

Statement by H.E. Ms. Paula Narváez
President of ECOSOC
51st Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS 51)
Global Interlinkages Dialogue
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Rome, Italy

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to join this panel of distinguished experts to contribute to addressing the global interlinkages in tackling global hunger and malnutrition.¹

The centrality of food security for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs cannot continue to be overlooked. At the halfway point to 2030, transforming food systems is a critical entry point for accelerating progress in delivering on the 2030 Agenda.

According to estimates by the United Nations, the world will reach 8.6 billion people in 2030 and 9.8 billion people by 2050. Food systems must be prepared to deliver on the needs of a growing world population.

At the same time, millions of people across the world are malnourished, and the world is off course to achieve most globally agreed nutrition targets. 3.1 billion people were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021.

¹ The other members of the panel are **Dr. David Nabarro**, Co-Director and Chair, Global Health at the Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College, London; **H.E. Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki**, Special Envoy for Food Systems of the African Union; and **Dr. Stefanos Fotiou**, Director of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub.

And while people remain undernourished, food waste continues to be a challenge in many countries. According to FAO, 13 percent of food produced globally is lost in the supply chain from after harvest and prior to retail. 17 percent is wasted in households, in food services and in retail.

The **2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR)** called for transformative change in food systems, as current models of production and consumption are not consistent with a livable planet for current and future generations. The report stresses that transformation has become even more important given heightened food security risks in context of multiple global crises.

The **2023 edition of the report on “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” (SOFI)** also shares candid findings on rising hunger as result of increasing food prices, challenges in the agricultural sector, energy transitions and conflicts and/or extreme events. These results should drive us to take urgent action.

The need to address food security and nutrition in an interconnected and interlinked way was evident in the **2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration**. It calls for bold, ambitious, just and transformative actions to accelerate progress, including in ending hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition. It also addresses the realization of the right to adequate food, sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems, as well as safe, nutritious and healthy diets. Member States also committed to supporting developing countries to address extreme food price volatility.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The outcomes of the **2021 UN Food Systems Summit and the Stocktaking Moment in 2023** offered a strong action plan to envision food security of a growing population while protecting the planet and its finite resources. It was evident that commitments to advance interlinkages to boost nature-based solutions, advance equitable livelihoods, decent work and empower communities while building resilience could yield substantial results in accelerating and deepening the transformative power of food systems. We must turn this plan into action.

One of my priorities as ECOSOC President will be to direct attention to the food crisis and strengthen agricultural development as a front line of humanitarian response. Another priority will be to advance concrete solutions to accelerate and scale up climate action in the face of crisis, which is closely linked to strengthening food systems. Through the various segments and forums of ECOSOC, I look forward to engaging you all to realize transformative and interlinked policy outcomes on food and nutrition.

One such example will be the **2024 High-level Political Forum** which will review progress on SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17. Taken together, this will provide a strong opportunity for identifying and leveraging synergies between eradicating poverty and hunger, climate action, justice and partnerships. This will also be an opportunity to continue to strengthen common understanding and commitments to accelerate food systems transformation while advancing synergies with other key transitions in expediting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Such discussions will also be an important input to the **2024 Summit and Pact of the Future**.

I value the important **contribution that the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** could make to the discussions at the 2024 HLPF. I commend the Committee's inclusiveness in bringing together multilateral actors such as Member States, civil society and private sector, financial and research institutions, as well as UN agencies to discuss food security and nutrition challenges.

I also recognize the potential role that the CFS Policy Recommendations on Strengthening Collection and Use of FSN Data could play in providing specific and actionable guidance for improving food security and nutrition data systems. The CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls Empowerment is also a welcome step to contribute to food security and better nutrition as well as to poverty reduction, social wellbeing, and economic growth.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We know that no one country can overcome the scale of our challenges alone.

Collective action is needed to address the interlinked challenges that are affecting agrifood systems and strengthen coordination between relevant stakeholders towards the design of bold and ambitious policies, programmes and interventions.

In 2015, we looked to the future and committed to ending poverty and hunger everywhere by 2030. With only 7 years left, we owe it to our countries and communities to achieve the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind. The Council stands ready to play its part and looks forward to working with all of you to make sustainable development a reality.

Thank you.