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**Human Rights Council****Forty-sixth session**

22 February–24 March 2021

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council  
on 24 March 2021****46/19. The right to food***The Human Rights Council,*

*Recalling* all previous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the right to food, and all resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights on the issue,

*Recalling also* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her health and well-being, including food, the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular Millennium Development Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture and on ending poverty in all its forms everywhere,

*Recalling further* the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

*Reaffirming* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and that they must be treated globally, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

*Bearing in mind* the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, adopted at the World Food Summit in November 1996, the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted on 13 June 2002, and the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security, adopted on 16 November 2009, and reaffirming the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, and the recommendations and commitments made therein,

*Stressing* the importance of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its Framework for Action, adopted at the second International Conference on Nutrition, held in Rome on 21 November 2014,

*Acknowledging* that the right to food has been recognized as the right of every individual, alone or in community with others, to have physical and economic access at all



times to sufficient, adequate and nutritious food, in conformity with, inter alia, the culture, beliefs, traditions, dietary habits and preferences of individuals, and that is produced and consumed sustainably, thereby preserving access to food for future generations,

*Reaffirming* that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment at both the national and international levels is the essential foundation that will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

*Determined* to take new steps forward in the commitment of the international community with a view to achieving substantial progress in the realization of the right to food through an increased and sustained effort of international cooperation and solidarity, with a view to building a community of shared future for humanity,

*Reiterating*, as in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, and the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures that are not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food and nutrition security,

*Reaffirming* that food security is a national responsibility, and that any plan for addressing food security challenges must be nationally articulated, designed, owned and led, and built on consultation with all key stakeholders, and recognizing the commitment to strengthening the multilateral system in the channelling of resources and in the promotion of policies dedicated to fighting hunger and malnutrition,

*Recognizing* the complex character of food insecurity and its likely recurrence owing to a combination of several major factors, such as the effects of the global financial and economic crisis, environmental degradation, desertification and the impact of global climate change, as well as poverty, natural disasters, armed conflicts, drought, excessive volatility in commodity prices and the lack in many countries of the appropriate technology, investment and capacity-building necessary to confront its impact, in particular in developing countries, including land-locked developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States, and the need for coherence and collaboration among international institutions at the global level,

*Expressing its deep concern* at the number and scale of human-made and natural disasters, diseases and pest infestations, as well as the negative impact of climate change, and their increasing impact in recent years, which have, in combination with other factors, resulted in substantial loss of life and livelihood and threatened agricultural production and food and nutrition security, in particular in developing countries,

*Recognizing* in that context that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis is exacerbating food insecurity, including through its devastating impact on the livelihoods of people, agriculture and food systems, value chains, food prices, nutrition and food security,

*Recognizing also* that urgent steps are needed to address food insecurity for the poorest and most marginalized segments of the population, and that measures aimed at providing immediate support to satisfy people's dietary needs should be put in place, including the provision of food and nutrition assistance, as appropriate,

*Emphasizing* the need to urgently assist countries that are disproportionately affected by climate change and are facing drought, plague, starvation and famine-related threats that could affect millions of people, most of whom are women and children,

*Stressing* the need to increase official development assistance devoted to agriculture, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance, and recognizing that small and medium-sized farmers in developing countries need to receive technical, technology transfer and capacity-building support,

*Recognizing* the importance of the protection, preservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in guaranteeing food security and the right to food for all,

*Reaffirming* the role of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as the key United Nations agency for rural and agricultural development and its work in

supporting the efforts of Member States to achieve the full realization of the right to food, including through its provision of technical assistance to developing countries in support of the implementation of national priority frameworks,

*Acknowledging* the contribution of relevant interagency mechanisms, such as the tripartite collaboration among the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Organization for Animal Health and the World Health Organization, in promoting cooperation and guidance towards safe and sustainable food supplies and practices,

*Looking forward* to the contribution of the Food Systems Summit, to be held in 2021, to the realization of the right to food,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity, and therefore requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;

2. *Also reaffirms* the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, so as to be able to fully develop and maintain his or her physical and mental capacities;

3. *Considers it intolerable* that, as estimated by the United Nations Children's Fund, nearly half of all deaths of children under the age of 5 are attributable to undernutrition, which puts children at greater risk of dying from common infections, increases the frequency and severity of such infections and delays recovery;

4. *Expresses deep concern* that, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the total number of people estimated to be suffering from acute hunger has doubled, increasing from 130 million in 2019 to 265 million by the end of 2020, while recognizing that the world had already been falling behind on fully realizing the right to food before the onset of the pandemic;

5. *Expresses its great concern* that, while women contribute more than 50 per cent of the food produced worldwide, they also account for 70 per cent of the world's hungry, that women and girls are disproportionately affected by hunger, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality and discrimination, that in many countries girls are twice as likely as boys to die from malnutrition and preventable childhood diseases, and that it is estimated that almost twice as many women as men suffer from malnutrition;

