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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 9th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 11 October 2019, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Fisher-Tsin (Vice-Chair) ..... (Israel)

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Agenda item 24: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition (*continued*)

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*In the absence of Mr. Niang (Senegal), Ms. Fisher-Tsin (Israel), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 24: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition** (*continued*)  
([A/74/79-E/2019/58](#) and [A/74/237](#))

1. **Mr. Córdova Chabla** (Ecuador) said that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, which remained the greatest global challenge, necessitated the promotion of sustainable agricultural production, food security, food safety and nutrition. His delegation reaffirmed 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. International efforts, including those undertaken as part of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025), should be aimed at reversing the rising hunger trend with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The Government promoted solutions framed within an economy of solidarity with the people, focusing on job creation, production chains and support for rural areas. Investing in and empowering rural populations fostered more equal and inclusive societies and economic development, thereby addressing the causes of migration and ensuring the right to live with dignity. The Government promoted sustainable farming practices that would help to protect biodiversity and ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations and sought to make food production more resilient to climate change. Efforts were aimed at eliminating chronic undernutrition, promoting breastfeeding, fostering good eating habits, ensuring the nutrition of children aged under 5 years and addressing obesity and overweight.

3. Science, technology and innovation should be channelled towards developing countries to boost the resilience and productivity of sustainable food systems and the income generated by those systems, which played a key role in controlling non-communicable diseases. His delegation expressed appreciation for the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization with regard to agricultural development and increasing food security, food safety and nutritional outcomes.

4. **Ms. El Hilali** (Morocco) said that hunger and malnutrition remained a bitter reality, particularly in

Africa. The continent would need to take steps to feed its growing population, which was projected to double over the next 30 years, as, unfortunately, it currently relied heavily on food imports. Food insecurity was further exacerbated by factors such as natural disasters, climate change, desertification, floods and soil degradation.

5. A major change was needed in the global food and agricultural system to eradicate hunger. Morocco had always invested in agriculture and participated in South-South cooperation in agriculture, which had great potential in Africa, with more than half of the non-cultivated arable lands in the world and a young population. A number of promising development projects were under way that would support the progress being made on food security. Morocco strongly supported the African Continental Free Trade Area, which would stimulate trade in food products between African countries, help to improve the revenue of farmers and promote agro-industry. The efforts of a number of international development agencies were providing momentum to accelerate cooperation efforts in the agricultural sector, especially in the context of South-South and triangular cooperation.

6. Morocco, under the leadership of the King Mohammed VI, had developed a sectoral development strategy, the Green Morocco Plan, focusing on the modernization of agriculture and agro-industry and the development of family farming. Food security was a strategic priority to which the Government took an integrated approach. Since 2014, Morocco had signed 38 agreements related to the agricultural sector with 18 countries in Africa, such as partnerships with Ethiopia and Nigeria on the production of fertilizers. Morocco had also initiated triangular cooperation, in coordination with FAO, to benefit countries including Cameroon, Eswatini, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Tunisia. Cooperation efforts included the Adaptation of African Agriculture initiative and the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security.

7. **Mr. Simpara** (Mali) said that, even though food security had been achieved in Mali, agricultural production remained subject to the effects of climate change and other major challenges linked to, for example, the management of land tenure, water management, access to new technologies, the need for capacity-building among producer organizations and access to financing, including credit. The agricultural sector was the cornerstone of the economy, employing more than 80 per cent of the population and accounting for 30 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). In order to make the sector more attractive and guarantee food sovereignty, the Government was introducing new

technologies into agricultural production systems, fostering mechanization and promoting agroprocessing. As a result, the country was hitting its cereal production targets and had increased its production of cereals and cotton over the previous season.

8. A law had been adopted to guide agricultural development, covering all agricultural and related activities. The High Council of Agriculture, chaired by the President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, was responsible for oversight of the implementation of the national policy on agricultural development. Considerable efforts had been made to increase and mechanize agricultural production, including through the establishment of tractor assembly plants and the distribution of 1,000 tractors to farmers, the implementation of measures to secure land tenure and the provision of subsidies. The Government would spare no effort to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, and his delegation called upon all development actors to strengthen international cooperation to that end.

