SDG2, zero hunger, for which responding to the urgent food insecure situations has equal importance.

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May, G7 countries, along with invitees, issued the Hiroshima Action statement for resilient global food security, providing a concrete and comprehensive summary of measures to address the urgent food insecurity and limit them to long-term measures. For instance it includes the ELPS initiative that IFAD and Japan established to support small scale farmers in developing countries for their production, growth and better incomes. The initiative also aims to help private sector in developed countries hold their sustainable food sourcing.

In addition, regarding data utilization, which is included in one of the agendas of this meeting, the action statement highlighted to strengthen the agriculture market information system, AMIS, hosted by FAO and other organizations. Moreover, it reiterates the importance of resilient, sustainable and productive agriculture, making fair and appropriate use of existing domestic agricultural resources and utilization of various sorts of innovation.

The CFS is an inclusive forum for policy discussions, bringing together all stakeholders as well as national governments. Ensuring global food security requires the cooperation of various actors, including the private sector, civil society and researchers. Based on discussions here in the CFS, I would like to express again that Japan will contribute to achieving the goal of zero hunger by building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems. Thank you for your attention.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Japan for your remarks. I have the following speakers: Burkina Faso to be followed by the Russian Federation, Spain and the United Kingdom. Burkina Faso you have the floor.

Burkina Faso

Thank you very much, Chair. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Burkina Faso is firmly committed to guaranteeing the food and nutrition security of its people, despite its difficult context compounded security situation. The highest authorities have made the fight against food insecurity an absolute priority in addition to that of reclaiming territory.

In order to achieve this goal and the SDGs and with the view of achieving zero hunger by 2030, several initiatives have been implemented and I would like to name the major ones. First, the presidential initiatives for agricultural production 2023-2024. This initiative will mobilize the defense and security forces as well as the defense of the homeland resources for internally displaced persons. It will allow the production of 190 thousand tons of grains and pulses over more than 11 thousand hectares.

Another initiative is the 2023-2025 agro-pastoral and fisheries offensive, which aims to achieve food sovereignty for the country by 2025. The plan envisages to cover 100% of rice consumption needs to cover the consumption needs of poultry and the agri-food industries to cover all potato import needs, to respond to 50% of fish consumption needs. To relaunch the poultry value chain and that for the production of small ruminants that have been affected by the different crises. To renew 15% of mango orchard surfaces. To create modern reference pastoral areas, two of them in West Africa and to relaunch wheat production. In total eight value chains will be targeted by this offensive: maize, rice, potato, wheat, fish, livestock, poultry, mango. For a total of amount of 592 billion CFA Francs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all partners who have supported our country in our quest for food sovereignty and to underscore the willingness and readiness of the country's authorities to engage in a genuine partnership with the different institutions for the wellbeing of our populations. I would like to convey our recognition our gratitude to the organizers of this event and assure you that our authorities are committed to achieving food sovereignty for Burkina Faso. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Burkina Faso. Next the Russian Federation has the floor.

Russian Federation

Thank you, Chair. Before turning on the timer, I wanted to ask a question concerning procedure. Since there were accusations made on my country, I would like to use our right of reply. How do you recommend I proceed: should I proceed with our main statement and then at the end use our right of reply? Or should I add it to my remarks right now?

Chairperson

I would recommend that you add it to your remarks right now.

Russian Federation

Ok, thank you. Distinguished colleagues, an increase in the number of people suffering from hunger without access to nutritious and healthy food is cause for serious concern. As was stated today, in the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres statement, the world actually produces enough food. We would like to focus on two issues, which are preventing us from resolving the issue of hunger.

The first issue is excessively high food prices. Representatives of the private sector today mentioned the war in Ukraine. However, for some reason, they failed to mention politics, the policies of the largest agro-industrial holding companies, transnational companies, which provide 90% of food and agricultural products around the world. These are three American companies and one Dutch company. During the pandemic, the G7 countries and EU countries rushed to rescue their economies and they adopted a large number of decisions affecting finances, economics, energy and other sectors, without considering how these decisions will affect other participants of the global division of labor. And this led to a rise in food prices, which at the start of the pandemic had already increased by 28%. None the less, these policies continued, unilateral economic sanctions were introduced against the largest producers of fertilizer, Belarus and Russia. Against Russia against one of the largest producers of agricultural commodities and food. Just for your information, the Russian Federation produces 20% of the grain being supplied to global markets. Ukraine produces 5%. But nevertheless, Western countries are continuing to stifle the Russian agricultural sector with their sanctions. We have heard many times throughout the year the following, that sanctions are not imposed on food and fertilizer. But at the same time, this is a lie. And this is why, the UN is continuing to work in Russia in order to implement the Russia-UN memorandum on supplying Russian food and fertilizer to world markets. This memorandum was part of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. We find it unfortunate that no one wants to answer these questions.

We can continue, we could supply grain, disregarding the sanctions. And we will continue to do so, no matter how much other countries are trying to cut off Russian agriculture from countries in need. Last year, two African countries we supplied 11.5 million tons of grains, and we will continue to do so, following the Russia Africa summit in September, we will begin the supply of fertilizer, 25 thousand tons to five African countries free of charge. And at the same time, we will also continue to unblock supply of our fertilizer, about 100 thousand tons which donated last year to countries in need are still blocked in the ports of Latvia, Estonia and Belgium. We would also like to call upon everyone. We can change this, but we need to put in the work, and we need to work responsibly with respect to all countries. Thank you very much. The full text of our statement has been transmitted to the Secretariat and will be translated.

Chairperson

We now turn to the distinguished delegate of Spain, followed by UK and Cameroon.

