

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

CO-CHAIR'S SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

KEY MESSAGES AND OVERVIEW

- The world is witnessing the worst cost-of-living crisis in over a generation with the global food and agricultural system, tied closely to global financial and energy markets, in turmoil from an onslaught of challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, climate-induced shocks, and more recently, the ongoing war in Ukraine.
- It's time to act together in a coherent and coordinated manner to enhance country-led responses with the SDGs as our compass and guided by the UN Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy, and Finance that is fostering joint analysis and coordinated policy recommendations from the UN System and the international financial institutions.
- Short- and medium-term solutions to the crisis should go hand-in-hand with long-term and sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems to ones that are more resilient, fair, sustainable, and inclusive, with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement as the world's compass.
- Convergence is emerging around core elements of integrated responses to the crisis at the global, regional, country and local levels:
- Step up humanitarian response, in all humanitarian contexts;
- Stabilize markets and commodity prices, and avoid unnecessary trade restrictions;
- Encourage increased local production, supporting and protecting smallholder and family farmers, cooperatives and SMEs and reduce food loss and food waste;
- Restore the availability and affordability of inputs including fertilizers, coupled with increased efficiency, unleashing the full potential of agroecology and other innovative approaches;
- Reinforce the social protection systems;
- Equip countries with the financial resources, fiscal space and funds needed.

The global food and agriculture system, tied closely to global financial and energy markets, is presently in turmoil from an onslaught of challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, climate change and its effects, and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine more recently. With global hunger and malnutrition numbers already trending upward ([see State of Food Insecurity in the World 2022](#)), 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 must be addressed now with coordinated action.

WFP estimates that the number of severely food insecure people doubled from 135 million pre-pandemic to 276 million over just two years. The war in Ukraine is expected to drive this number up to 323 million in 2022. With global food and commodity prices rising 22.8% higher than last year - according to the FAO food price index - an additional 19 million people are expected to face chronic undernourishment globally in 2023 if reduced food exports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine result in lower food availability worldwide. This year's food crisis is about lack of food access; next year's could be about lack of food availability.

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"; among others. Intergovernmental bodies are already addressing some aspects of this crisis –FAO, WFP, IFAD and WTO governing bodies. The Security Council addressed its impacts on food security in May, and the General Assembly adopted the Resolution 76/264 State of global food insecurity on 23 May.

The international community is deeply concerned especially because people living in extreme poverty, exclusion, or in vulnerable situations typically spend more than 50% of their income and are the ones being hit the hardest. As a result, we are seeing years of progress in reducing hunger and poverty reversed, undermining efforts to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while further exacerbating inequalities.

In this context, on 18 July 2022, H.E. Abdulla Shahid President of the General Assembly and H.E. Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero de Loma y Osorio, Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) co-convoked a High-Level Special Event to foster coordinated global policy responses to the current food crisis. It contributed to building synergies and linking multiple response efforts, advanced a shared understanding of the main issues and challenges, deliberated on options for further policy responses, identified emerging areas of convergence, and fostered coordinated action on the food crisis. It was supported by – and convened in support of – the UN Secretary General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. The high-level event included participation by Prime Ministers, Ministers, Permanent Representatives, civil society,

private sector, academia, and UN System leaders. Full statements from speakers, presentations, videos, and a recording of the event can be found on the [CFS public website](#).

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

PART I - Opening Segment

In his opening remarks, the **President of the 76th General Assembly (PGA) H.E. Abdulla Shahid**, reminded Member States that the “world faces a grave food crisis, as outlined in the recently released 2022 Report on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. Hunger and malnutrition are on the rise, with nearly a billion people going hungry in 2021.” He urged member states to act together since prospects of attaining SDG 2, a world of Zero Hunger, by 2030 look dim without urgent collective action. He expressed support to the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (GCRG), launched by the UN Secretary-General, and thanked member states for adopting resolution 76/264, entitled “State of global food insecurity”, which urges the international community to jointly support countries affected by the food security crisis.

Mr. Shahid noted that, as countries implement more sustainable and environmentally responsible food practices, they approach food security as part of a broader multilateral agenda that both recognizes the interconnectedness of today’s challenges, and the futility of trying to solve them unilaterally or in isolation. Food systems must provide affordable healthy diets that are sustainable and inclusive. They must also become a powerful driving force toward ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

He underlined that all stakeholders, including donors, international financial institutes (IFIs), global and regional blocs, and civil society should work together and take actions that must include “scaling up climate resilience across food systems, strengthening food environments and changing consumer behaviour to promote dietary patterns with positive impacts on human health and the environment”. He also underlined the need to stop conflicts that disrupt supply chains; to repair our relationship with nature, and secure sustainable agriculture; and to strengthen the global institutions working to alleviate poverty and hunger.

