

Statement by OHCHR – Item agenda III

Item agenda III: Strengthening coordinated policy responses to the food crisis – The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023

Thank you Chair.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights would like to express its deepest appreciation for the work of the CFS.

On behalf of the UN High Commissioner, I would like to share our deep concern that, according to SOFI 2023, more than 700 million people in the world still face hunger, with an insufficient reduction of 3.8 million fewer people suffering from hunger between 2021 and 2022, while at the same time agricultural trading companies made record profits during the same period, as reported in the latest UNCTAD Trade and Development Report 2023 on Food Commodities and Corporate Profiteering, negatively affecting both the availability and affordability of the right to adequate food for millions of people around the world, especially vulnerable groups.

We recognize the positive role of trade in making available food production, but we also share our concerns about global food value chain's market concentration and would like to remind businesses of their obligations to respect human rights, in particular the right to adequate food.

We would like to recall that the global trade architecture should not interfere with the obligation of States to maximise available resources for the realisation of the right to adequate food, including through investment in rural infrastructure and effective and universal social protection systems.

In this context, we would like to call for:

- A human rights economy placing people's human rights at the centre of economic and social decisions with a focus on vulnerable groups.
- We call upon national and international regulators, international organisations, academics, and civil society organisations to assess the drivers of market concentration in global food systems and its impact on the realisation of the right to adequate food, with a view to ensuring that the right to adequate food is protected by States and respected by businesses.
- We also call for ensuring that the international food trade architecture provides an enabling environment for States to realize the right to food everywhere, for all people.
- Finally, we call upon governments, specialized agencies, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to promote the effective and comprehensive dissemination and the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas in line with the new resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council two weeks ago establishing a working group in this regard.

Last but not least, I would like to remind that food is a right, not a commodity and even less an asset on which we can speculate.

Thank you.