Spain

Distinguished Chair, members of the Committee. Those of us who work in this domain are well aware that food systems and global food security are facing a critical time. The global pandemic, pressures from the climate crisis, high energy prices and fertilizer prices and of course Russia's aggression in Ukraine have provided disruptions to production and the supply chain. Now, the situation in the Middle East. And I would like to again condemn the indiscriminate attack against Israel as well as the massacre in the al-Ahli hospital. I would like to express our solidarity with all victims. On the other hand, Israel has the right to defend itself within international and humanitarian law. The reaction of the international community must be unanimous and effective to combat the scourge of hunger and current food insecurity. Coordinated action alone that shows the coordination of us all will allow us to overcome this crisis and leave no one behind.

Chair, my country's commitment to food security is unflagging. The Spanish agency for international cooperation has a portfolio of projects in rural development and food security for over 300 million Euros and we will continue to allocate financial support and contribute to mechanisms such as WFP, IFAD, FAO or the joint SDG Fund in the realm of food security. In this, Spain, and as stated by the head of government in the UN General Assembly, Spain is committed to committing 236 million Euros from 2023 to 2025. As you know, Spain's Chairmanship of the CFS has been guided by a host of key principles, despite the adverse and complex context. I would like to list a few: 1) continue to foster solidarity and cooperation between and among nations; 2) tackle severe food insecurity and malnutrition despite a geopolitical context that could be discouraging. Therefore, remaining the value added of CFS and its values have been guiding principles for us. 2) We are proud of the achievement of the Multi-Year Programme of Work, which is ambitious and will be the guide for the way forward for the CFS. 3) We support gender equality in food and nutrition, recognizing that women play a fundamental role in the production and distribution of food and at the same time are the most affected group. When food insecurity rises, they are affected most. 4) We have placed the triple nexus at the heart of our policies.

I would really like to thank Gabriel for his commitment and his leadership of the CFS these past two years. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you distinguished delegate of Spain. Next the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom has the floor.

United Kingdom

Thank you very much, Chair. We join others in thanking FAO for the presentation of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023. It highlights again that progress on ending hunger and malnutrition that we are all focused on here is so off track that it will not be achieved by 2030. Over one billion people in over 100 countries do not have enough food to eat and malnutrition affects one in three people worldwide with a deteriorating, worrying trend in recent years. As others had highlighted, the world is in the midst of a food and nutrition security crisis, a crisis driven by conflict, climate change, the economic impact of the pandemic, and global food market volatility compounded by Russia's war in Ukraine.

The scale of the crisis requires a multifaceted approach across sectors. The UK is committed to tackling this crisis through our campaign to improve global food security and nutrition. Working closely together with all partners and driving to scale what works. As part of this, the UK will be hosting a global food security summit in November, alongside Somalia and the UAE that aims to accelerate progress against the four pillars that are the focus of the campaign: creating new approaches to ending preventable deaths of children; building a climate resilient and sustainable food system; anticipating and preventing famine and food security crisis; and using science and technology to boost food security and nutrition.

We all need to work together to build on longstanding investments and global policy work, leading solutions to mitigate the risk of famine and prevent future food and malnutrition crises. As humanitarian

needs soar, our investments also need to respond to rapidly increasing immediate needs while also addressing systemic resilience building. In an era of runaway climate change and multiple crises this is a challenge affecting us all. The UK is committed to working with others on efforts to get SDG2 back on track, to support food security for vulnerable countries and communities, and to end the preventable deaths of mothers and babies. We need strong coordinated policy responses to the food crisis that also address issues of prevention, whether this is through integrating nutrition into health systems to achieve universal health coverage or integrating nutrition into social protection, agriculture and climate agendas.

We need to work with public sector grants, private sector investments, technical assistance, prioritizing our support to sustainable agriculture and food securities to smaller farmers, particularly in the poorest and most food insecure countries.

We also need more aligned and needs-based policy responses that engage multilateral development banks and our partner finance institutions, encouraging a scale up of their work and investments to tackle all forms of malnutrition to achieve SDG2. The UK supports existing efforts that deliver well to scale up and out, thus reducing fragmentation and maximizing impact in these times of soaring needs.

The CFS is a unique forum that brings together all stakeholders, and we look forward to the contribution that can be stepped up in developing the more coordinated response that the world so urgently needs. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed, distinguished representative of the United Kingdom. Now it is my pleasure to give the floor to Cameroon, followed by Hungary, Venezuela, and Yemen. Cameroon, you have the floor.

Cameroon

Thank you, Chairperson. Cameroon is immensely pleased to join this ministerial segment and to contribute to today's discussion on the theme coordinating policy response to the global food crisis, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023. We support, at the outset, the statement delivered by honorable Minister of South Africa, and seize this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Nosipho for a brilliant election as a chair. This brings us to the basic of election of the chair since thirty-ninth session. This year's FAO flagship publication focuses on urbanization, agri-food systems transformation and healthy diet across the rural urban continuum. Belaboring and digging deep into the challenges faced by the transformation of agri-food systems in delivering nutritious, safe, and affordable diet for all.

I will focus for Cameroon very quickly on the effect of urbanization in agri-food system transformation. Recent figures show that urbanization is taking place at a very high annual rate of 182% on average moving from 24% in 1973 to 59% in 2022. Today, the urban population stands at 58.7% of the total population of about 28 million people. The projected figure for urban population in 2050 stands at 73%, meaning that three out of four Cameroonians live in cities. Dear members of the committee, the urban growth is considered a complex phenomenon in Cameroon, due to interaction among different economic, social, environmental, cultural, administrative institutional components. The first elements that are impacted by rapid urbanization are the changes in urban land use areas and consumption patterns of the city dwellers. Considering the strong link between farming and increasing urbanization, we see a reduction of smallholder farmers and a consequent reduction in the ratio of food producers vis-a-vis the consumers. The direct consequence of this situation is that urban's lifestyle is more and more dependent on food exports, while food sovereignty is no longer achievable. In the meantime, the phenomenon of street food business amplifies. The situation described above portrays the underlying aspect of urbanization: poverty. The rural urban continuum, grossly sustained by rural migration, is considered a coping strategy for rural people in search of diversified earnings. With the socioeconomic impact of the ongoing war crisis in the world, the policies adopted locally by the Government in support of the unstoppable rural urban demographic structure is far from yielding positive results. The situation has been compounded by recent setbacks driven by a typically recent staple food, energy and fertilizer prices affecting primarily rural poor household.

