



# COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

**Forty-sixth Session**  
***"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"***

**Rome, Italy, 14-18 October 2019**

**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FAO**

Honorable Ministers and Vice-Ministers;  
Ambassadors;  
Heads of Delegation;  
Distinguished Participants and Observers;  
Excellencies;  
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen!

It is a pleasure for me to welcome all of you to the 46th session of the Committee on World Food Security, my very first CFS as FAO Director-General. We are here today because we are committed to ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, as the SOFI report, gave us some discouraging news. In its 2019 edition, this report shows that more than 820 million people were hungry in 2018!

It unveils that true global food insecurity is actually a more alarming problem than we all thought. Two billion people in the world experience moderate or severe food insecurity because they do not have regular access to nutritious and sufficient food throughout the year.

The global obesity numbers and trends, among others, are also worrying. It is even more serious. What seems increasingly obvious is that our collective efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger, and perhaps others, are coming up short.

We cannot accept this situation and continue doing business as usual. We need to look critically at what we are doing, within our organizations, and as a member of the CFS. We must come up with new ideas and take innovative, bold action!

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In the last two and half months, we had informal consultations with Member Countries here, and with colleagues in other international organizations in New York, in Washington D.C., in Geneva and other places.

We initiated the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, FAO intends to have more impact where it is most needed; in countries, especially in the poorest countries, the Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, and countries affected by conflicts and economic crises.

As I promised during my campaign, I said that we would offer tailored services to help people who are in the vulnerable regions.

FAO will intensify its efforts to support countries. FAO will give priority to the provision of policy and technical support to countries on key issues for food security and nutrition within a sustainable development perspective.

FAO will strengthen and establish partnerships with all key players, for greater synergy, effectiveness, efficiency and inclusivity.

FAO will continue to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries.

As the host of the Secretariat of the CFS, FAO strongly believes that this Committee is a unique global platform to collectively address the concerns identified by the SOFI report, and catalyse our respective agency work on these priorities.

It has been 10 years since the CFS was reformed and we need to rethink, revisit and restart!

I believe it is time to consider how CFS can unleash its full potential and help us reach our SDG goals in a proper way and a complementary function.

We can all certainly do better at deploying CFS products; we can also look at piloting future frameworks to learn from country experiences; and, we can help the Secretariat communicate with our colleagues back home. Especially FAO systems; Regional Offices, Country Offices, can give concrete support to CFS activities.

However, CFS will succeed if, and only if, you – Member Countries, with support from other stakeholders – take the step of applying CFS policy frameworks, as appropriate, into your national dialogues, your legislation, and your country and regional development plans.

CFS work should continue to be guided by demand from countries and the needs of those most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition - the poorest, women, youth, smallholders and other vulnerable groups.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that tomorrow will be the International Day of Rural Women, and we are going to launch the FAO Women's Committee officially, the first ever, as I promised.

I already established the Youth Committee last month, and tomorrow I will establish the Women's Committee to take care of women's rights, politically, economically, culturally and biologically.

CFS work should continue to be guided by demand from countries and the needs of those who most need it.

Presuming you will approve the draft Multi-Year Programme of Work this week, CFS will focus on four very important topics for the new quadrennial where the ideals of CFS can be put into practice, jointly, with FAO's support.

And, ongoing work to produce Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition could not be more relevant to bolster our joint efforts to organize a Food System Summit in 2021.

Excellencies,

FAO will continue to support CFS, together with IFAD and WFP, as a priority for RBA collaboration. It is a big platform for the RBAs to make an influential impact jointly, collectively, synergistically. We have other small platforms, but I consider this platform the big one.

FAO will continue to ensure that CFS policy frameworks are a central part of its own work, here in Rome and in the field network and will support their application at national, regional and global levels.

Excellencies,

We have a huge challenge in front of us: eradicating hunger, food insecurity, and all forms of malnutrition.

We can achieve this challenge if we work together Hand in Hand, including with and within FAO and CFS. FAO will play its part and devote all its resources to support countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I reaffirm FAO's commitment to a strong CFS that has impact and adds value to achieving the SDGs.

We need to Design bigger, Do Concrete and Aim Good!

I wish you all very fruitful debates and hope some real concrete solutions will come out. I am waiting for that to work with you during my term. Thank you!