9. **Mr. Izourar** (Algeria) said that urgent action was needed to ensure sustainable food production systems. The reasons for the recent rise in world hunger were diverse and included conflict, environmental fragility, natural disasters, access to commodities and price volatility. Drought, desertification, climate change and soil degradation continued to hinder progress towards food security, particularly in Africa.

10. In line with the aims of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028), Algeria had adopted policies to better support small-scale food producers and increase their resilience, productivity and incomes. In that regard, the Government had diversified the financial resources available to farmers and had taken steps to make the agricultural sector more attractive to private sector investors through subsidized loans, favourable taxation arrangements and support for inputs and materials.

11. Algeria was facing both desertification and climate change, which had a negative impact on rural productivity and incomes. Food security was a priority goal of the Government's agricultural policies, especially since the global crisis of 2007–2008 had highlighted the country's lack of self-sufficiency. National food security was therefore considered a matter of food sovereignty, and every effort was being made to strengthen sustainability in the agricultural sector. An integrated national policy, investment in rural infrastructure, the sharing of best practices and the development of partnerships were key to achieving food security, maintaining social cohesion and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. The Government

sought to integrate technological advances through its agricultural model and to harmonize national development strategies and macroeconomic policies.

12. In the light of persistent concerns regarding destabilization risks, which threatened countries that suffered from food insecurity, his country promoted global solutions that would provide affordable food for all. The agricultural sector could contribute to job creation and poverty reduction, particularly among vulnerable rural populations. Greater efforts were needed, however, to meet the sector's growing needs, which included affordable agricultural inputs, stronger sustainable farming practices and increased competitiveness with a view to promoting local products in national markets.

13. **Mr. Bokoum** (Burkina Faso) said that, unfortunately, in the world in general, and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, food insecurity remained a persistent problem. The economy of Burkina Faso relied heavily on farming, animal husbandry and mining. Agriculture accounted for 40 per cent of GDP and 85 per cent of jobs. The sector faced a variety of difficulties, including climate change, a lack of storage infrastructure, disease and invasive pests, limited arable land and inadequate access to credit.

14. The Government had given priority to agricultural development in its national economic and social development plan and had implemented a number of related programmes and strategies, for example on food security and on the sustainable development of irrigated agriculture. The aims of those policies included: increasing the share of irrigated agriculture in total agricultural production; meeting national demand for cereals and agro-industrial inputs; and improving the management of land tenure in rural areas.

15. As part of the significant progress that Burkina Faso had made in tackling malnutrition, there had been a reduction in the prevalence of underweight among children between 2015 and 2018. Food security had improved owing to significant investments in agricultural productivity, food production and livestock feed. A law on rural land tenure guaranteed equitable access to land for all those living in rural areas, without distinction on the basis of such characteristics as sex, age, nationality or political affiliation. Against a difficult security backdrop, Burkina Faso continued to depend on the support of its partners in the international community for the implementation of initiatives to promote food self-sufficiency for all.

16. **Mr. Sharif** (Sudan) said that eradicating hunger and poverty were priorities of the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development, but the world was not on

track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Courageous measures were therefore needed to address food security and nutrition. Global hunger had risen for the third consecutive year, and Africa continued to experience the highest levels of undernourishment worldwide, affecting one fifth of its population. Food insecurity was exacerbated by factors including economic recession, gender inequality, armed conflict, desertification and drought. Increased efforts were required on the part of the international community to overcome such obstacles. Building systems that were equal, fair, inclusive, stable and resilient required policies that strengthened agriculture and food systems, improved adaptation and resilience to climate change, including through ecosystem services and biodiversity preservation, and incorporated poverty, hunger, food security and nutrition objectives into national plans.