To conclude, in this connection, and in response to the four questions that we raised before, Mr. Chair, in disciplinary, the Government has responded strongly, this is what I inform you of. By putting in place incentives that prevent among rural, vulnerable households low incomes to increase the diversity of their earnings, low food stocks and gaps to secure food access and availability and rising food and non-food prices to stabilize their purchasing power. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative of Cameroon. Next, the distinguished representative of Hungary has the floor, to be followed by Venezuela and Yemen.

Hungary

Thank you very much for the floor, Chair. I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to address this session on behalf of Hungary. As we read in the report of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, it is estimated that between 692 - 783 million people in the world faced hunger in 2022. Although there was some modest progress in global hunger last year, a significantly higher number of people still have to face many forms of malnutrition day by day.

Besides the still persisting consequences of the pandemic, new challenges also affected food systems and food markets in recent years. The report mentions shocks and disruptions arising from conflict. Of course, as we know, climate variability and extremes as well as economic contractions with growing inequities as major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition. Indeed, we live in a world, where the affordability of basic foodstuffs has become more and more critical. Besides hundreds of millions of people who go to bed hungry each night, there are an even more significant number of people who do not have the opportunity to eat healthy.

Another topic I'd like to address is urbanization. The report highlights that the changing pattern of population agglomerations across this rural urban continuum is driving changes throughout agri-food systems, creating both challenges and opportunities. These challenges are multi-sectoral, and the effect, amongst others, reduction of availability of arable lands. The need for sustainable agricultural practices, influencing consumer's eating habits towards healthier and more sustainable food options. National urban and agricultural policies should focus on promoting sustainable urbanization, encouraging urban agriculture, such as community gardens or vertical farming, increasing local food production, and developing efficient and sustainable food distribution systems. Research and innovation also play an important role in improving the quality of life in urban and rural areas. New technologies provide opportunity not only to involve the younger generation in the agricultural sector, but also to overcome challenges of limited area and resource constraints. Last, but not least, let me emphasize that the two interlinked processes, urbanization and food system transformation require strong and supportive collaboration among governments, urban experts, farmers, private sector partners, and communities to ensure that urban areas provide access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food for their citizens.

Dear colleagues, I really hope that together we can create a world where every person has access to adequate and nutritious food, ensuring a brighter and healthier future for all of us. Thank you so much for your attention.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed, distinguished representative of Hungary. It is a pleasure for me to now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Venezuela.

Venezuela

Thank you very much, Chairman. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. War never goes hand in hand with humanity, as expressed by His Excellency Jean Paul II. I couldn't agree more. Therefore, my delegation

must express a concern, publicly stated by Venezuela's government with respect to the terrible situation in the Gaza strip, where the lines of humanitarian respect have been crossed and all international agreements in this domain have been violated. It is imperative that there be an immediate ceasefire and that a humanitarian channel for assistance to the population as well as the reestablishment of international law be established through the compliance with UN resolutions and respect for the commitment of the parties in all the negotiations that have taken place. Venezuela, in line with its diplomacy of peace, advocates for a quick, peaceful, integrated and lasting resolution to conflicts, bearing in mind the concerns of all those concerned, excluding no one.

Chair, we are facing a very complex global situation characterized by the persistent effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, restrictions to the trade, rising prices, both for agricultural inputs and fuel, restrictions and unilateral coercive measures imposed by some countries, sovereign nations, that are affecting the development of agri-food systems, increasing food insecurity, as shown by the numbers set out in the SOFI report. Also, the climate crisis is severely affecting the poorest communities that live in low- and middle-income countries. The impact of climate change isn't equitably distributed across the world – developing countries are bearing the brunt of this more so than developed countries. It is therefore not viable that the world continue to widen the social and economic gap. It is not possible nor ethical that we continue to feed an economic system that continues to deepen economic inequality and places at risk the rights to life itself, such as hunger and nutrition.

The food systems stocktaking moment held here in Rome saw the Secretary General, Antonio Gutierrez, make a call for collective action and mass investment in agri-food systems while reducing the carbon footprint and limiting global warming. Therefore, in order to advance the 2030 Agenda, we must invest in solidarity, international cooperation, respectful dialogue among and between nations with a clear priority placed on collective interest above any other individual or partial interests. Dear colleagues of the CFS, I would like to restate, confirm once more, the need to defend the principle set out in the UN Charter, safeguarding the technical essence of this organization and preserving this multilateral forum, which is so important and crucial for the fulfillment of the 2030 agenda and SDG2 in particular, for zero hunger. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its commitment to peace, the eradication of poverty and hunger in the world. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, Ambassador, representative of Venezuela. Next, Yemen has the floor.

Yemen

Thank you very much. First of all, we would like to congratulate her Excellency, the Ambassador of South Africa for assuming the Presidency. And we thank you Mr. Chairperson for your dedication. I would like to congratulate you, as you have mentioned in your opening statement that the use of water and food as weapons in war is unacceptable, illegal, therefore it is condemnable. And this is what is actually taking place in Gaza to the extent that we believe that even if water and food are provided, will there still be Palestinians alive? As the genocide continues by the occupying forces.

