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Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

Excellencies,

FAO Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu,

Honorable Ministers, distinguished colleagues, ladies, and gentlemen,

1. As Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security, I am honoured to speak to you today on this important occasion, the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East.
2. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the host country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and all the organizers for their meticulous efforts in hosting this significant gathering.
3. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Director-General of FAO, Dr. QU Dongyu, for this invitation and the privilege of engaging with you on the multidimensional nature of food security and nutrition.
4. The Committee on World Food Security, CFS, was established 50 years ago as a platform for intergovernmental coordination and as a standing committee of the FAO Council. It facilitates multistakeholder conversations in an effort to achieve Zero Hunger and to pursue the progressive realization of the right to food in societies through global coordination.
5. It was reformed in 2009 to include a wider range of participants and stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, Indigenous Peoples, farmers' organizations and international financial institutions, among others. The CFS currently comprises 141 member countries.
6. In the face of multiple challenges, the CFS plays a critical role in supporting regional and national efforts to achieve sustainable food security and nutrition. First, as a provider of policy guidance, the CFS, through its High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE-FSN), consolidates scientific evidence to address food insecurity through participatory processes by developing and offering voluntary guidelines as policy guidance tools.
7. Second, as a collaborative platform, the CFS facilitates strategic coordination among the three Rome-based UN agencies (FAO, the World Food Programme [WFP] and the International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD]) and beyond, promoting synergies, resource optimization and multistakeholder participation in the area of food and nutrition.

Documents can be consulted at www.fao.org

8. Third, as a dynamic knowledge exchange platform, the CFS fosters dialogue on regional and country-level efforts, enabling member countries to benefit from adapted policy guidance products and best practices.

9. In that line of thinking, important activities have been developed in Mauritania and Tunisia, on the implementation of the VGGT Guidelines: the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

10. In both countries, the VGGT principles were mainstreamed in their land tenure agenda to support land governance approaches and practices with technical support provided by FAO, adapting frameworks to the challenges specific to the region.

11. In Mauritania, the Government has been initiating an inclusive and participatory land reform process to adapt its legal instruments for ensuring food security and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in its rural areas.

12. To support the Government's commitment, a national multistakeholder platform on tenure governance was created, bringing together governmental and non-governmental actors. This strategy has proven to be particularly successful, in inclusivity, methodology and results. It has inspired the establishment of similar platforms in other nearby countries, Guinea, Senegal and Mali.

13. In Tunisia, the capacity development project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the framework of the FAO VGGT programme was jointly designed by FAO and the Tunisian Agricultural Land Agency (AFA). This project generated important activities for impact: capacity building programmes, actions and events aimed at implementing the VGGT and twining programmes with other countries. It also introduced new stakeholder participatory approaches with the objective to improve their land management practices based on the principles and recommendations of the VGGT.

14. I would also like to acknowledge the interest shown in CFS activities by other members in the Near East and North Africa region, such as the United Arab Emirates, on healthy diets and sustainable agrifood systems, and the Republic of Türkiye on both gender and youth areas.

15. Beyond these concrete examples, and as mentioned above, CFS provides a wide range of guidelines and policy recommendations aimed at providing strategic support to policymakers in addressing policies, food security and nutrition. These policy agreements cover a wide range of food security and nutrition issues, such as land tenure governance, responsible investment in agrifood systems, sustainable agrifood systems for improved nutrition, gender equality and women's empowerment, youth engagement in agrifood systems, linking smallholder farmers to markets, ensuring food security in protracted crises, to name only a few.

16. Of particular relevance to the Near East region, the CFS is working on the Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA). This is the first global common consensus on how to mitigate threats to food security and nutrition in protracted crises.

17. This policy agreement recognizes that building resilience can increase the capacity to absorb shocks and long-term stresses. Given the severity of hunger and undernourishment during protracted crises, nutrition needs require a special focus on vulnerable and marginalized populations.

18. Since its endorsement in 2015, many activities have been carried out to raise awareness of the CFS-FFA Framework for Action, to: i) provide policy assistance and capacity development at the national level; ii) create knowledge-sharing platforms on resilience; iii) build an evidence base on the role of food security on peace, stability and social cohesion, and the conditions required for successful food-security-related responses; and; iv) enhance cooperation and partnership in strengthening resilience, building on complementarities to better support countries and regions.

19. As I have emphasized from the beginning of this speech, the CFS is a resource and a strong ally of member countries in the effective implementation of food security and nutrition policies. The Committee remains firmly committed to supporting you as policymakers and working with regional and national stakeholders to advocate for comprehensive food security and nutrition policies and strategies. The collaboration of the Rome-based agencies extends to the dissemination of CFS policy

tools at the regional and country levels, with significant support from FAO, WFP and IFAD, which have committed substantial financial, technical and policy support to the CFS work programme.

20. In the spirit of cooperation, I urge all member countries to actively participate in the implementation of the recommendations made by this Committee into national strategies – together we can move forward to achieve our common goals.

21. To those countries that are not yet members of the Committee, I extend a warm invitation to join the CFS family. Your active participation and contributions are critical to shaping the global dialogue on food security and nutrition. As we strive for further progress, I encourage Ministers to actively participate in the high-level segment of the upcoming the 52nd Session of the CFS in October. In this forum, we will have the opportunity to collectively advance discussions, share lessons learned and shape policy priorities that will contribute to the global effort to achieve sustainable food security.

22. In closing, I would like to thank all the participants, speakers and organizers for their invaluable insights. Let's foster continued collaboration and strengthen our commitment to achieving our goals to end hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

23. Thank you for your commitment and support.