

08 June 2022 | Remarks by CFS Chair at the ECOSOC Management Meeting

Your Excellency, Ambassador Stoeva, Vice-President of ECOSOC,

Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen,

I am delighted to address you today in my capacity as Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Allow me to start by thanking H.E. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of ECOSOC, for inviting me to report on last year progress and contributions by CFS towards the 2030 agenda and especially SDG 2 on Zero hunger.

Excellencies,

This session takes place in a markedly different world from the one we knew when my predecessor briefed you about the work of CFS a year ago.

With your indulgence, I will briefly reflect on the global food crisis the world is facing today and then present the CFS Report.

Distinguished delegates,

Conflicts around the world are a major threat to achieving the 2030 Agenda, including ending hunger and malnutrition.

While all armed conflicts are regrettable, avoidable and condemnable, the war on Ukraine has an exponentially-large, systemic global impact on food production, access and trade, supply stability and sustainability and prices. We are on the brink of a cost of living crisis.

Regrettably, as is the case with all conflicts and crisis, the most vulnerable, poor and excluded people are getting affected first and hardest.

We must do everything possible to minimize the effects of this war on hunger. The primary strategy, the most effective and least costly, is peace.

Excellencies,

I commend the several initiatives that have been launched over the past months by different Member States, institutions and political fora, mobilizing leadership, finances, political will and proposing a wide range of valuable policy responses to the food crisis.

Lessons from the last food crisis and from the COVID-19 recovery efforts more recently showed that meaningful and principled global policy coordination, that listens to the voices of those most affected, and of key stakeholders, is vital.

Only by ACTING TOGETHER will we solve this problem.

The Secretary General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance that is fostering joint analysis and coordinated policy recommendations from the UN System.

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) stands ready to support these efforts.

CFS was reformed in 2009 precisely to respond to global food crises such as the one we are witnessing by serving as the UN's most open, inclusive, intergovernmental platform for food security and nutrition, with the mandate of promoting coordination at global level, policy convergence and coherence on global food security and nutrition issues, in support of country-led processes.

I am working closely with the President of the General Assembly and with the Secretary General to join forces and make the best use of the CFS platform to foster global policy coordination to face this food crisis.

Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now, I turn to the yearly report of the Committee's contributions in 2021. I will focus on FOUR main items. A more detailed account of our work is available in the full report submitted to this Council which I encourage you to read.

1. **FIRST**, The Committee convened two extraordinary sessions in 2021. CFS 47 In February 2021, which endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSN), and CFS 48 in June, which agreed on the policy recommendations on “Agroecological and other innovative approaches”.
2. **SECOND**, in October 2021, CFS convened its 49th plenary session, that among others:
 - a. **Addressed** the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2021 - specifically on the severe and lasting impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition - and their policy implications
 - b. **Deliberated** the potential implications of the UN Food Systems Summit on CFS and its HLPE. As a result, CFS is currently working on identifying key options and potential actions for CFS to fulfil its mandate in a more effective and responsive way, in view of the momentum created by the UNFSS at the global and national levels, and among different constituencies. This will be the focus of a special HLPF Side Event by CFS and the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and a Special Event at CFS 50 in October this year.

In addition, as a response to the call by the UNFSS for strengthening science-policy interface for food systems, the CFS High Level Panel of Expert (HLPE) is discussing how to enhance both horizontal integration, with other UN Science-Policy interface systems – like IPCC and IPBES. - , and vertical integration with regional and sub-regional expert groups and institutions.

3. THIRD, the Committee reviewed and updated its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2020-2023.with focus on:

- a. The **Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment** in the context of food security and nutrition that are currently being negotiated by CFS Members and Participants, hopefully to be agreed at CFS 50 in October 2022.
- b. Policy recommendations on **Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems** currently under negotiation for endorsement at CFS 50 in October 2022.
- c. **Data collection and analysis tools for food security and nutrition** for which the HLPE Steering Committee has been finalizing a report as the basis for a new policy convergence process.
- d. **Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition whose** policy convergence process is expected to be completed in 2023.

The CFS HLPE is currently preparing its third note on “**Critical, Enduring and Emerging issues**” for food security and nutrition, which will inform the next strategic orientation of the CFS and its programme of work 2023-2027.

4. FOURTH, CFS **took stock of the use and application of CFS policy recommendations on Food Security and Climate Change; and on Water** for Food Security and Nutrition at CFS 49: The Committee encouraged a more prominent inclusion of agriculture and food security at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) – and subsequent ones.

Distinguished delegates,

In conclusion, allow me to quote the UN Secretary General, who in his address at CFS 49, commended CFS policy agreements for “*putting the issues of land tenure, responsible agricultural investment, emergency nutrition response and famine prevention (among others) front-and-centre*” as he called CFS to “*drive change across food systems, with the full force of the United Nations family...*”.

As I conclude my remarks, I deeply thank for their engagement the 133 Member States of the Committee, as well as all the participants that include the UN agencies –very especially to FAO, IFAD and WFP-, civil society, private sector, Indigenous Peoples and farmer organizations, philanthropic organizations, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), international financial institutions (IFIs), the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, and the CFS High Level Panel of Experts, for their engagement.

I look forward to seeing you at the High-Level Event on addressing the current global food crisis that we are organizing with the President of the General Assembly in July, here in New York and at the CFS 50th Plenary session in Rome, from October 10-13.

I thank you.