Mr. Chair, the food insecurity situation in Yemen has deteriorated over the past years and this was the result of the Huthi Coup d'Etat in 2011. As a matter of fact, the number of food insecure people has reached 17 million people, which is 54% of the total population. In addition to that we have growing cases of malnutrition, and these are two million people, most of them being women and children. And this is due to a number of drivers, chief among them being conflict, the limited resources in addition to climate shocks and economic crises.

In spite of all these circumstances, the government of Yemen has been keen on taking a number of measures and policies in order to best use the available resources and to best orient the agri-food systems to achieve food security. And I would like to mention that we have continued our efforts with our friends in order to achieve peace and to build a database of food security and national and government level in order to support decision-making. Also, the national strategy for trade and fisheries was prepared for the period 2024 – 2030. We continued also to work on enabling women and to build their capacities to

enhance their participation in the community. Also, we have conducted workshops for the economic empowerment of women. However, we are facing hurdles, such as the lack of funding. This lack of funding has led to a dwindling of assistance during the past years. Therefore, we appreciate our work together in order to find the proper funding to tackle the immediate needs and to build the capacities in the fisheries sector and to develop the framework of relevant strategies. We stress the importance of benefitting from the various sources of technologies and innovation. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed distinguished representative of Yemen. Now it's my pleasure to give the floor to India, followed by Peru, Iceland, and Estonia. India, you have the floor.

India

Thank you, Chair. Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, good evening. At the outset, India would like to congratulate Her Excellency the Ambassador of South Africa for being elected unanimously today as the new chairperson of the CFS. We also record our appreciation to you, Chair, for all your efforts enabling, steering the CFS during the last two years. Chair, India views the Committee on World Food Security, with all its inclusiveness, as well positioned in developing policy recommendations and guidance for ensuring global food security and nutrition for all. India would be happy to continue to associate and contribute its part to the CFS.

This SOFI report, it provides pathways for strengthening coordinated policy responses towards food security and nutrition, which is a step in the right direction. While nations and international organizations are working tirelessly to create crisis resilient food systems, we believe the scale of the problem demands a multifaceted approach supported by concrete actions. The report highlights the symbiotic relationship of urban and peri-urban areas in food security and nutrition of its inhabitants. We are happy to note that the report records practices and models from India as references and examples to analyze the food and nutritional security in the rural urban continuum. Be it our e-commerce initiatives during pandemic or efforts being made in shifting to natural farming or leveraging digital technologies and mobile phoning for service delivery, these are some of the transformative initiatives of India in terms of scale and reach. Making a mention in this report further strengthens our resolve about securing food security and nutrition through agri-food system transformation. Having said this, we are of the view that more work with deeper analysis is required to better understand the multidimensional facets of food security in the rural urban continuum. We hope the future editions of SOFI would continue to dwell on this matter and come out with newer insights. We also see the need for more engagement by the agencies bringing out important reports like SOFI with countries to better reflect the views of the latter while publishing the country-specific data. We see a coordinating role for CFS in this direction.

Chair, India, through its policies and programs aimed at inclusive, resilient, sustainable agricultural and food system is committed to ensure food security and nutrition to all. We are moving away from only crops to cropless strategy, underscoring the importance of horticulture, livestock, diary, and fisheries in building resilience and sustainability. We are making efforts to promoting organic agriculture and natural farming. The number of such farmers reached 4.5 million, the highest in the world. We are encouraging precision agriculture through AI and drones and biofortification through breeding programs.

Our collective efforts resulted in declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets. We are committed to take forward this initiative to the next level. We are in the forefront of leveraging digital technologies for food security. It is well established that the financial inclusion across the agriculture requires access to agriculture credit, crop insurance and financial inclusion as three important instruments for building resilience.

We have opened 500 million bank accounts for rural population in record time. As a result, we could undertake cash transfers to 200 million women during pandemic. We could transfer 31 billion to 110 million farmers in the last three years.

Chair, these are some of our initiatives I like to highlight because of time constraints. It is I just want to say, one point. During pandemic, India emerged as a role model for global food security. We are operating the largest ever food security system covering 810 million people by providing free food grains, and we continue to do so. Lastly, the elephant in the room is the issue of colossal food loss and waste, which stands at staggering 30%, which all of us has to address with the consorted efforts. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed distinguished representative of India. Next on my list I have Peru, to be followed by Iceland, Estonia and Israel. Peru, you have the floor.

Peru

Thank you very much, Chairman. Food security is a right of all people to have available healthy and nutritious food. However, it is not equally realized for all the planet's inhabitants especially for people who live in rural areas. The results of SOFI 2023 show us that the state of food and nutrition in the world is worrying. One out of three people in the world cannot afford a healthy diet as we sit here debating this, in this room. This is a multidimensional issue that goes beyond the availability and production of food and living conditions.

This situation is not new to my country. The impact of the pandemic, economic instability at the global level, rising food prices and inputs as well as increasingly intense and frequent weather events have had an impact on our economy and food security. In Peru, the food crisis mainly affects the vulnerable population that is poor or extremely poor and has trouble accessing nutritionally adequate, safe food, especially due to their economic and social conditions. Chair, we are aware that the problem of food insecurity is also a political one, given that it is a matter of priorities.

That is why our government has been working through a multi-sectoral commission on food and nutrition security on this issue. We are implementing policies such as the food security and nutrition law, the food recovery law, the law for state procurement, the law on family farming, the law for social inclusion and others. And we are working on developing a national policy in this domain. We are also prioritizing the development of a policy on family farming with a view to achieving sustainable and competitive production, given that they are the pillar of food security. And we are also seeking to improve the livelihood of producers nationwide. In 2021 in the context of the Food Systems Summit, we made a commitment to advancing the transformation of sustainable resilient and inclusive food systems and therefore developed a roadmap that is aligned with our national policy in this realm. I would like to take advantage to announce Peru's accession to the School Feeding Coalition. We are seeking to tackle anemia, which affects our children under the age of three. We are designing innovative strategies that allow us to effectively tackle overweight and obesity. Chair, demographic indicators show a growing population trend in developing countries in urban areas and a decline in rural areas. We should be developing in infrastructure, better technologies and innovative solutions to tackle the many challenges that our food systems face.

