



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States

51st Committee on World Food Security

(23-27 October 2023)

“Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition”

FINAL VERSION

Item V: Item V: Empowering women and girls and promoting gender equality: endorsement and uptake of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls Empowerment (GEWGE) in the context of food security and nutrition (for decision).

Dear Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. Iceland, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
3. Allow me to start by thanking the CFS chair and the former co-chairs and co-facilitator of the Open-Ended Working Group, as well as the whole of the CFS Secretariat team, for their engagement and dedication in the development of and negotiations on the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls Empowerment (GEWGE) in the context of food security and nutrition. I sincerely thank them because these Voluntary Guidelines are in large part the fruit of their energy and professionalism.
4. Please allow me also to thank all CFS members and stakeholders for their constructive engagement. These Voluntary Guidelines are also the fruit of our collective commitment, determination and resilience, which have allowed us to reach a consensus and deliver a policy framework that will guide our work to achieve gender equality in the context of food security and nutrition.

5. We would like to join the CFS chair in welcoming the keynote intervention by Commissioner Dalli today, which highlighted the importance that gender equality has for the EU and its Member States. We consider that achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girl' is fundamental to the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and in particular for the realisation of the right to adequate food. Empowering women is indispensable to ending hunger and malnutrition, in all its forms, to achieve SDG2.
6. We welcome the fact that the Voluntary Guidelines recognise that women and girls often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as well as gender-based violence, including sexual violence, across food systems. Furthermore, they make reference to: challenging gender stereotypes; closing gender gaps in the labour market; achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy; addressing the gender pay gap; and achieving gender balance in decision-making. We would stress the importance, in this regard, of developing specific actions for the agriculture and food systems sectors.
7. Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is a priority of the European Union. We are therefore ready to use these Voluntary Guidelines and supporting the dissemination, use and application of the Guidelines in the development, enhancement and implementation of EU policies at the EU regional and national levels, as well as in the EU's external actions.
8. These Voluntary Guidelines represent a key intergovernmentally-agreed global policy framework to make these changes happen. They support country-led efforts to address gender inequality and to empower women and girls towards achieving food security and nutrition.
9. We recognise that the voluntary and non-binding nature of these Voluntary Guidelines allow each Member State to implement them according to their own priorities, preferences and pace while heading in the direction traced out therein.
10. Therefore, the EU and its Member States strongly support the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls Empowerment (GEWE) in the context of Food Security and Nutrition and encourage the uptake and implementation of these Voluntary Guidelines.
11. We are ready to engage constructively with all CFS members and stakeholders for the uptake and implementation of these Voluntary Guidelines, particularly in relation to the implementation of the National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation and other national and regional strategies and plans which place social sustainability at their core.

Thank you, Mr Chair.
