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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 20 June 2022, at 10 a.m.

Co-Chair: Mr. Pary Rodríguez (Vice-President) (Plurinational State of Bolivia)

Co-Chair: Ms. Rainne (Vice-President) (Finland)

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In the absence of Mr. Kelapile (Botswana), Mr. Pary Rodríguez (Plurinational State of Bolivia), Vice-President, and Ms. Rainne (Finland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions (continued)

(e) Long-term programme of support for Haiti (continued) (E/2022/52)

(f) African countries emerging from conflict

(g) Sustainable development in the Sahel (E/2022/63)

1. **Mr. Pary Rodríguez** (Co-Chair) said that the present meeting on the transition from relief to development, convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/290 A, would address the linkages between humanitarian and development assistance under the current year's overall theme, entitled "Recurrent crises and sustainable solutions: building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity and displacement". The new format of the meeting, with in-depth roundtables, demonstrated how the Council could be innovative and implement changes to how it did business. It would allow Member States, United Nations bodies and a range of partners to explore jointly the pressing issues that directly impacted countries, communities and people worldwide. It would also enable the Council to deliberate on how the United Nations could make the biggest impact to improve people's lives through humanitarian, development and peace efforts, and it returned the attention of the world to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Work was needed to build resilience and to transition to sustainable, durable solutions and peaceful and equitable societies, in line with the promises of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. The roundtables would examine collaboration, coherence and complementarity across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, drawing from concrete experiences on the ground in regions across the global, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Furthermore, no current crisis could be understood outside the context of recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, conflicts and the climate crisis. Food insecurity and displacement were at extraordinary levels and continued to rise, which made the present meeting and future work all the more urgent and imperative.

3. Global hunger was at levels not seen in generations. The number of severely food insecure people had increased from 135 million to 276 million in the past two years alone, while the number of people facing a hunger catastrophe had seen a ninefold increase since 2016. Hunger was not driven by a global lack of food but was caused by a staggering lack of equality in access to food and the means to produce it, especially for the most vulnerable.

4. **Ms. Rainne** (Co-Chair) said that the world must do better to address the immediate humanitarian suffering of the current hunger crisis, to avert the looming risk of famine in parts of the world and to build long-term solutions which reinforced community resilience and led to advancing sustainable development, ending conflict and combatting climate change. The solutions needed to be inclusive to build resilience and empower those who were too often forgotten but had enormous agency and capabilities, such as persons with disabilities and older persons. Women and women's organizations must be part of planning and decision-making across humanitarian, development and peace efforts, particularly in fragile contexts and peacebuilding. Nothing would be equitable, sustainable or effective unless women were included at all stages of design, programming and implementation.

5. She looked forward to hearing about the critical actions that would need to be taken across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts in order to prevent and respond to the further escalation of food insecurity and the risk of famine. It would be especially interesting to draw lessons from building resilience, such as through strengthened social protection systems, anticipatory approaches and investment in climate-sensitive agriculture and livelihoods. She would also welcome proposals on how different financial streams could incentivize collaboration across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding to reduce needs, risks and vulnerability and build resilience. The international financial institutions certainly had a role to play in that regard.

6. **Mr. Kelapile** (Botswana), President of the Economic and Social Council, delivering a keynote address, said that the theme of the meeting was very appropriate and timely. There was an unprecedented convergence of multiple and complex crises that had dramatic consequences for the entire world and particularly for the most vulnerable.

7. Recent reports painted a highly troubling picture regarding food insecurity. Food prices were the highest ever recorded by the Food and Agriculture Organization

of the United Nations (FAO) and gas and fertilizer prices had more than doubled since 2021. Ongoing disruptions in global supply chains and financial markets were compounded by climate change and the conflict in Ukraine, which further intensified the crisis. It was alarming that three quarters of a million people risked falling into famine or famine-like conditions in 2022 if they did not receive assistance.

8. The total number of displaced persons was at an unprecedented level of over 100 million, which included more than 59 million internally displaced persons. The resilience and fortitude of every displaced person should be recognized.