The President concluded that we must pursue a coordinated multilateral response, anchored in values of solidarity, respect, and mutual resolve, with the most vulnerable in mind to defeat this food crisis and ensure no one lives in hunger.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in a statement delivered through a pre-recorded video message, **commended** PGA and CFS for joining forces at what he called “this critical moment”, noting that the number of people who are severely food insecure has doubled in the last two years. He stressed that we could avoid this catastrophe if we together craft bold and coordinated policy responses, by:

- Reintegrating Ukraine’s food production, and Russia’s food and fertilizer, into world markets, and keeping global trade open;

- Tackling the finance crisis in the developing world, and urgently unlocking all possible resources to enhance social protection and support smallholder and family farmers to increase productivity and self-reliance; and
- Transforming food systems at every level — to put affordable, healthy, and sustainable diets within reach of every person, everywhere.

HE Gabriel Ferrero de Loma y Osorio, Spain's Ambassador at Large for Global Food Security, and Chair of the CFS, cautioned that global hunger and malnutrition numbers were already trending upward since 2015 and the war in Ukraine has triggered an unprecedented global food crisis. He added that because of this global crisis, people around the world, from Cairo to Caracas, Dhaka to Donetsk, from villages around Lake Turkana in Kenya to smallholder farmers in the Dry Corridor in Honduras, are suffering.

He continued that the poorest households, those excluded or in vulnerable situations, especially children, women, and girls, are hit hardest by the crisis. He urged all to consider the plight of the most vulnerable. “Mothers and fathers deciding which meals to skip, which ailment needs a visit to the doctor or taking their children out of school”. “We should all take on board their concerns and their interests, ensuring that all of them are at the front of our deliberations.”

Ambassador Ferrero expressed gratitude to civil society and Indigenous Peoples and private sector representatives for their commitment, adding that their voice is connected to the frontline reality. He commended the initiatives launched over the past months by governments, institutions and political fora to address the crisis. These initiatives are “mobilizing leadership, finances, political will and a wide range of policy responses to the global food crisis”.

He said that “all agree it is time to act”. However, the challenge is so overwhelming that acting is not enough. “We must act together”, ensuring that all our actions to address the crisis are aligned and converge. We have enough evidence to back this up. Lessons from the 2007-8 food crisis, as well as from the COVID-19 pandemic more recently, show that meaningful and principled policy response should support country-led solutions - ones that involve all of society: from farmers to consumers, civil society, and businesses, especially those most affected by the food crisis.

He ended his remarks by outlining the following four goals in line with the UNSG GCRG:

- We need to put those most affected first;
- We must build synergies and connect the multiple efforts being undertaken;
- We should build consensus, convergence and alignment on the policy responses and strategies in support of country-led actions; and,
- Finally, we should ensure that a long-term vision of the 2030 Agenda is taken into consideration as our compass, and the sustainable agriculture and food systems transformation as our roadmap to address the immediate threats of the crisis.

He concluded by expressing his gratitude for being able to partner with the President of the General Assembly and the UN Secretary-General to face this unprecedented challenge.

Video: Peoples Voices

The session featured a short video message by Ms Souad Mahmoud from Tunisia who expressed her frustration with the ongoing food crisis. She emphasized that after the COVID-19 pandemic, the food crisis impacts the lives and livelihoods of people as well as their nutrition and called on leaders to act decisively, and act together.

Link: <https://youtu.be/0fDBbzTB2j4>

PART II - Context Setting Session: The Challenges

This segment outlined the multidimensional cost-of-living crisis, updated on the state and prospects of the global food crisis, and provided the latest updates from the UN SG's Global Crisis Response Group.

Ms Rebeca Grynspan, UNCTAD Secretary-General and Global Crisis Response Group Task Team Coordinator, said that the time for this High-Level Meeting is the right moment; not tomorrow but today, as “time is running out”. As UNCTAD Secretary-General and coordinator of the UN GCRG Task Team on the war in Ukraine – she highlighted the world is on the brink of the most severe global cost-of-living in a generation including shocks in the global food, energy, and fertilizer markets - in a world already grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. A “perfect storm” - quoting the UN Secretary-General.

Ms Grynspan focused on the multidimensional perspective of the cost-of-living crisis which is marked by three factors:

- Rising prices which are still historically high for fuel and food. But also interest rates which are becoming prohibitive in many countries. These high prices develop vicious cycles: “expensive energy increases transport costs and fertilizers, which increase food prices, which increase inflation, which pressure higher interest rates, which weakens currencies which make imports more expensive and so on...” (she highlighted the recent case of Sri Lanka as one example, adding that 60% of low-income countries are dealing with debt distress).
- People, especially the most vulnerable, are at the centre of this cost-of-living crisis. They are exhausted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Climate Change. Now, their income has been stretched and they need to take impossible decisions (e.g. skip a meal, pay electricity bills, keep children in school, or pay medical bills); and, another vicious cycle starts. The cycle of social unrest leads to political instability and therefore rapid deterioration of socio-economic prospects.
- An urgent need for multilateral action, not only on food, but also on energy, finance, debt and trade. This is not an isolated crisis; isolated reactions will not resolve the situation.

She concluded her presentation by sharing the following policy recommendations to address the cost-of-living crisis:

1. Stabilize markets, reintegrate Ukraine food production as well as fertilizers and food coming from Russia. Keep trade open and avoid trade restrictions;

2. Offer developing countries funding and liquidity and increase social protection and collaborate with IFIs and another round of SDRs;
3. Spend resources well. Emergency Social Protection measures should be targeted to households and small farmers, consistent with the SDGs;
4. Fix the global debt architecture in time; and,
5. World leaders must lead now; decisive action is needed at upcoming events like UNGA, IMF annual meeting and the G20 summit. These opportunities should bring successful results.

