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

Chair, Your Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I am honored to be here with you today, as the Chair of the CFS, to address this Regional Conference and to tell you about the most recent accomplishments of CFS and some of the activities that we will undertake in the upcoming months.

Since the CFS was reformed, few years back, to become more effective and inclusive by adopting a multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder structure, I am proud to say that the Committee has already achieved many remarkable results.

As I update you on the last two CFS sessions (CFS 41 and 42), I would like you to reflect on CFS work of particular relevance to your country and this region, and how, going forward, CFS policies recommendations and guidelines can be used in support of country policies for food security and nutrition. I would also like to take the opportunity to inform you on the CFS Programme of Work for 2016-2017, and encourage regional multi-stakeholder representatives to actively participate, through various channels, in the activities that the Committee will carry out in the next two years.

Thanks to the commitment and the strenuous work of my predecessor, H.E. Gerda Verburg, the Committee achieved some striking accomplishments in the previous biennium, the most notable of which are the endorsement of the **Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems** and **The Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises**.

The Principles, which apply to both public and private financing, represent the first time that governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, UN agencies, development banks, foundations, research institutions and academia have reached a common understanding on what responsible investments in agriculture and food systems mean and how those contribute to food security and nutrition. Responsible investments make a significant contribution to enhancing sustainable

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livelihoods, in particular for smallholders and members of marginalized and vulnerable groups, creating decent work for all agricultural and food workers, eradicating poverty, fostering social and gender equality, eliminating child labor, promoting social participation and inclusiveness, increasing economic growth, and achieving sustainable development.

The Framework for Action, which bridges the gap between humanitarian action and development interventions, provides policy guidance by setting out experience-based principles and describing concrete actions for addressing critical manifestations of food insecurity and undernutrition and resolving their underlying causes in the context of crisis and protracted emergencies. The principles are intended to guide the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and actions to improve food security and nutrition in protracted crises.

All stakeholders are now strongly encouraged to implement the recommendations included in these two documents, particularly as they pertain to ALL of US.

At the Forty-first session of CFS, the Plenary endorsed two sets of policy recommendations, which were scientifically informed by the reports of the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). Particularly relevant to your region are the policy recommendations on *Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture*, which recognize the primary role of fisheries and aquaculture for protein and other essential nutrients' intake as well as a source of income and livelihoods.

CFS 42, last October, had the broadest participation across stakeholder groups since the Committee was formed, with over 1000 delegates from 6 regions, 129 countries, 96 civil society organizations, 68 private sector organizations and, for the first time, many youths.

The Policy Round Table discussion on *Water for Food Security and Nutrition*, supported by the findings of the HLPE report, highlights the relations between water and food security and nutrition, from household to global level, and provides concrete examples for many different stakeholders to improve water management in agriculture and food systems and to strengthen the governance of water for better food security and nutrition for all.

CFS will continue raising awareness of its products and, in particular, I will do my utmost to showcase the contribution the Framework for Action can play in helping achieve the objectives of the World Humanitarian Summit and addressing some of the major humanitarian challenges we are facing.

The 42nd session of CFS also marked the beginning of our work in a number of new topical areas, many of which will also be discussed here in the next days. I will be happy to hear your contributions and I will make sure to keep the Committee well informed about the most pressing issues of this region as well as the suggestions that I will hear from here.

At its last session, the Committee has decided to put the implementation of the **SDGs** at the center of its work. A key feature of the 2030 Agenda is its universality, as it applies to all countries, developing as well as developed, and all actors. CFS, being the most inclusive platform for all stakeholders working on food security and nutrition, has already repeatedly been cited as a reference. A working group on SDGs has been established and your representatives in Rome are currently agreeing on identifying ways in which CFS can play a constructive role in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs, by supporting country implementation and providing an effective, inclusive, and multidisciplinary platform for discussion.

Following the call of the Second International Conference on Nutrition, the Committee has decided to step up its role to better address malnutrition in all its forms, in particular by better understanding the relation between nutrition and food systems. To fulfill this mandate, the Committee has requested from the HLPE a report on **Nutrition and Food Systems** for 2017, and it established a working group that is working on how better advance the agenda on nutrition within CFS.

A **High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets** took place in June 2015. The Forum represented an opportunity to discuss policy implications and possible solutions to some of the

challenges that smallholders face when trying to link themselves to markets. Following the Forum, we are working on drawing out lessons and best practices that can further help overcome barriers and maximize opportunities in value chains for smallholders and hope to endorse these at CFS 43 in October.

Beside the themes already mentioned, the CFS also foresees work on two additional pressing topics: Urbanization and Rural Transformation; and Women's Empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition. The **High-Level Panel of Experts** has been tasked to prepare three reports in the next two years; in addition to the report on nutrition and food systems, a report on Sustainable Agricultural Development, including Livestock, in 2016; and one on Sustainable Forestry in 2017.

Over the course of 2016, the CFS will go through an external, independent **evaluation** process to assess its effectiveness. This holistic review of the CFS work and model comes at the right time, as it will serve the purpose to identify possible improvements for making the evidence-based inclusive policy-making process of CFS even more relevant and responsive to the challenges of our time.

As you can see, our work programme is dense but it tackles challenging issues that need global solutions. Since the CFS was reformed, the Committee has achieved some important objectives, but we cannot stop here! There are 490 million people still suffering chronic hunger in this region, almost 62 percent of such people in the world. It is for them that we need to continue our mission to ensure that people of all ages and genders enjoy their right to food and nutrition. It is for them that I am here today, to make an appeal to each of you to reach out to those that are not here, at all levels, and to help me spread the voice with them about the work of CFS and the tremendous impact that we can achieve only by working together. Building trust and collaboration between all stakeholders, whether they are local, national, regional or global, this is the only way we can achieve sustainable results and fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, whose vision is fully aligned with the goals of CFS.

Let me conclude with an appeal to make the plea of the UN Secretary-General, "Leave no one behind by 2030", our motto for the coming years. If we can make that happen, I can ensure you that food security and nutrition will be within reach. So let us start working now. *This* is the future we want!

Thank you!