9. Despite the staggering numbers, the food and displacement crises were not insurmountable. The stakeholders present at the current meeting could avert food insecurity and prevent more hunger and famine by strengthening food security systems and finding durable solutions that built resilience and reduced need, risk and vulnerability. The Council would continue its work to support the transition from relief to sustainable development in countries in conflict, post-conflict and those facing humanitarian emergencies. It could work to reduce vulnerability, build resilience and achieve durable solutions for the internally displaced. With stronger commitment and collaboration, the challenges associated with displacement could be overcome.

10. **The Deputy Secretary-General**, delivering a keynote address, said that it was a pleasure to address the opening of the 2022 Council meeting on the transition from relief to development, the themes of which, namely recurrent crises and sustainable solutions, building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity and displacement, could not have been more timely.

11. There was no doubt that much of the developing world, supported by the United Nations system, bilateral and other partners, had made significant progress in enhancing food supplies and reducing hunger over the past 25 years but, more recently, global hunger had risen, reversing decades of progress. Climate change, extreme weather events, conflicts and economic downturns were some of the factors driving growing food insecurity.

12. Some 193 million people had experienced food insecurity across 53 countries or territories in 2021. Acute food insecurity was at a record high. The ripple effects of the conflict in Ukraine were extending human suffering far beyond its borders, threatening global hunger on an unprecedented scale.

13. Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen were hunger hotspots facing catastrophic conditions, according to the latest report by the World Food Programme and FAO. Afghanistan and Somalia were new entries to that worrisome list. A total of 750,000 people were already facing starvation and death in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Sudan, Syria remained countries of very high concern where conditions were critical and deteriorating, as was the Sahel region.

14. Violence and conflict remained the primary drivers of acute hunger and conflict levels, and violence against civilians had increased in 2022. In particular, conflict had led to new waves of displacement, forcing people to abandon their homes, land and livelihoods, reducing the amount of food locally available in their communities. In the Sahel alone, close to 2.8 million people had been internally displaced.

15. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, some 13.6 million children globally under the age of 5 were suffering from severe acute malnutrition, which, in young children, was a medical emergency that carried an elevenfold increased risk of dying, compared to healthy children. Even if the children survived, they might suffer from stunting, which had lifelong consequences. Only one in three of those children had access to treatment.

16. The situation could be changed with just \$300 million, or just 0.1 per cent of official development aid spent in a year. To put that figure into perspective, in the past two years, 62 new food billionaires had been created and billionaires in the food and energy sectors had seen their fortunes increase by some \$382 billion.

17. Business as usual could not continue. Investing in development was key to addressing root causes and it must be done with a sense of urgency and scale to get ahead of the crises. The war in Ukraine had combined with the climate crisis and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its unequal recovery to create a perfect storm of needs in developing countries.

18. New approaches and policies that were commensurate with the challenges would be needed. The Secretary-General's initiative to address the multiple waves of crises, namely the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, convened United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and partners around the triple crisis. In its first brief, the Group had revealed that 1.2 billion people lived in countries that were severely vulnerable to all three dimensions of the crisis while

1.6 billion people were exposed to at least one dimension. The Group's second brief set out how rising inequality and economic instability could lead to social and political unrest in some of the worst affected countries in the coming months.

19. The actions that were needed to prevent the perfect storm should focus on three possible fronts. First, time was short to prevent a food crisis of global proportions in 2023. Therefore, it was necessary to stabilize global markets, reduce volatility and tackle the uncertainty of commodity prices. There could be no effective solution to the global food crisis without reintegrating into world markets Ukraine's food production and the food and fertilizer produced by Russia, despite the war. To avert a food availability crisis in 2023, fertilizer availability must be restored immediately, especially for smallholder farmers.

20. Second, given that food was a fundamental human right, immediate suffering must be alleviated through humanitarian assistance and by investing heavily in social protection systems. It was also necessary to realize the long-term vision of a food systems transformation, in accordance with the commitment made in 2021 at the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

21. Third, country-specific responses were required and the revitalized United Nations country teams, guided by the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, under the leadership of the resident coordinators, had a central role to play. Countries across the world had already benefited from the convening roles of resident coordinators in the formulation of national pathways for sustainable food systems, which would guide the development of policies and legislation. The country teams were required to support Governments to translate the national pathways into concrete actions and policy interventions, even while they targeted short-term needs. It was pleasing that they were doing exactly that.

