

CFS 51 Session Side Event

Uptake and implementation of CFS Policy products through legislation: the role of parliaments and parliamentary networks

Tuesday 24 October 2023

Parliamentarians from different regions convened to discuss the role of parliaments and parliamentary networks in fighting hunger and malnutrition at an FAO side event at the 51st session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Rome in October 2023, with conversation covering the Right to Adequate Food and identifying pathways and mechanisms to more systematically involve parliaments and parliamentary networks in CFS work. An exchange of lessons learned provided examples of how to capitalize on parliamentary networks to strengthen the uptake of CFS recommendations and their incorporation in national legislation and policies.

The [Second Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition](#), held in June 2023, highlighted the crucial role of parliaments in fighting hunger and malnutrition, especially in times of crises. In a clear demonstration of shared objectives, more than 200 parliamentarians, 15 presidents and vice-presidents of national and regional parliaments and parliamentary bodies from 64 countries agreed on a [Global Parliamentary Pact against Hunger and Malnutrition](#) at the conclusion of the Summit.

The Pact calls for the CFS to establish appropriate mechanisms on the representation of parliamentarians actively involved in the fight against hunger and malnutrition in CFS sessions, and for the stronger involvement of parliaments as key drivers for the implementation of CFS instruments and policy documents.

FAO has been expanding its outreach and collaboration with parliaments worldwide, actively engaging parliamentarians and their networks within and across national assemblies on matters relevant to its mandate.

“Appropriate legal frameworks are needed for the complex factors causing food insecurity around the world to be captured and given due attention in national legislation”, noted Marcela Villarreal, Director of FAO’s Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division. “With their unique prerogatives of public budgeting and oversight on government’s action to implement internationally agreed commitments, parliamentarians are very strategic actors in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. FAO works closely with parliamentary networks and alliances against hunger and malnutrition all over the world in this endeavour.”

"The key contribution the CFS can make to the daily work of parliamentarians lies in its potential to help define key regulatory frameworks and the legislation needed to advance the Right to Adequate Food in its multiple dimensions, but for that to happen we need parliamentarians’ voices actively participating in the CFS,” said Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero, CFS Chairperson, reiterating the CFS’s commitment to bringing parliamentarians into CFS processes.

Members of parliaments from different regions of the world intervened, bringing to the table regional perspectives on possible engagement opportunities.

“Parlatino is an active ally and promoter of the Global Parliamentary Pact against Hunger and Malnutrition, and has much to contribute to the work of the CFS, for example through model laws, which are regional, normative frameworks of reference that can inspire national legislation in member states,” said the President of Parlatino, Honourable Silvia Giacoppo.

The newly elected Coordinator of the Parliamentary Front against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, Honourable Sonia Rojas Mendez, stressed that, “as part of the Global Parliamentary Pact against Hunger and Malnutrition that emerged from the recent Summit, we committed, as parliamentary fronts, to strengthening working ties with the CFS, requesting their support to ensure that the voice of parliaments is also present in this important global governance space, as recognized spokespersons.”

Honourable Francoise Uwumukiza, a member of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), highlighted that “the second Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition provided a space for parliamentarians from different regions of the world to discuss the challenges agrifood systems are facing. The Global Parliamentary Pact against Hunger and Malnutrition resulting from it is a very honouring statement and EALA is fully committed to contribute to its implementation”.

“One of the resolutions adopted at the recent 44th AIPA General Assembly focused on encouraging the application of the ASEAN Guidelines, strongly grounded in the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI) and reflecting the specificities and characteristics of ASEAN member states on promoting responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry sectors at regional and national levels,” stated H.E. Ar. Siti Rozaimeriyanty Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). “The Practical Handbook for ASEAN Parliamentarians on the guidelines, developed by AIPA in collaboration with FAO and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)”, she added, “offers guidance on promoting responsible investment in the food, agriculture, and forestry sectors and an awareness campaign to disseminate and socialize the handbook, jointly coordinated between AIPA and FAO, will take place in 2024.”

“Hunger is not a technical problem, but a political one, which must be solved with policies. And parliamentarians are the best positioned for this,” said Dr Miriam Ciscar Blat, Head of the Sectoral Cooperation of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, in her closing remarks. “The Global Parliamentary Pact against Hunger and Malnutrition called for adequate mechanisms to engage the CFS. We are glad that this issue is on the table for discussion, and we trust that it will be institutionalized soon. The vast experience we have, the lessons learned and the consolidation of these networks linking parliamentarians around the world, can be used to further strengthen the adoption of the CFS recommendations and their incorporation into national legislation and policies.”