Mr Maximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist, presented a snapshot of the threats to food security: pandemic, climate and war. Mr Torero presented three major drivers - in order of importance - that affect access to healthy diets, and which are underlying causes of poverty and inequality.

1. Conflicts;
2. Economic slowdowns and down-turns; and
3. Climate variability and extremes.

He stated that global hunger is on the rise (as presented in the 2021 SOFI report) noting that up to 828 million people suffer chronic hunger. He noted that current trends indicate that the global food security situation in 2030 will be at the same level as in 2015, when the SDGs were launched. He also underlined that food insecurity and chronic undernourishment have increased in every region of the world (3.1 billion people without access to healthy diets today).

Mr Torero also presented the impact of the War in Ukraine on the global food situation, noting that disruptions in grain exports from Russia and Ukraine were hurting global supply. However, he added that export gaps for wheat and maize production gaps were partially covered by India and the EU and by Argentina, the US, and South Africa. He also stated that global food prices reached an all-time high in March 2022 according to the FAO Food Price Index, and that, despite minor drops, remains high. The major negative outcome of this historical increase of food prices is the increased food import bill for the most vulnerable countries - with a US \$24 billion increase.

In addition, Mr Torero underlined that export and trade restrictions were hampering food access for 2022. Noting that fertilizers are the big difference between this crisis and previous crises, Mr Torero cautioned that the conflict is affecting availability and price of both fertilizers and fuels meaning the world is likely to experience a food availability crisis in 2023.

Ms Deirdre Woods, speaking on behalf of the Civil Society and indigenous Peoples' Mechanism for the CFS recalled that this was the third food price crisis in 15 years, and that "failure to deal with the structural causes of the crises in 2008 and 2011 means we are once again facing the unacceptable situation of millions more being pushed into hunger".

Ms Woods underlined that the Rome Based Agencies, G7 and financial institutions frame the current global food crisis almost exclusively from a market and production perspective, due to a war involving two major agro-exporting countries. But, she added, they fail to question "why so many countries in the global south have become dependent on imports, and why we continue to face unacceptable levels of hunger despite years of record production." She also underscored that, as with past food price crises, governments with the economic power to effect structural reforms

in the global economy are not effectively acting to address the root causes and are leaving communities with the burdens of adjusting to successive crises.

Finally, Ms Woods provided CSIPM's views on why responses by dominant economic actors are biased:

- They are not based on a human rights approach;
- They are not proposing any policy or normative changes for a vision of profound food systems transformation to address the multiple and intertwined crises;
- They do not address the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples and mobile pastoralists;
- They do not address the challenges faced by small-scale food producers and workers; and,
- They do not take into account and build upon relevant policy outcomes of the CFS.

Ms Cindy Brown spoke on behalf of the Private Sector Mechanism for the CFS, emphasizing that the 2007-8 food crisis served as a push to invest in new programs and direct funding to support farmers and infrastructure, but the support was short-lived. She also said that now, due to the global crisis, was the time to invest directly into agriculture and food chains. However, overseas development assistance is currently too low considering that 80% of the world's people living in multidimensional poverty live in rural areas.

Ms Brown highlighted that “the food production system has been working very hard to deliver the food we need through multiple years of challenge”. She said that the prices of food increased due to inadequacy of workers due to COVID-19, unavailability of repair parts and challenges in finding additional labour. She also added that there are logistical challenges to ship commodities around the world and therefore there is an urgent need to have a competitive global shipping sector. She underlined that the reality is “food production is a challenging job”.

She further said that the Private Sector needs “working systems that create ongoing conversations to interact with decision makers and to discuss the pressure points that are inhibiting our ability to deliver food efficiently”, declaring that there is a need for new commitments to equity - like the voluntary guidelines on gender empowerment that are currently being negotiated in the CFS. “Without putting focus on the rural dimension of challenges we see in the food system; we will not succeed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”. She concluded her statement saying that we need to make investments right at the base of the food system to avoid humanitarian crisis and to profoundly impact how people respond to their governance structures.

Prof. Dr. Bernard Lehmann, CFS HLPE-FSN Chairperson, suggested solutions for policy making in light of “real trade-offs within the food system” noting that taking trade-offs into account was particularly important because they reflect different interests that affect implementation of the recommendations.

He underlined that the HLPE-FSN has proposed to recognize that the definition of food security and nutrition encompasses six dimensions including agency and sustainability, alongside the more well-known pillars of availability, access, stability, and utilization.

He also said that critical policy shifts are required to achieve the SDGs and the necessary radical transformation of food systems, as outlined in HLPE-FSN's report on "[Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030](#)".

Finally, he underlined that "we live in a permanent food crisis; efforts have to be made to massively strengthen the resilience of local food systems". He noted that the task is enormous while the pace of implementation is still slow. "Scientists have been making warning calls for decades. Now, is the time for governments to hear them, and to act", he concluded.

