

14 October AM

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Mr Mario ARVELO, CFS Chair

Colleagues and friends, good morning and welcome to Rome for CFS 46. For the delegates who are standing, I see open seats, maybe on the bleachers to the far right of you, looking at the podium. There are probably some seats in the balcony and there are additional seats in the red room where the session is being broadcast. The red room is two storeys below us in this building. I would everybody to note that the seating arrangement reflects the democratic, egalitarian nature of CFS.

Yesterday afternoon I came with the Secretary to see the room and the Chair made the executive decision to desegregate non-state participants so that, for example, FAO is seated between Ethiopia and Fiji, IFAD is seated between Iceland and India and WFP is seated between Vietnam and Yemen, and this is to show that we are all equal in CFS. Other non-state actors are also seated amongst the Member States. This happened yesterday.

I did not do the research on this but I believe, and I would venture the thought that perhaps this is a first in the UN system, the aggregation of everybody sitting together. We also sat Sudan right out here in front so that we start with Sudan and then go, of course, in alphabetical order by country name in English and that is because my predecessor as Chair was then Ambassador Amira Gornass from the Sudan.

And, lastly, on the seating arrangement, that distribution allowed us to have my successor as chair seated right in front of me, Mr Tiensin from Thailand. So, that was a happy coincidence. Now, before our formal programme begins, UN security regulations require us to watch a short instructional safety video. Let us all pay attention to it.

SCREENING OF VIDEO

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for that. Now, today and in the course of the week we commemorate two milestones, 45 years since the establishment of this Committee and ten years since its trailblazing reform. In working through our ambitious agenda, let us keep in mind why CFS was born and why it was so deeply transformed. We have come a long way since the international community responded to the 1973 global financial and food crisis by creating an inter-governmental body, the CFS, to share information and promote policies to avoid starvation and ensure open access to market data on food and commodities.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD, the consultative group for International Agricultural Research, CGIR, and the global early warning system housed at FAO were also born from this response. When, in 2007/2008, another global food crisis necessitated a fundamentally different approach, CFS was transformed into a multi-stakeholder platform which is a revolutionary advancement in United Nations architecture where governments, civil society, the private sector, scientists and others now sit together as partners and we are, for the first time ever, sitting together here in this room today.

This foremost inclusive platform of the international system is a stage for speechmaking but, more significantly, it is a brainstorming centre for crafting wise and effective policy approaches. While we have these milestones to celebrate, let us not forget why we are here and who we are striving to help. In this light, I wish to call for a moment of silent reflection in memory of the millions who have died of hunger and from diseases stemming from malnutrition since CFS 45. I would like to mention some special friends of CFS who we have lost.

Jacques Diouf of Senegal, who was Director-General of FAO, championed the CFS and its placement in Rome, the United Nations capital for food and agriculture. Christine Tonnu of France, who served as vice-chair of CFS and was an active negotiator of the 2009 reform document. And all those travelling to a United Nations conference in Nairobi aboard Ethiopian Airlines flight 302, in particular my friend and interpreter extraordinaire, Grazia de Luis of Mexico, and her United Nations colleagues who also perished in that disaster. A moment of silence.

Thank you. I will now ask the CFS Secretary, Chris Hegadorn, to provide administrative and logistical details for this forty-sixth session. Mr Hegadorn leads the CFS Secretariat team whose tireless work and commitment to excellence is responsible for what will surely be a fruitful CFS week. Chris is also an old friend and colleague and was very active in the reform of CFS and actually is one of the founding fathers of the high-level panel of experts on food security and nutrition as he was the chair of the working group that created this science and evidence-based arm of CFS. Chris.

Mr Chris HEGADORN, CFS Secretary

Thank you very much, Mario, Mr Chair, and good morning to all of you who have travelled far and wide. I want to start first by thanking the team that made this meeting come together. If the CFS Secretariat staff can raise their hands and identify yourself quickly, please give them a quick round of applause. This has been, of course, a team effort and they have done amazing work to make this all happen. So, let me start by announcing as well that the European Union is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article 2 of the FAO Constitution and a declaration to that effect is contained in information document 6.

As of this morning, the number of Member States registered for this session is 126, with 111 in attendance now. That means our working quorum is 56 member states. The number of registered attendees in total is 1,875, which is a new record and reflects the very strong interest in the CFS. We have also confirmed, since CFS 45, the membership of Myanmar amongst the member states.

To confirm that your name will be included in the list of participants, please visit the registration desk located by the pavilion. This year, again, CFS is going paper smart. That means we are encouraging the use of electronic versions of documents. If you still need paper copies, please send an email to the dedicated address on the CFS web page. Limited printed copies will be available at the CFS 46 document pick-up point at the messenger's desk in plenary hall, to the right of you as you face the podium.

