



# COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

## Forty-first Session

*"Making a difference in food security and nutrition"*

**Rome, Italy, 13 - 18 October 2014**

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS)**

Members of the Committee Bureau

Member country representatives

Mr Director- General of FAO, José Graziano da Silva

Mr Vice-President of IFAD, Michel Mordasini

Madam Executive Director of WFP, Ertharin Cousin,

Mr Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the High-Level Panel of Experts

Members of the Advisory Group

CFS Secretary and members of the CFS Secretariat and

Distinguished Ministers

Honorable Delegates and Observers

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

This 41<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session of the Committee on World Food Security marks 5 years since the reform of CFS in 2009. Today, I would like to take stock of what has been accomplished over the past 5 years. Thanks to the hard work of my predecessors Maria Squeff, Noel De Luna and Yaya Olaniran, who led the reform, and consolidated the new role of the committee, and thanks to the commitment of the members, the Bureau, the Advisory Group and the joint Secretariat, CFS has made major steps forward.

The key to CFS successfully engaging the global community on food security issues lies in its inclusive, multi-stakeholder character. In addition to the three Rome based Agencies, CFS has been enriched by the participation, views and energies of many actors - other UN bodies, agricultural research institutions, financial institutions, civil society and social movements, the private sector and philanthropic foundations. Even though interests between actors might diverge, working together on concrete solutions helps to build trust and mutual understanding at all levels. Today, CFS is widely known as the place where all stakeholders work together on these issues.

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Since its reform, CFS took a leading role in focusing worldwide attention towards Food Security and Nutrition, not shying away from contentious issues such as international investments, climate change, or biofuels. Thanks to the work of the High Level Panel of Experts, our policy decisions are informed by transparent, scientific evidence. I would like to congratulate both the current Chair of the Steering Committee, Per Pinstrup-Andersen, who is here today, and his predecessor Professor Mankombu Swaminathan, for their leadership.

One of CFS's early successes in bringing about consensus among stakeholders, has been the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security – the VGGT. Based on our stock-taking event in May it is very encouraging to see how many countries have started **implementing the VGGTs only 2 years after their endorsement!**

One year ago in this room I shared with you my ambition to further raise the profile of CFS, and of Rome as the global hub for food security and agriculture. In May, **the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon came to Rome** and addressed CFS stakeholders. His visit demonstrates the recognition of the committee's progress, its importance within the UN system, and its added value to the work of the RBAs and of UN Bodies such as the HLTF. The work of CFS also features prominently in the Secretary General's last report on Agriculture development, food security and nutrition for the last General Assembly. In Rome, Mr Ban Ki-moon described the work of CFS as "one of the best untold stories of modern development". So let us proudly start telling the story!

We are all responsible for promoting the CFS message and the CFS model. It is encouraging to see that some countries have established multi-stakeholder platforms to deepen shared ownership of food security issues. I invite each one of you to be a champion of the CFS. Because much remains to be done!

Now let's focus on our 41<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session. We have a busy week ahead. All those who care about the poor and hungry of this world are expecting us to endorse key processes and initiatives in this plenary. Reports on food insecurity and malnutrition all emphasize the key role played by responsible and sustainable investments in agriculture and the food system. This is why we have negotiated **Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems**, which are on the agenda for endorsement at this session. These principles will be a cornerstone to foster not only more, but especially better investments in agriculture and food systems to meet the challenge of sustainable, global food security and nutrition for all.

An increasingly pressing issue is that of food insecurity and malnutrition for people living in situations of **protracted crisis**. This year, the first draft of the Agenda for Action did not enjoy the undivided attention it should have, which is a paradox in the face of a substantial increase in crises where food insecurity is widespread! The Agenda for Action can strengthen the resilience of the millions impacted. They deserve our full commitment. I count on you to agree on a road map which will result in the endorsement of a strong and ambitious "Agenda" at CFS 42.

This will be a challenging year, but with a focused agenda, aiming for concrete results and impact. While consolidating the achievements of the first 5 years, we are making progress, but we must not get complacent. I would like to ask all of you to reflect on how CFS could do better in fulfilling its role and in supporting your work. The CFS is setting a more formal mechanism to assess its effectiveness, which I hope you will endorse. And I am always available to hear your ideas and suggestions.

I would like to conclude by quoting Henry Ford: *"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."*

Let all of us, CFS stakeholders, strive towards **success** in making food insecurity part of history.