Video: Peoples Voices

The session featured the voice of Michelle Gwatimba, a youth farmer from Zimbabwe **who** highlighted the challenges she faces as a young female farmer. She stressed that even before the COVID-19 pandemic and the current food crisis, she experienced difficulties accessing loans to improve food production.

Link: <https://youtu.be/85MCRdnSTK4>

PART III - Mobilising Leadership

The CFS Chairperson, Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero, introduced this segment stating that the scale, nature, and complexity of the challenge presented in the previous segment will only be resolved through bold, committed and even audacious political, policy and financial leadership at all levels of society. He added that featured speakers would highlight the impacts of the food crisis on the most affected countries and describe existing initiatives to mitigate the effects of the global crisis proposed by countries, regions, and institutions.

In her video message, **HE Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P. Prime Minister of Barbados** called for the mobilization of required leadership and to "find the means to do what must be done" highlighting that this global food crisis is multifaceted. She noted that as a leader of a Small Island Developing State and as a representative of the Latin America and Caribbean region, the climate crisis and the legacy of global financing inequalities may have helped shape this global food crisis. Now, the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflict in Ukraine has given this crisis legs to run rampant, charging through each nation and region with a frightening fervour and a lack of respect for geographical size, GDP, or economic status.

She underlined that the time to act together is now and said that when it comes to the global food crisis there is no tomorrow, for without food, there is no life. She called for timely, meaningful, and principled policy coordination at local national and global levels that can provide the means to do what must be done. She added that these policy responses need to be systemic, context specific, involve public-private sector partnerships, and be inclusive of all - farmers, consumers, civil society - all the while being mindful of those who are most affected. She acknowledged that this will not be easy but was necessary.

She concluded her statement by saying that without food and water, there is no life; and we must confront the reality of the degradation of our soils, which is compounding the situation by reducing yields. “We have lived life as if it didn't matter what happened in the future. But, we know today that everything we do affects our ability to face tomorrow, to face next week, to face next month, to face next year”.

In a video message, **HE Mr Pedro Sanchez, Prime Minister of Spain** said that the food crisis has become the new global crisis for which we must work together and urgently. He noted that we must understand its immediate origins, emphasizing that contrary to widespread misinformation, sanctions are not affecting global food security but- that Russia's ban on grain and fertilizer exports and blockading of ports are having dire consequences.

To tackle this global crisis, PM Sanchez underscored that Spain would (1) co-lead an initiative to transport more than 8,000 tons of grain and cereals out of Ukraine by train. (2) commit to increasing its financial contributions to the World Food Program in 2022 by nearly 75% and (3) will contribute 5 million Euros to the International Fund for Agricultural Development and another 5 million Euros to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program.

PM Sanchez highlighted that Spain is further convinced of the need to strengthen the role of the Committee on World Food Security to harmonize various initiatives. He made a final call to work together to “stop the atrocity that, in a world of plenty, many are still dying from hunger”.

HE Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission said that the world is facing an unprecedented food crisis prompted by overlapping factors such as conflict, climate extremes, COVID-19 pandemic, massive public debt burden and now the geopolitical tension as a result of the conflict in Ukraine. She added that we are facing a perfect storm that is not just hurting the poorest of the poor but is also overwhelming millions of families who until now barely managed to keep their heads above water.

AU Commissioner Sacko underlined that the situation in Africa is precarious, adding that the most recent estimates indicate that one in five people in Africa were facing hunger and that 80% of Africans cannot afford a healthy diet. She also underlined that Africa has become a victim of a distant war due to foregone imports of Russian and Ukrainian commodities (wheat, maize and sunflowers), Russian energy and Russian and Belarussian fertilizer. She noted that this is directly impacting 10 countries (Benin, Ghana Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda) and disrupting their GDP citing the example of Malawi which is going into recession in 2022.

She further stated that loss of employment in most African countries and inability of the labour market to recover before 2025 means more poverty, declining incomes and rising food prices. To feed its growing population, Africa spends about \$45 billion annually on food imports. “We are net food importers and if this figure does not change, we might reach \$110 billion in 2025.” She underscored “that we can expect not only famine but also social unrest in many parts of Africa”. The Horn of Africa faces a profoundly alarming hunger crisis worse than in 2011 when famine claimed many lives, as does the Sahel which faces the world's worst food crisis in 10 years, with over 37 million people suffering from hunger.

AU Commissioner Sacko said that the African Union Commission as Africa's main intergovernmental body has reacted to minimize the impact of this crisis. The AU in collaboration with FAO convened a meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of African Union Member State on 16th April 2020, and another tripartite ministerial meeting between Ministers of Finance, Trade, and Agriculture to share experiences. She added that a task force comprising all major players in agriculture was put in place to oversee implementation of the actions identified by ministers in their declaration. This task force is composed of eight institutions namely the African Union Commission, FAO, European Union, African Development Bank, the World Bank, IFAD, WFP, and NEPAD. Finally, she underlined Africa is committed to sustainable food systems transformation, as presented in a common position to the UN food System Summit on the 23rd of September 2021.