Requests for printing will be handled in the order received. Your collaboration on this initiative will continue to ensure CFS remains environmentally friendly. We will also be piloting a series of survey tools through the week, intended to solicit your feedback to improve future sessions. Thank you in advance for your time and your constructive thoughts on this session.

Last, and also for a first for CFS, there will be a meditation session each day from 9.45 to 10 a.m. in Room A250 on the floor below us. Mr Chair.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Chris. I hope I'll be able to attend one of those meditation sessions. We now proceed to agenda item I, Organizational Matters. The CFS Bureau discussed and approved the provisional agenda and timetable in consultation with the advisory group. For the first time, the Secretariat has prepared a guide to CFS 46 with detailed information. You can find it online. To have lively and interactive debates, I strongly discourage reading formal statements. The full agenda requires rigorous time management. Therefore, speakers are requested to keep interventions brief, articulating your points concisely. I suggest you dispense with diplomatic pleasantries as the Bureau has established a maximum of three minutes per speaker.

The Bureau has exceptionally allocated up to five minutes for minister, vice ministers and delegates speaking for regional groups as well as spokespersons for the civil society and the private sector mechanisms. A clock counting down the available time will be shown on the screens left and right and also on the podium and I will give a 30-second warning to conclude, like so. That is my meditation bell that I have brought here.

This year delegates have the option of recording a video statement instead of taking the floor in plenary. Those interested in taking advantage of this possibility should contact the CFS Secretariat. They all had their hands raised and you know Chris here. Delegates wishing to see their statements posted on our website can email them to cfs@fao.org. While I take for granted that everyone is familiar with the agenda, the Secretary asks me to highlight the political decisions we must take during this CFS 46.

On Thursday morning we will debate, and I am confident we will approve, a multi-year programme of work for the period 2020 to 2023. This is what we call the MyPoW. This four-year programme of work resulted from an inclusive, transparent and intensive process and follows recommendations of the CFS independent external evaluation. That is on Thursday morning.

Then on Friday afternoon... Rather on Thursday afternoon, under item... Well, we will deal with when in just a moment but just take a note that item 12 a), b), c) and d) are for decision. We will be appointing a new chair and bureau for the next two years. Also, the current bureau is submitting a request to elevate the status of FAO, IFAD and WFP in the advisory group to become *ex officio* members. That is to say the three Rome-based agencies will in practice be permanent advisors to the CFS Bureau.

Before submitting the provisional agenda for approval, the Secretary has a point to make. This is a clarification that I need from Mr Hegadorn. Chris, please.

SECRETARY

Thank you, Mr Chair. In fact, I will make an announcement as well as the point you asked me to make. Friday morning there will be a youth special event in the Red Room. Youth delegates from different constituencies are working hard to make this event as lively as possible. They will report back on their impressions of this plenary and side events and they will be shooting short videos. If you are asked to do a short video, please support this activity. Youth delegates will also place two magic boxes at the back of the plenary hall where you can insert your answers to a very important question, what actions and steps can be taken by governments and other actors to ensure youth are involved and engaged in food security and nutrition policy making in their national context?

Last, there will be a pre-event survey to align expectations before that event, available in English, French and Spanish. It will be paperless and I understand QR codes will be circulated soon. Youth delegates seek to involve all of you in the Friday events and we encourage you not to miss this opportunity. On the matter the Chair mentioned, there is a proposed amendment to the agenda for item 12 under Other Matters to approach sub-item a), that is amendment to the CFS Rules of Procedure on Thursday afternoon starting at 17.30 instead of Friday afternoon. This is the item the chair just referred to, on the status of FAO,

IFAD and WFP as permanent members of the advisory group. Bringing this item forward will allow a decision to go to Drafting Committee, which will meet only once, on Thursday evening. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Chris. Can we adopt the provisional agenda and timetable so that they become the official agenda and timetable? Thank you. Now the Secretary will give us the proposed composition of the Drafting Committee for CFS 46.

SECRETARY

Based upon regional submissions, the following countries have been nominated to serve as Drafting Committee members: Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan and Switzerland. Sanna-Liisa Taivalmaa of Finland will chair the Drafting Committee. Ms Taivalmaa is senior advisor on rural development at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Helsinki. The European Union will participate in the Drafting Committee in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article 2 of the Constitution and on matters within its competence will exercise on an alternate basis the membership rights of the EU member state nominated to the Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee meets on Thursday at 6.30 p.m.