In conclusion, Chair, there is an imperative need that we transform food systems, the design of agricultural systems that guarantee sufficient and quality food. However, it is not just about tackling this technical challenge, but also a political one that tackles food systems in a holistic way through economic and social policies that must be consistent with the goal of achieving food security for all. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished representative from Peru. Next, I would like to give the floor to Iceland.

Iceland

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is enough food in the world to feed every person on the planet. Nevertheless, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report reveals the chilling fact that we are not making progress in ending hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition. In 2022, between 690 and 783 million people in the world were facing hunger. 122 million more people than before the Covid pandemic. In the same period, 2.4 billion people, comprising relatively more women and people living in rural areas, did not have access to nutritious and sufficient food all year round. In his report from the SDG Summit in September, the Secretary General of the United Nations informed us that only 12% of the SDGs are on track. More than half are moderately or severely off track and 30% have either seen no movement or rest below the 2015 baseline. You foresee that at the same rate almost 600 million people will be chronically undernourished in 2030, far from the goal set in 2015. The efforts of international organizations like FAO, World Food Program and IFAD help millions of people, but still do not suffice, as millions of people die from hunger every year, though almost 800 million people go to bed hungry every night. We are facing a global food crisis. Hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity have serious consequences on those who suffer these scourges. But the most horrific consequences are the long-term effects on children. It is incomprehensible that in 2022 there were 148 million children under 5 years of age, who suffered from stunting, 45 million suffered from wasting, while 37 million children were overweight.

The international community must do more to confront this global crisis. Among the approaches discussed in this forum is the transformation of our agri-food systems, and Iceland fully supports that approach. Icelanders as an island nation know that fish and other aquatic food form a fundamental part of healthy diets in many countries and provide the animal protein required to consume the least costly, healthy diet. Small-scale, artisanal fishers and fish workers, half of them women, produce the majority of this food and represent a large proportion of the workers in many countries.

It must also be kept in mind that the staggering 35% of the global harvest and capture of fisheries and agriculture is either lost or wasted every year. This calls for our attention. When hundreds of millions of people go to bed hungry every night, it is unacceptable that one-third of our blue aquatic food is wasted or lost. It is for this reason that we highly value the message and calls of the blue aquatic food coalition, its aims at full integration of sustainably harvested blue food, generated through sustainable and equitable management of natural resources from a healthy ocean and inland waters into our food system.

In this regard, we take note of the consensus that emerged from the July 2023 UN Food Systems Stocktaking, namely, that food system transformation urgently requires coordinated and inclusive action across the multiple sectors that produce, transport, process, market and consume food, including those who have been previously marginalized, such as fishers and other smallholders.

We need linked up action in a multi-sectoral, collaborative manner in order to achieve the SDGs.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, Iceland looks forward to the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Context of Food later this week. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, distinguished representative of Iceland. We are approaching the end of the list of requests for the floor. I will read out what I have and see if we missed any. We will of course go through the remaining members and then before we adjourn the session, we will give the floor to observers. I have Estonia, Israel, Kiribati, United States and Belgium. As for observers: the World Health Organization, IDLO and Palestine. We will begin with Estonia.

Estonia

Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor. First of all, Estonia fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and its 27 Member States delivered by Spain. As my country was unfairly attacked by the Russian Federation, I would like to make a couple of points.

It is very unfortunate that Russia is using the food security situation in the global South for its own propaganda purposes, spreading false narrative, as if the EU sanctions are the cause of deterioration of the global food security situation, whereas it is their own war of aggression against Ukraine that has fueled the global food crisis. The sanctions adopted by the EU do not target agricultural and food products, including wheat and fertilizers, between Russia and other countries. Contrary to Russia's allegations that the EU sanctions have been blocking Russia's fertilizer's exports, the UN data clearly demonstrates that total exports of Russian fertilizers to developing countries have remained stable in 2022 compared to previous years. Moreover the FAO data show that Russia has significantly increased its income from exporting fertilizers in 2022, benefiting from the high prices. Estonia does not impose any obstacles for Russian fertilizers to be exported further. In fact, we have worked closely with the UN in general and the WFP in particular to solve this issue. However, Russia has so far delayed this process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished delegate of Estonia. We will have some energy to clap for all the speakers! Next, we have the delegation of Israel.

Israel

Thank you, Chair. Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates, as we gather here today to address the critical issue of the SOFI report on the food security and nutrition in the world, I must deliver Israel's right to reply in response to numerous statements from some CFS members. I wish to remind here that the Committee for World Food Security exists to promote international cooperation for a world without hunger. Israel places high importance on these values, and the people of Israel as well. While the democratic state of Israel abides by international law and the law of war, our enemies violate them systematically.

No one can remain silent in the face of the unspeakable atrocities that unfolded in Israel on the dire Saturday of October 7th. The war was forced on Israel, and it has the right to defend itself and its citizens.

On this day of October 7th, Hamas terrorists stormed Israel's borders in a deliberate, savage terror attacks. Israel was subject to unimaginable horrors, as widely reported. As we sit here now, many Israelis remained held hostage by Hamas. Dr. Shoshana Ran is one of them. Dr. Ran is the estimated founder and president of the NGO Fair Planet. She had an advisory role at the International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources at FAO in this building in 2019. She dedicated her life to promote food security in developing countries, especially in Africa. Doctor Ran has been kidnapped by Hamas alongside 9 members of her family.