HE Mr. Arrmanatha C. Nasir, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, on behalf of the G20 Presidency, highlighted that the situation today is dire as the 3 main causes of food insecurity, extreme weather, economic factors, conflict, and war, are now converging. He added that the people in developing and low-income countries will suffer the most.

He also noted that the G20 showed leadership to tackle global food insecurity via the Matera Declaration on Food Security, Nutrition and Food System which outlined specific actions to be taken. He said that while the war in Ukraine has made it more challenging for the G20 this year, the food and energy crisis was addressed at G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bali. The G20 has also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from the PIF, Caricom, African Union, NEPAD, and ASEAN enabling the G20 Ministers to get first-hand information on, and understand the direct impact of, the current food security crisis in Small Island Developing States, developing and low-income countries.

Ambassador Nasir cautioned that if the crisis on energy and fertilizers is prolonged, by 2023, countries reliant on staple foods other than wheat, like rice, may also face grave food insecurity and crisis. He called for action to ensure accessibility of food and fertilizer, scaled-up humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable, and support to the work of humanitarian agencies.

He outlined five central actions for the G20:

- Increase investments in agricultural productivity;
- Diversify food production;
- Avoid discriminatory trade on agricultural products;
- Improve agricultural market transparency; and,
- Address impacts of climate change on farming.

He concluded by stating that with President Widodo's role as a Champion of the UN GCRG, and current Chair of the G20, Indonesia is committed to being part of the solution to bridge differences and strengthen cooperation to tackle the crisis.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Germany, State Minister Dr. Tobias Lindner, said in a pre-recorded video message that CFS offers an important forum for inclusive and intergovernmental exchange on global food governance.

He noted that Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine put food security and nutrition for millions of women, children and men at risk and the war is further exacerbating already dire global food insecurity caused by, amongst others, armed conflicts, climate change and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deputy Minister Lindner said that two months ago, the G7 launched the Global Alliance on Food Security. This Alliance is designed to be a key platform to foster cooperation, guided by the shared belief that governments, international organizations, multilateral development banks, civil society, the private sector, science and philanthropist organizations must work together to weather the storm. The Global Alliance strongly supports the UNSG's GCRG in its work stream on Food, with Chancellor Scholz acting as one of the six "Champions" upon invitation of the UNSG.

He reiterated that the G7 agreed on 28 June at its Elmau summit to commit an additional 4.5 billion US dollars to protect the most vulnerable from hunger and malnutrition. He added that in the run-up to the Elmau summit, three German ministries (Foreign Affairs, Development Cooperation, and Food and Agriculture) hosted a ministerial conference on 24 June that extended well beyond the G7 format, with more than 60 delegations participating and where strong commitments were made on humanitarian assistance, as well as longer-term sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems. He added that Germany was undertaking a strong national effort and supporting several partner countries in developing their own national pathway towards this goal and said that Germany pursues its work in the Coalitions of Action, to carry forward the momentum on the transformation. He emphasised that the most important contribution to a solution to the short-term problems would be for Russia to end its war in Ukraine.

In closing, he said that the G7 commends and supports not only the activities of the UN Secretary General's Global Crisis Response Group, but even more so his and UN OCHA's mediation efforts to enable a re-start of Ukrainian grain exports.

In a video message, **HE Mr Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs** said Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has exacerbated an already dire global food insecurity situation with humanitarian needs at an all-time high. The number of people affected by hunger continues increasing after the pandemic while climate change also continues to challenge the resilience of the food system. In parallel to military action in Ukraine, he said the Kremlin propaganda machine was also at war, 'spreading baseless lies.'

He underlined that it was "truly time to act together," stating EU's support to the key role of the UN GCRG to coordinate the international response and bring on board all relevant actors. The European Union and other donors have increased their humanitarian aid and are mobilizing 620 million Euros in immediate humanitarian support. However, he noted that the donors' base has remained insufficient, and he appealed to more donors to step in, as, in his words, "hunger cannot wait".

Noting that humanitarian aid alone is not the solution, HE Borrel Fontelles underlined that the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is the cornerstone of our food assistance and implementation of the development goals. He said that the EU aims to mobilize more than 7.5 billion Euros until 2024 for humanitarian aid, and support towards more resilient and sustainable food systems.

He concluded by stating that the EU is committed to working with partners around the world in a comprehensive “Team Europe Global Food Security Response” comprising four strands of action: (1) Solidarity: by providing humanitarian short-term aid, including for food affordability and macroeconomic stability; (2) Supporting countries in boosting local production: by investing in sustainable food systems for better resilience (3) Combatting the blockade and working to keep the flow of trade in agricultural products and Inputs (through the initiative “European Union Solidarity Lanes Action Plan” or supporting UNSG efforts to open Black Sea ports) (4) Multilateralism: Firmly standing behind the United Nations, insisting upon respect for the United Nations Charter, and anchoring our food security response to the multilateral system which he described as “the only solution”.

Mr Cary Fowler, U.S. Special Envoy for Global Food Security said that it will take all of us working together to end this global crisis as we’ve seen an accelerating crisis unfold driven by climate change, COVID and now conflict stemming from Russia’s aggression.