6. *Encourages* all States to mainstream a gender perspective in food security programmes and to take action to address de jure and de facto gender inequality and discrimination against women, in particular where such inequality and discrimination contribute to the malnutrition of women and girls, including by taking measures to ensure the full and equal realization of the right to food and ensuring that women and girls have equal access to social protection and resources, including income, land and water, and their ownership, and full and equal access to health care, education, science and technology, to enable them to feed themselves and their families, and in this regard stresses the need to empower women and to strengthen their role in decision-making;

7. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to continue to mainstream a gender perspective in the fulfilment of his mandate, and encourages the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and all other United Nations bodies and mechanisms that address the right to food and food insecurity to integrate and effectively implement a gender perspective in their relevant policies, programmes and activities regarding access to food;

8. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food,<sup>1</sup> which highlights thematic areas of focus for the mandate in the upcoming years;

9. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur to continue to take into account the links between human rights and trade policy perspectives, food systems and global governance,

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/46/33.

and to cooperate with relevant international organizations to ensure that the international trade regime and global economic architecture are geared towards fulfilling the right to food;

10. *Also encourages* the Special Rapporteur to continue his collaboration with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and international financial institutions, and to facilitate their cooperation in order to contribute to ensuring that the right to food is promoted further within these organizations, in accordance with their mandates, including for the advancement of smallholders and agricultural workers in both developing and least developed countries;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of giving due consideration to the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food;

12. *Reiterates* that improving access to productive resources and responsible public investment in rural development, taking into consideration the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, as endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security, is essential for eradicating hunger and poverty, in particular in developing countries, including through the promotion of investment, including private investment, in appropriate small-scale irrigation and water management technologies in order to reduce vulnerability to droughts, tackle water scarcity and ensure the preservation and sustainable use of ecosystems;

13. *Recognizes* the importance of smallholder and family farmers and peasants in developing countries, including women and local and indigenous communities, in ensuring food security, reducing poverty and preserving ecosystems, and the need to assist their development;

14. *Reaffirms* the need to ensure that programmes delivering safe, sufficient, nutritious and culturally accepted food are inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities;

15. *Encourages* States to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and, as soon as possible, to enjoy fully the right to food, and, where appropriate, to consider establishing appropriate institutional mechanisms and adopting national plans to combat hunger;

16. *Recognizes* the advances made through South-South and triangular cooperation in developing countries and regions in connection with food security and the development of agricultural production for the full realization of the right to food;

17. *Also recognizes* the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, inter alia, traditional seed supply systems, and access to locally adapted seeds, including for many indigenous peoples and local communities;

18. *Stresses* that the primary responsibility of States is to promote and protect the right to food, including in humanitarian emergencies, and that the international community should provide, through a coordinated response and upon request, international cooperation in support of national and regional efforts by providing the assistance necessary to increase food production and access to food, in particular through agricultural development assistance, the transfer of technology, food crop rehabilitation assistance and food aid, achieving food security, with special attention paid to the specific needs of women and girls, and promoting support for the development of adapted technologies, research on rural advisory services and support for access to financing services, and to ensure support for the establishment of secure land tenure systems;

19. *Calls upon* States to consider reviewing any policy or measure that could have a negative impact on the realization of the right to food, in particular the right of everyone to be free from hunger, before instituting such a policy or measure;

20. *Recalls* the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,<sup>2</sup> and acknowledges that many indigenous

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<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 69/2.

organizations and representatives of indigenous peoples have expressed in different forums their deep concern over the obstacles and challenges to the full enjoyment of the right to food that indigenous peoples face, and calls upon States to take action to address those obstacles and challenges and the continuous discrimination against indigenous peoples;

21. *Recognizes* the contributions of peasants, smallholders, family farmers and other people working in rural areas in all regions of the world to development and in ensuring the right to food and food security, which are fundamental to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

22. *Requests* all States, private actors, international organizations and agencies, within their mandates, to take fully into account the need to promote the effective realization of the right to food for all;

23. *Stresses* that all States should make every effort to ensure that their international policies of a political and economic nature, including international trade agreements, do not have a negative impact on the right to food in other countries;

24. *Invites* all relevant international organizations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to avoid any actions that could have a negative impact on the realization of the right to food;

25. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to participate in relevant international dialogues and policy forums relating to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paying particular attention to Sustainable Development Goal 2 with respect to achieving zero hunger;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide all the human and financial resources necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

27. *Calls upon* all Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur by supplying all necessary information requested by the mandate holder, and to give serious consideration to responding favourably to the requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries to enable more effective fulfilment of the mandate;

28. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of the mandate through, inter alia, the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;

29. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to report annually on the implementation of the mandate to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly in accordance with their programmes of work;

30. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter under the same agenda item in accordance with its programme of work.

*50th meeting  
24 March 2021*

[Adopted without a vote.]