On October 7th, Israelis were murdered in front of their families. So many of them were farmers, who succeeded to overcome the challenges of the desert that was their home. These farmers transformed the desert to agricultural heaven. Saeed Moshe, may he rest in peace, was one of them. He developed special varieties of potato, and he was murdered while trying to protect his wife from the terrorists. The attacks target not only Israeli civilians, but also Americans, Canadians, Argentinians, Brazilians, British, French, German, Italians, Nepalese, Thais, and many more.

Israel, agreed to humanitarian aid entering to Gaza. At the same time, Israel is not required to supply Hamas with the capabilities to advance its genocidal agenda. On the other hand, the terrorist organization does not allow the Red Cross to visit the 222 civilian abductees, depriving them basic human rights. Let me reiterate. Israel's right to retaliate to the barbaric terrorist attacks is not in opposition to the principles of achieving food security and nutrition. There is no place for using this committee for spreading hatred towards Israel, nor lies.

We hope that the discussion here will not be diverted by continuous political debates. In the face of adversity, Israel remains committed to the pursuit of food security. We are determined that terrorism will not prevail, and we look forward to continuing the cooperation to address the global challenges we are all facing. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much distinguished delegate from Israel. Next, the delegation of Kiribati has the floor, followed by the US. Kiribati, please go ahead.

Apologies, there must have been some sort of mistake on the screen, the automatic request screen. Kiribati showed up and I am not sure they are in the room. I do not believe they are. Apologies for that. In that case United States has the floor, followed by Belgium, Canada and Algeria.

United States of America

Thank you, Chair. The United States is taking the floor to exercise our right of reply regarding statements from a few select delegations. The United States wishes to underscore that economic pressure measures, including sanctions, are a legitimate, important, appropriate, and effective tool for responding to harmful activity and addressing threats to peace and security, and the United States is not alone in that view or practice. In cases where the United States has applied sanctions, we have done so in accordance with international law and with specific objectives in mind, including as a means to promote a return to rule of law or democratic systems, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, or to respond to threats to international security.

Some in the international community erroneously blame so-called unilateral course of measures for negative humanitarian impacts. This argument fails to consider internal domestic policies a state may impose that harms its own people.

I will add that, despite Russia's disingenuous claims, I would like to echo my distinguished colleague from Estonia, who noted that the UN has facilitated record Russian exports of fertilizer. As we have consistently made clear, no US sanctions target Russian grain or fertilizer exports.

I must now briefly announce or address the current situation in Gaza. Like every nation in the world, Israel has the right to defend, indeed it has a duty, to offend itself from vicious attacks. By attacking Israeli civilians without warning, Hamas brought this tragic war to the Gaza strip. They have compounded and perpetuated the suffering of the Palestinian people at every step of this crisis.

As we stand with the people and government of Israel, we also stand with the Palestinian civilians. We are committed to working to create the conditions needed, starting with the resumption of humanitarian aid through the Rafah crossing, to provide lifesaving and essential humanitarian assistance for civilians in need, and caught in Hamas's barbaric terror, including access to food, water, medical care, and telecommunications. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you. Thank you, distinguished delegate of the United States. It is my pleasure now to give the floor to Belgium, followed by Canada and Algeria. Belgium, the floor is yours.

Belgium

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to exercise our right of reply since Belgium was mentioned by the representative of the Russian Federation. And like my colleague from Estonia, Belgium would like to repeat again that EU sanctions do not apply to foodstuffs and humanitarian goods. This was clarified in the legislation on sanctions and in the guidelines on their application. We would also like to remind you that these measures are not applied extra-territorially and do not create obligations for non-European operators, as long as their activities are not conducted at least partially in the EU. As for fertilizers, which are in the Belgian ports, we are aware of the situation and we would like to assure you that we are making every effort and are working closely together with the World Food Programme as part of a program by the WFP to ensure that these fertilizers will be shipped off as quickly as possible to countries that are most in need.

Food should never be used as a weapon of war. It is the war of aggression conducted by Russia against Ukraine and its targeting of agricultural equipment and Ukrainian exports that has exacerbated the rising food prices. European sanctions only aim to reduce Russia's ability to conduct and finance this war and to place cost on those that are responsible for this unjust and unprovoked war. As for Russia with its propaganda campaign, we would like to remind you that the SOFI report clearly states that there are about 23 million people suffering from chronic malnutrition additionally, had the war not occurred. And the EU has actually committed to ensuring that these sanctions have no impact on food security. Thank you very much.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed, Belgium. It's my pleasure to give the floor now to Canada. Canada, you have the floor.

Canada

Thank you, Chair. We appreciate the latest edition of the SOFI report. The report provides valuable context on the food security crisis we continue to face. And indeed, the multiple crises that have come together to generate persistent hunger across all geographies and societies. This speaks to the importance of bodies like the CFS. Multi-sectoral crises call for multi-stakeholder approaches, and CFS has the opportunity to usefully contribute in this regard.

We've taken note of the range of interventions this evening, some of which we regard as extremely unfortunate. Top of mind for many in the room is the impact of conflict, notably the illegal invasion by the Russian Federation of Ukraine and the conflict between Israel and the terrorist organization Hamas. We reiterate the importance of humanitarian access and note the allocation by Canada of 60 million dollars in humanitarian support for the civilian population of Gaza, but we also reiterate the right of Israel to defend itself for Article 51 of the UN Charter following the brutal attacks perpetrated by Hamas.

Canada will continue to call on all parties to protect civilians and respect international humanitarian law. Healthcare and humanitarian personnel and facilities must be protected in all circumstances. Canada stands firmly with the Israeli and Palestinian peoples in their right to live in peace, security, with dignity, and without fear.