He added that the Russian military continues to wreak havoc on Ukrainian farms and block access to its ports with crops at risk of rotting in silos and in fields rather than helping to alleviate the food crisis which will continue as long as Russia maintains its unlawful presence in Ukraine, a sovereign nation.

He said that to galvanize collective action, the roadmap for global food security launched by the United States during its Presidency of the UN Security Council in May, and at the ministerial meeting hosted by Secretary Blinken on May 18th, several calls to action were identified including increasing humanitarian food assistance, keeping markets open, increasing fertilizer production, and investing in food system resilience.

Mr Fowler explained that 100 countries have signed on to this roadmap, and the US welcomes other countries endorsements as well. He said that “we now have the responsibility to turn commitment into action” and the United States had committed nearly \$2.8 billion in emergency food assistance to Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean since February.

He also underscored that the global fertilizer shortage which is being felt most acutely in Sub Saharan Africa is a grave concern because it will result in lower production in future growing seasons. He noted that President Biden has committed \$500 million to boost USA’s fertilizer production in order to alleviate global shortages. The President has also launched a global fertilizer challenge to raise at least \$100 million by COP 27 to increase fertilizer efficiency and to develop alternatives.

Mr Fowler highlighted that, at the global level, agricultural markets must remain transparent and open to ensure that all countries have access to sufficient food and critical agricultural inputs. To

this end, the US supports the efforts of the United Nations and Turkey to broker an agreement for the safe passage of vessels exporting food from Ukrainian ports. He added that we have to continue investing in long term solutions noting that under the Feed the Future Initiative, the US is investing \$5 billion over five years to combat hunger, poverty and malnutrition in more than 35 countries.

He urged for support to initiatives within the international institutions and financial institutions to cushion food shocks and to give countries greater flexibility to make sure they can feed their people.

Finally, he said that the US calls on all countries to reaffirm their commitment to multilateral institutions, build faith in the global trading system, and take concrete actions to improve the short-, medium-, and long-term outlook for global food security.

HE Ms Catherine Colonna, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs said that today, 828 million people are believed to live with food insecurity, 46 million more than in 2020. This means ruined and lost lives, malnourished children, forced displacements and conflicts. It is therefore a major cause of global instability.

She noted that the causes of this crisis are known, and some are longstanding. But the war of aggression by Russia on Ukraine has dramatically worsened the situation, exposing us to a global food crisis. The consequences of these actions, she said, are Russia's responsibility alone, as Russian agricultural products, food and fertilizers have not been sanctioned. The sanctions seek only to deprive Russia of the means to wage its war.

France is shouldering its responsibilities. It has launched the FARM initiative, endorsed by the European Union and the G7, to offer tangible solutions. FARM is based on three pillars: transparency and open markets, solidarity with vulnerable countries, and strengthening of agricultural and food systems. The aim is to bring on board public and private actors, including international organizations, businesses in the Global Business for Food Security coalition, researchers, producers and civil society. Our response will be coordinated and inclusive. She concluded by saying that, with the Committee on World Food Security bringing together all those committed to fighting food insecurity and malnutrition, we have the means for action. So "lets act now!"

H.E. Mr Marc Fesneau, Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, France said that the FARM initiative has been unfolding since March, driven by France and subsequently by the European Council. He added that it comprises measures that France considers necessary for a response to the food crisis based on three pillars: (1) Transparency and fluidity in order to ease the pressures on international markets and avoid even steeper rises in prices of global cereals. (2) Solidarity with the most vulnerable countries. Actions in this respect involve in particular support for the WFP for humanitarian programmes without impacting local production sectors and without disrupting markets. He noted that France is ready to assist with export of cereals from Ukraine. (3) Expansion of sustainable resilient production. This is a medium-term measure in which we must all act together. He acknowledged IFAD's ongoing work to support sustainable cereal production, particularly in vulnerable countries, and concluded by underlining the need for collective action and France's resolute commitment to such.

PART IV - Interactive Dialogue: Coordinated Responses at local, national and regional levels

This segment of the event, moderated by Mr. David Nabarro, Special Envoy on COVID-19 for the World Health Organization, focused on coordinated responses at local, national, and regional levels. It highlighted ongoing national and regional interventions to face the crisis. Delegations were requested to address the following questions of their interventions:

1. What are the most pressing challenges and the corresponding priority responses –strategies, policies or programs-, your country is taking to respond to the impacts of the current food crisis?
2. Which priority responses need to be pursued at the global level, including by the UN System, the International Financing Institutions and other international organizations?

Among the many delegates requesting to speak were the Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture, Brazil's Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Russian Federation Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Three statements were made by regional group representatives - China, on behalf of the group of friends of the Global Development Initiative; Morocco, on behalf of the Africa Group; and, Ecuador, on behalf of the Andean community of states. In all, despite time constraints, twenty delegations took the floor, while others shared their interventions through e-statements.

