



## **TIME TO ACT TOGETHER: COORDINATING POLICY RESPONSES TO THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY CRISIS**

High Level Special Event

*Monday, 18 July 2022, from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. (EDT)  
Trusteeship Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

The global food and agriculture system, tied closely to global financial and energy markets, is presently in turmoil from an onslaught of challenges, the most recent being the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and its dramatic impact. With global hunger and malnutrition numbers already trending upward, the conflict in Ukraine has given rise to additional perturbations to the planting, harvesting, transport and export of major agricultural commodities from the Black Sea region, as well as to prices of and access to essential inputs like fuels and fertilizers. In addition to its heavy humanitarian toll, this conflict is severely damaging the food security situation for all countries, for all communities, and hampering the people's capability to fulfil their right to adequate food in the context of national food security, which was already seriously compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic, other armed conflicts, climate change and rising food prices. The wellbeing, livelihoods, and access to nutritious, affordable food by the world's most vulnerable people is a tragedy that none of us can afford to turn away from.

The current food crisis is multifaceted – linked closely to food, fuel, climate, health, inequalities and other protracted threats and crises, in what is a cost-of-living crisis for many in the world. In light of the current shocks, the faults and fragilities of the global food system have been exposed, evidenced by a clear over-dependence on fossil fuel inputs and an over-concentration of production and supply chains. These vulnerabilities leave the poor and most vulnerable with even greater challenges to access affordable and healthy diets produced sustainably. As such, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development together with accelerated climate action, is needed more than ever. They remain the most comprehensive blueprint on development, for the international community. And while we respond to the immediate challenges of the latest food crisis we are facing, the SDGs must remain our compass.

The lessons learned from the 2007-8 food crisis, as well as from the COVID-19 pandemic, show that meaningful and principled policy coordination at the local, national and global levels is vital. Policy responses need to be systemic, context-specific, involve the whole-of-government and whole-of-society, be country-led, and inclusive of farmers, consumers, civil society, businesses,

and especially those most affected. It is of paramount importance that, when the world responds to the emergency we are facing, countries, regional organizations, civil society, producer organizations, businesses and the research community acknowledge that food systems transformation is needed to help transition the current global system toward one that is more resilient, fair, sustainable, and inclusive.

In view of the evolving food crisis, several initiatives have been launched over the past months by different countries, institutions and political fora, including: the G7 Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS); the Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission (FARM); the International Financial Institutions' Action Plan to Address Food Insecurity; the Global Food Security "Call to Action"; amongst others. Intergovernmental bodies are already addressing some aspects of this crisis –FAO, WFP, IFAD and WTO governing bodies. The Security Council has also addressed its impacts on food security in May.

### **It is time to act together**

The General Assembly adopted in May the resolution 76/264 entitled "State of global food insecurity", calling on the international community to urgently support countries affected by the food security crisis through coordinated action.

The Secretary General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance is fostering joint analysis and coordinated policy recommendations from the UN System. The Global Crisis Response Group's analysis and recommendations provide guidance and direction for governments, the business community and civil society as they plan their responses.

The General Assembly, bringing together all Member States, the UN system and all relevant stakeholders, play a critical role in highlighting various viewpoints, raising awareness, driving dialogue, galvanising momentum, and forging multi-sectoral partnerships to address this issue of global significance.

Joining in this effort, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) offers its intergovernmental and inclusive platform to the Response Group and to the international community, broadly, to coordinate policy responses to address this crisis. Reformed in 2009 in the wake of similar market failures in the food, fibre, fuel, and finance sectors, the UN Committee on World Food Security was designed to drive consensus around key issues related to the production of food, while simultaneously dealing with water, climate change, biodiversity and a broad assortment of other issues and elements of the complex food system. Unique within the United Nations, CFS in FAO offers an open, science-backed policy platform not just for governments, but for civil society, the private sector, UN and Bretton Woods institutions, researchers, foundations, and others.

### **Objective**

The high-level special event aims to foster coordinated global policy responses to the current food crisis. It will contribute to building synergies and connecting the multiple efforts being developed, advance a shared understanding of the main issues and challenges, deliberate on the

options for policy responses, identify emerging areas of convergence in response to the food crisis, and foster coordinated action on the food crisis. It is supported by – and in support of – the UN Secretary General’s Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance

### **Format and Outcome**

The high-level special event will comprise of an opening segment, a session on the challenges the world faces, three interactive dialogues, and a closing segment.

There will be **no pre-established list of speakers**. The speaking order will be determined based on established protocol. Time limits for interventions will be three (3) minutes for individual delegations, and five (5) minutes for interventions on behalf of groups.

The special event will benefit from the broad and inclusive membership and platform offered by the CFS, with engagement of its Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples, and Private Sector, Mechanisms, respectively, as well of as its High-Level Panel of Experts.

A Co-Chairs’ summary of the deliberations capturing the discussions, key recommendations, best practices, and case studies, and will be circulated.