Finally, we thank the current chair for his leadership and constant efforts over the last two years, and we look forward to supporting and working with the new chair when she assumes office at the end of the week. Congratulations to you both. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed, Canada, for your words. I now go to Algeria. Algeria, you have the floor.

Algeria

Thank you, Chair. At the outset, I would like to express the gratitude of my country's delegation for your chairmanship over these past two years. I would like to congratulate South Africa on its election.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the North Africa and Middle East group. The SOFI report once again painted a bleak picture of food security around the world. This is not a coincidence but caused by human activity and our actions.

Distinguished, Chair, we have seen this and over the past two weeks we have seen a barbaric attacks in violation of international humanitarian law against the defenseless Palestinian population by Israel. Chair, it is imperative for the international community to urgently address this situation and stop the aggression and to also put an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, distinguished representative from Algeria. Next, I wanted to open to floor to observers, but I can see that the list is growing. I can see that the Russian Federation has requested the floor as well as Belarus, I assume to exercise their right of reply. Russian Federation, you have the floor.

Russian Federation

Thank you, Chair. I would like to very briefly respond to the colleagues from Belgium and Estonia. I would like to say that according to the latest FAO data over the past year, the production and most importantly the export of Russian fertilizer to world markets decreased by 11%. And this decrease took place because of sanctions. In order to understand whether sanctions have an impact, including on fertilizer, and to understand how these sanctions are supposedly not impeding the exports of Russian fertilizer, I would like to ask a question to three countries, I would like to ask Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, which are waiting for these fertilizers, specifically Nigeria we are proposing 34 thousand, Zimbabwe 33 thousand and Sri Lanka 55 thousand tons. These three countries have been waiting for those fertilizers for months, whereas Estonia and Belgium are claiming that they are not impeding exports and working hard to expedite shipments of Russian fertilizers from ports to countries that truly need them.

And one more small comment with respect to sanctions that are targeting the political governance of a country, the political class rather than a specific people. Recently we heard a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Ms. Oltenen, who openly said that the Russian people must pay for what is currently happening in Europe and that the Russian people must suffer from the sanctions. So, I would like to ask my colleagues, please decide, I am you trying to deal with the Russian leadership or are you trying to punish the Russian people? But don't forget that the Russian people, we are not talking about 2 thousand or 3 thousand or 2 million people that you are trying to suppress in Gaza, it's a lot more people than that. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, Russian Federation. Next, Belarus has the floor.

Belarus

Thank you, Chair. I will also be very brief. Colleagues, it is very unfortunate that no one exercised their right of reply to my statement. Nobody except Belgium, which stated that there are no sanctions on fertilizer. But colleagues this is untrue, you just simply don't know about it. Last year, in this very room, I was reading a decision by the EU from December 2021, which implemented sanctions against fertilizer and fertilizer producers. So, what you are saying is not true. But I would like to hear a response from the US and from the EU to my remarks. The EU and the US two years ago implemented sanctions against Belarusian fertilizer and Lithuania banned the transport of our fertilizer to a port, where Belarus owned a third of the port. Please, colleagues, use your right of reply. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, distinguished representative of Belarus. I can see no further requests for the floor. Among members, let me be specific. If this is the case, I will now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the World Health Organization as a participant of the CFS. Thank you for bearing with us, you have the floor.

World Health Organization (WHO)

Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you for all being here, for your perseverance. It's been a long day, and those online. The World Health Organization is proud to contribute to the SOFI report as one of the five UN organizations working together to update the global community on global progress towards ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition.

This year's report revealed that the mega trend of urbanization is shifting diets across rural and urban settings. Increasing demand for more diverse and nutritious foods, but also more convenient, highly processed foods, and foods away from home, which are often high in fats, sugar and salt. Too many people globally remain unable to afford a healthy diet. A coordinated response towards food systems transformation for food security and nutrition must recognize these trends.

WHO advocates for a package of concrete evidence-based policy actions that cross sectors and levels of government, to move away from the primary production and consumption of energy-dense, highly processed, and unsafe foods, towards the promotion of foods that are nutrient-rich, safe, diverse, sustainably produced, and equitably distributed.

We must also acknowledge the role of international trade in the spread of and increased demand for highly processed foods, high in fats, sugars, and salt. WHO calls for commitments to ensure coherence between trade and nutrition policy objectives, so that international trade supports rather than undermines affordable healthy diets.

WHO remains committed to continue working with the CFS and in line with its mandate, to promote sustainable food systems that support the health of people and planet. Thank you. Chair

Chairperson

Thank you very much, distinguished delegate of the WHO, for your words. Next, the IDLO, International Development Law Organization, has the floor as an observer to the CFS.

International Development Law Organization (IDLO)

Thank you. Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it is a pleasure to address this plenary session on the behalf of the International Development Law Organization in our observer capacity.

The SOFI report has highlighted that the intensification of conflict, the devastating effects of climate change and economic crisis combined with growing inequalities are pushing us off track to meet the SDG2 targets. To address these intersecting global challenges, the significance of cross cutting, intersectoral and systemic approaches as well as mutual collaboration cannot be overstated.

IDLO is the only global intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law, to advance peace and sustainable development. Our 40-year experience has shown that the rule of law can serve as a catalyst, enabling the achievement of all 17 SDGs, including our commitment to realizing a world with zero hunger. Realizing the right to adequate food for all will not be achieved only by satisfying immediate needs.