Member states expressed diverse views on challenges of food security and strategies needed to overcome them. Some of the core messages are summarized below:

- The pandemic, the challenges of post-pandemic recovery, previous economic recessions, soaring inflation, energy and commodity prices, climate change, conflict in Ukraine and other protracted crises around the world have contributed to the current food crisis felt across the globe. The world is experiencing a multidimensional crisis, including food, energy, and finance.
- The Global South has been adversely impacted by the conflict in Ukraine and various measures put in place in response. As the conflict drags on, it derails the efforts of the Global South to secure food security and eradicate hunger in the run-up to 2030.
- We need to act together and work in a coordinated way to address the short, medium, and long-term causes of the global food crisis. In the short-term, we need to avert the global spill over of the Ukraine conflict and ensure a safe passage of Ukrainian grain to the most vulnerable countries. It is necessary to ensure fertilizers are available for next year's planting season and to stabilize agricultural input costs.
- Second, we also need to recognize the pre-existing vulnerabilities of global food systems and address them. Even before the pandemic, prices were already rising, and we were not on track to achieve SDG 2. The fight against poverty and hunger should be our top priority. Concerted actions are needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda, particularly the SDG2 to end global hunger.
- The current food crisis has hit the poorest countries the hardest. Developing countries, including LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, and African countries, are the most vulnerable to food inflation. The international community must support these countries. The United Nations

system, international financial institutions, and other international organizations should help countries build fairer, more sustainable, and more resilient food systems and work based on regional integration processes. Effective North-South, South-South, and triangular international cooperation should be pursued to tackle the crisis together.

- Many African countries are severely affected by the crisis. Despite its huge potential, Africa only generates 10% of food output because many countries are plagued by low productivity, under-investment, and other challenges. A comprehensive African Union Agricultural development program and investment plan for agriculture and social protection must be implemented to improve the situation.
- It is important to invest in sustainable agriculture, especially in the production of basic grains. It is also necessary to transform the agriculture system to a more resilient and sustainable one to better prepare for future crises and meet growing demand. We should take steps to build up resilience and invest in technology to build up capacities in food production.
- We must invest in the establishment of staple food reserves with a regional focus and control speculation and hoarding that artificially distort food prices. We need an effective strategy to assess if food security programs are achieving their objectives, adopting a preventive rather than merely reactive approach to address the root causes of hunger from a holistic perspective.
- Major grain-producing nations need to scale up grain exports and fund the storage of grains in Ukraine and elsewhere. Coordinated actions and partnerships with stakeholders during food production, storage, transportation, and increased investment in the agricultural sector are needed to improve food self-sufficiency.
- The planting, harvesting, storage, and export of food should not be interdicted. Global food supply chains, open trade channels, and free markets for food and other agricultural products by promoting a universal, non-discriminating, and equitable trade system under the WTO must be upheld. However, we must adequately appreciate the importance of equity, affordability and accessibility when it comes to food. We have already seen how these principles were disregarded in the case of Covid-19 vaccines. Open markets should not perpetuate inequality and promote discrimination.
- Member states noted the Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (GCRG) as an important initiative to address the food crisis. They also expressed support for the UN and Turkey's efforts on the export of grains from Ukrainian ports.

PART V - Globally Coordinated Responses

This panel discussion on **Globally Coordinated Responses** was moderated by Mr. David Nabarro, Special Envoy on COVID-19 for the World Health Organization bringing together leaders and senior representatives of the UN Global Crisis Response Group. They built on views expressed by Members States and other stakeholders and highlighted the policy responses to be undertaken by the UN system.

In her remarks, **Ms. Valerie Guarnieri, WFP Assistant Executive Director**, thanked all Member States and speakers for highlighting the emergency of providing immediate food support for the most vulnerable, among other urgent actions. She informed them that the priority for WFP is to ensure that food nutrition support reaches the most vulnerable. In the face of the current crisis, WFP has undertaken the biggest scale-up effort ever, seeking to reach 152 million people worldwide. This includes sourcing and delivering more food and stepping up humanitarian cash transfers.

Ms Guarnieri underscored that alongside urgent humanitarian assistance, investing in social protection is also necessary to reach billions of vulnerable people who require support. She also highlighted the need to assist nations in strengthening and investing in their national social protection systems and making them more efficient and inclusive.

Mr Maximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist, noted that coordinated action is needed with no flags and names of institutions. He stressed the need to act quickly and in a coordinated manner.

In her intervention, **Ms Satu Santala, IFAD Vice-President for External Relations and Governance**, highlighted that IFAD is focused on serving small-scale farmers and the rural poor as the United Nations development finance institution for agricultural development. Founded as a result of a food crisis in the 1970s based on the vision that local diversified inclusive food production value chains build the resilience of communities and nations, IFAD is scaling up support to Member States. Recognizing that small-scale farmers produce 50% of the calories we consume globally, she emphasized the need to support them alongside small rural businesses and value chains ensuring they are linked to the market which will enable them to produce resiliently, and to make a decent living.

Ms Geeta Sethi, World Bank Global Lead and Advisor on Food Systems Transformation, highlighted country-level actions to overcome the challenge. Those actions must include:

- Support vulnerable households through enhancing support programmes;
- Enhance the next-season production by facilitating farmers' access to agricultural inputs, including fertilizers;
- Facilitate increased trade, noting that restrictive measures have been put in place; and,
- Invest in strengthening resilience of food supply systems.