17. As the primary source of economic activity in the Sudan, agriculture was the country's main driver of development. The Sudan had a wealth of natural resources, including fertile land, abundant water resources and a favourable climate for agricultural production, and could contribute to food production at the regional and international levels. The Government had introduced a strategic plan to strengthen the agricultural sector, increase food security and step up national production over the period 2017–2020. An initiative launched by the League of Arab States in 2018 sought to build food security in the Arab region by stockpiling food to be used in times of crisis. His delegation called upon the relevant United Nations agencies to provide assistance through technology transfer and partnerships.

18. **Monsignor Hansen** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the achievement of multilateralism in lifting nearly 1 billion people out of extreme poverty stood in stark contrast to the lack of progress on ending world hunger. Eradicating hunger and poverty was a moral duty. Three worrying tendencies had come to light with respect to international efforts to end hunger. First, there was more than enough food for everyone. Waste, excessive consumption and the use of food for purposes other than to satisfy hunger persisted, while millions of people were suffering from undernourishment. That pointed not to a lack of food, but to poor management of the food chain and inappropriate models of consumption and production. Second, aid and development initiatives, including nutrition-specific projects, were often obstructed by political decisions, skewed ideologies and impenetrable customs barriers. Third, efforts to end hunger must be based on partnerships, working for the common good and in good faith with all parties concerned. In that regard, the

involvement and engagement of local communities and a focus on their specific needs must be at the heart of global strategies to defeat hunger.

19. **Mr. Madriz Fornos** (Nicaragua) said that, in the discussion on the progress achieved and the challenges outstanding in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the recent high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, the need for financing, technology transfer and capacity-building had been made clear. Sustainable Development Goal 2 established the right to adequate, safe and nutritious food and the need to promote and develop sustainable agriculture. Complex problems relating to nutrition were being exacerbated owing to the negative impact of climate change, droughts and floods on agriculture, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable.

20. The Government had developed a package of strategies and programmes to achieve food sovereignty and security and, since 2007, had been steadily promoting measures to increase production and eradicate hunger, allocating economic and technical resources in support of small-scale producers, including inputs, credit, technical assistance and efforts to increase connectivity between urban and rural areas. Centres had been established for capacity-building and research in such areas as the production of coffee, maize, livestock and chocolate. In early October 2019, Nicaragua had launched a national seed production strategy, focusing on high-yielding seeds that were more resilient to climate change. Family farming employed 98 per cent of all producers and accounted for 90 per cent of agricultural land, giving it a key role in food security. Nicaragua had made significant progress on indicators related to food and nutritional security, reducing, for example, the prevalence of chronic undernutrition.

21. **Ms. Mucavi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the 2030 Agenda placed the eradication of poverty and hunger among its core priorities and identified sustainable agriculture, investing in rural development and transforming food systems as key drivers of inclusive, sustainable development. Unfortunately, the latest evidence provided in *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019* had shown that the world was not on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2.

22. Poor diets were responsible for the multiple burden of malnutrition: the coexistence of obesity with different forms of undernutrition. Conflict and protracted crises, increasing climate variability and extremes, and economic slowdowns and downturns

were key drivers of hunger and malnutrition. Bolder targeted actions were needed to renew progress towards ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition, including overweight and obesity. In that connection, delegations were invited to participate in the celebration of World Food Day, focusing on the theme “Healthy diets for a zero hunger world”.

23. As highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General on agriculture development, food security and nutrition ([A/74/237](#)) and in the *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019*, the transformation of food systems could play a critical role, not only in eradicating poverty, hunger and all forms of malnutrition, but also in advancing the achievement of other major goals. Promoting the development of food systems that were inclusive, nutrition-driven, sustainable, eco- and climate-friendly and resilient was a challenge that required action across the 2030 Agenda. It also required a special focus on the family farmers and indigenous peoples who were responsible for a substantial share of the world’s food supply and who provided a variety of uncompensated ecosystem services. Rural communities were often hit the hardest by hunger, poverty, natural resource degradation or depletion, extreme weather and conflict. They also had less access to education, health services, energy, clean water and sanitation and decent jobs. In that connection, food systems analysis could help to determine the connections between the economic, social and environmental challenges that the world was facing with a view to identifying solutions.

*The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.*