At IDLO, we apply an integrated approach to eliminate systemic barriers that lead to unequal production, procurement and distribution of food. In our new policy brief titled "rule of law for food systems transformation". We emphasize three key elements that can contribute to accelerating food system transformation through the rule of law. First, we must empower the most food insecure people, women, youth, indigenous peoples, smallholder farmers, and people on the move should be able to engage with duty bearers to realize their rights. Second, we must work with governments to create sound legal and regulatory frameworks and strengthen effective institutions, enhancing transparency and accountability, and enabling inclusive decision making. Third, we must improve and safeguard equitable access to land, water, and other natural resources by protecting diverse forms of tenure, including traditional and customary rights to land and other resources.

On this occasion we wish to thank the outgoing chair and congratulate the incoming chair. We look forward to collaborating with her, and with all partners in promoting an all-encompassing and coordinated strategy to address hunger. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much, distinguished representative of the IDLO and apologies once more for that mix-up earlier. The distinguished delegate of Palestine has the floor as an observer.

Palestine

Excellencies, the Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen. Today, we address the issue of policy convergence in relation to food security. We focus on the SOFI report 2023. In this vein, let me indicate that Gaza prior to October 7th, recorded 63% of food insecure people on its territory due to siege, full and comprehensive siege for 16 years by the occupier, Israel. This has led to the exacerbation of the situation in Gaza, the situation that represents a major challenge in terms of achieving food security and nutrition as well as the SDG2. The falling of and the breakdown of all sectors in Gaza services and infrastructure are all due to the Israeli occupation. Poverty, prior to 7th of October, impacted 60% of the population, food insecurity, again prior to October 7th, impacted 63% of the population. More than 80% of the Gaza population live under the poverty line prior to October 7th.

How is the situation today? 17 days later, 17 days of bombardment and invasion by land. The siege is on-going, food and medicine supplies have seized to reach Gaza. Hospitals are out of service. Tons of food is amassed outside Gaza, waiting Israel's permission to allow this in. 100% of the population, precisely 2 million and 30 thousand people suffer today from food insecurity. If we speak about water, the quota is no higher than three liters of water. Desalination stations are out of service. 100% of the population is vulnerable and prone to killing, disease, suffering, morally and physically. Until now, over 5,000 lives were lost. Almost 2,000 people are now lying under rubbles. No one can save them. More than 15,000 wounded people.

This is a humanitarian catastrophe, which requires employing every possible means to put an end to this crisis. As humanitarian organizations should also be ensured safe access to reach Gaza and its people. We have to prove that what we talk about here in this room is put to action. We have to focus on the international decisions and resolutions condemning the violations of the IHL, namely starvation as a weapon of war. We have to stress that this is considered a crime. When anyone prevents humanitarian aid from reaching the needy people, the people who need it to survive, to avoid a genocide. This is what we all need to work to reach and achieve.

I find it awkward that people justify the current situation in the name of self-defense. Let me remind you that Israel occupies Palestine for tens of years. Israel turned our lives to hell. Israel has stolen the lives and dreams of our children. Israel has gone against all legitimacy. It continues to occupy this land unjustifiably. I want you to remain closer to your people and see the situation as it should be.

Chairperson

Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador, and thank you for your indulgence. We have two remaining speakers, the Syrian Arab Republic, but this might be a legacy hand. If this is the case, we have one remaining speaker and that would be Finland. Syrian Arab Republic, I'm not sure if this was a legacy, the hand I see on the screen. Otherwise please take the floor if you wish.

Syrian Arab Republic

Chair, this is a new request, as I would like to practice the right of reply. Thank you for giving me the floor. Let me say that the coercive measures and the sanctions impact people's lives, leading to death. Everyone who pretends that coercive measures do not impact people's lives, I invite you to go to a

country under sanctions and see how people live there. They say to us that the sanctions are not imposed on food and medicine. In fact, these sanctions are imposed on banks, where countries remain unable to afford the price of food and medicine. In our hospitals, our MRI devices are out of services and cannot be repaired due to the sanctions and the coercive measures. When the farmers are unable to grow the land when a piece need to be replaced on the machine, this is all due to the sanctions and coercive measures. This is my reply to those who pretend to the contrary. These measures affect people and their living. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed, distinguished delegate, dear ambassador. Now we'll have the last speaker, which is Finland. Finland, you have the floor.

Finland

Thank you, Chair. I exercise my right to reply to the remarks by the Russian Federation, who commented on remarks by our Foreign Minister - an example of a continued effort by Russia to divert attention from what is really at the core of the issue, the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine. The solution to that is, stop your war on Ukraine. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you very much indeed distinguished representative of Finland. And this is the last speaker today in this session. So, I want to thank you very much indeed for all your statements, all your points, it is almost impossible to summarize the richness of the many elements you provided collectively to our dialogue and to our deliberations. I will do so in any case, through a summary of the chair of this session, where I will include all the points that have been raised during the session that will be released after the plenary session.

In the meantime, allow me just to recall what I quoted this morning referred to the document CFS2023/51/2/Rev1, where it reflects that in line with practice, sorry with the CFS plenary session and depending on the nature of each agenda item, be that for information, for discussion or for decision, four types of procedures are foreseen for this plenary, for the preparation of the final report as established by the CFS Bureau and agreed on its session held on June 19th. So this, according to this document and the agreement. The proposed procedure for this agenda Item III reads as preparation of that of text by the CFS secretariat, which is submitted directly to the drafting committee. The text will make reference to the panelists and to the transcription of the session.

Of course, as I said, I will release the chair summary after the plenary session. And with this, dear colleagues, I am very glad that we are on time for having a brief rest, only 15 mins. We are all joining the cocktail offered by the Brazilian mission. It is upstairs, I understand right now. Okay, so the Brazilian delegate is kindly saying that it is right now, so you can just go to the restroom, maybe, and go straight upstairs. It is the eighth floor, and we'll see each other there. Formally, the session will continue the CFS plenary session tomorrow morning, 10 am. I strongly encourage everyone to attend the very interesting side events taking place earlier in the morning.