She said that the World Bank has made US 30 billion available to support countries in managing the crisis over the next 15 months. She stated that collaboration and coordination are critical to allow different programs to work in synergy and ensure that there are no gaps in coverage. For this, along with the G7 presidency, the WBG has launched the Global Alliance for Food Security, an alliance for countries and organizations to support existing initiatives and catalyse an immediate and concerted response. The Alliance seeks to enhance collaboration by countries and organizations through information, analysis on food security, tracking of funding gaps and efforts to raise additional resources to support effective response efforts.

Mr Robert Powell, IMF Special Representative to the UN, said that the IMF is helping countries to close their balance of payments, along with filling finance gaps that have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and spikes in food and energy prices.

He highlighted several priorities for the IMF that include:

- Providing national and international humanitarian support to vulnerable households;
- Promoting international supply of food and finding a diplomatic solution to the transport of food and fertilizers currently blocked in Ukraine; and
- Lifting export restrictions that have been put in place by around 30 countries.

Mr Powell noted that the IMF is stepping up its engagement and providing policy advice, capacity development assistance and financial support under various facilities to catalyze and complement financing from other institutions. He maintained that IMF monitors the impact of higher prices, identifying the most vulnerable countries and their financing gaps and monitoring trade restrictions on food, energy, and other key commodities. He underscored that restrictions are counterproductive and can lead to retaliation by other countries, exacerbate shortages and contribute to further pressures and volatility. He concluded by assuring that IMF is working to assist countries with their efforts to improve social safety nets and protect vulnerable households.

PART VI - Closing Segment

The High-Level Event concluded with remarks by **HE Amina J Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General** who commended the President of the General Assembly and the Committee on World Food Security for organizing this high-level event to keep a sharp focus on working together on priority actions to address the current food crisis. She highlighted that the compounded challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate shocks and conflicts - including the ongoing war in Ukraine, have made the global food security situation even more complex. The level of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms are an urgent global concern requiring coordinated resolved action. She emphasized that it is time to act together to align the initiatives presented in the event and ensure that policy responses converge around the growing food and cost-of-living crisis in support of country-led solutions.

Ms Mohammed urged Member States and all stakeholders to support national pathways and action areas emanating from the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, to help accelerate action to promote sustainable agriculture and food systems. She concluded by acknowledging the CFS multistakeholder platform and its collaboration with the PGA, calling everyone to reconvene at CFS 50 plenary in October 2022 in Rome to continue this critical discussion.

In his closing remarks, HE Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero y de Loma-Osorio, Chairperson of CFS, reiterated that it was an honour to have joined forces with the President of the General Assembly with support of the UN Secretary-General, to co-convene this high-level event.

He underlined the urgency of the crisis and underscored the need to act together in a coordinated manner in support of country-led solutions – including governments, regional organizations, the international community, civil society, farmers and producers, businesses and academia.

He underscored the convergence around the core elements of integrated responses to the crisis at the global, regional, country, and local levels, and summarised six priority actions:

1. Step up humanitarian response for those already in need to alleviate immediate suffering, in all humanitarian contexts;
2. Stabilize markets and commodity prices, release strategic food stockpiles and fertilizers into markets, minimize hoarding and other speculative behaviour, and avoid unnecessary trade restrictions to immediately restore the availability, accessibility and affordability of food to enable all people everywhere realize their right to food;
3. Encourage increased local production and consumption of diverse food varieties, supporting and protecting smallholder and family farmers, cooperatives and SMEs who produce the 80% of the food we eat. Diversify sources of imported foods; and reduce food loss and food waste to wean countries off their dependencies on imports for increased resilience;
4. Restore the availability of inputs including fertilizers, ensuring sustained and affordable access by smallholders and family farmers as well as larger-scale food producers. This should go hand-in-hand with increased efficiency in the use of energy and fertilizers, unleashing the full potential of agroecology and other innovative approaches to sustainable agriculture;
5. Reinforce the social protection systems that are needed to prevent a slide into poverty of those in vulnerable situations. This includes well-proven nutrition-focused systems such as school meals or cash transfers;
6. Equip countries with the financial resources, fiscal space, and funds to support and protect their people, while speeding up the transition to more resilient and sustainable food systems.

He underscored that responding to the current food crisis implies accelerating food systems transformation, not setting it aside, keeping our shared commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement as the roadmap. He concluded by saying that the discussion started at the high-level event will continue at the CFS Plenary in Rome in October 2022, with a High-Level Ministerial Session on 10 October.

H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly closed the event by emphasizing that multidimensional challenges have put humanity in a precarious situation, and severely affected our food security. He reiterated the need to approach the issue of food security with fresh resolve. “It would be a stain on our conscience to stand idly by as millions more fall victim to hunger and malnutrition.”

He called for the General Assembly to go forward and avoid wasting time “for the sake of the millions of our fellow human beings that are at this very moment starving and malnourished”. He closed the High-Level Event urging all to join efforts since ‘only by working together can we alleviate hunger and malnutrition, the ongoing crises and inequalities that contribute to these ills.’ Finally, he thanked the Committee on World Food-Security and the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General for their roles in co-convening the high-level event.