22. Country teams were using the development emergency modality of the Joint Policy Fund to Advance the 2030 Agenda through Integrated Policy to help Governments devise strategic interventions to cope with the multidimensional crisis in food, energy and finance and to accelerate the transformation of food systems. In Yemen, for example, the focus was on identifying key inefficiencies in the political economy of the food system and the gatekeepers responsible for them, to help inform the design of future policies. In Haiti, the emphasis was on diversification of the economy, improved livelihoods for women and youth and strategic partnerships for agriculture and fisheries. In the Niger, efforts prioritized data gathering and

strategic forecasting to understand and respond to the triple crisis better.

23. The world was facing a global hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions and it was at a critical crossroads. Either the challenge of meeting immediate needs while supporting programmes that build long-term resilience at scale would be met or even greater humanitarian crises would be encountered down the line. It would take everyone's efforts to fix a crisis that involved everyone.

Round table 1 on recurrent crises and sustainable solutions: building resilience and addressing rising food insecurity

24. **Ms. Uusikyla** (Director of the Humanitarian Financing and Resource Mobilization Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), moderator, said that although everyone was experiencing the financial consequences of a global crisis, the poor and most vulnerable were suffering the most. The hunger crisis that had been created by the COVID-19 pandemic was getting worse as food, energy and fertilizer prices skyrocketed. Humanitarians were ready to do everything that they could, but commodity and fuel price hikes meant that the operational costs of humanitarian activity were increasing, supply chains were being disrupted and sanctions could complicate responses. The challenges were daunting but not insurmountable and the world could act to end global hunger.

25. **Mr. Torero Cullen** (Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), panellist, said that 811 million people had faced hunger in 2020 and that number had increased significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The key drivers were economic slowdowns and downturns, COVID-19, climate variability and extremes, conflict and the war in Ukraine. They had affected the cost and affordability of healthy diets, had exacerbated extreme poverty and had led to major inequality.

26. Between 2016 and 2021, the population in crisis or worse had increased by about 80 per cent, from 108 million to 193 million, and the number was growing. While conflict had been the major reason for acute food insecurity, it interacted with the other drivers, such as slowdowns, downturns and climate change.

27. In order to understand the resilience of food supply, FAO had developed a dietary sourcing flexibility index for kilocalories, which compared the diversity of domestic production and stocks with the diversity of imports and trade partners. The index identified how low-income countries and lower-middle-income

countries showed a lower level of diversity and resilience in food procurement and that some upper-middle-income countries had a problem with food procurement resilience. It was therefore necessary to learn how to increase the resilience in those countries.

28. There were very few key exporting countries of cereals. In the food crises of 2007–2008 and 2011 there had been a significant concentration in five exporters of maize, wheat and rice, meaning that if something had happened to any of those countries there would have been a problem with food prices. The same challenge was happening in 2022. As a result of the conflict in Ukraine, 30 per cent of global exports of wheat had been lost and prices were therefore skyrocketing. It was necessary to understand that there had been significant evolution in exports between 1999 and 2019. For example, there had been reductions in wheat exports from the European Union, the United States of America, Africa and Asia while there had been increases from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, making many countries, some of which were already in crisis situations, consequently dependent on the latter two countries for imports.

29. Although sub-Saharan African countries were not major importers of wheat, owing to a very low per-capita consumption, they faced increased import bills because they depended on oil seeds and animal feedstock, the prices of which had also increased. There was a relationship, therefore, which had long been evident, between the prices of commodities, energy and fertilizers.

30. Close to 17 per cent of globally traded calories were currently being impacted by export restrictions, which was higher than at any time during the COVID-19 pandemic or the food crisis of 2007–2008. That was important because some countries depended on international supplies to provide the different food groups that they required. In sub-Saharan African countries, it would not be possible to supply all the nine food groups that they needed without trade.

31. Climate change was also another very important topic. Droughts were causing increasing undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa and there was a positive trend in extreme temperatures and variability. The frequency of severe drought and water stress meant that 3.2 billion people lived in agricultural areas with high to very high levels of water shortage and one sixth of the world's population lived in agricultural areas with very high water constraints.

32. The risks being faced could be placed in three groups. Humanitarian risks meant accelerated support was needed for countries, such as Ukraine and

Afghanistan, and for displaced people. Food and agriculture risks highlighted the relationship between inputs and price. It was necessary to understand logistical bottlenecks and to become more resilient to them. Macroeconomic risks included the relationship between energy and food. For example, gas prices were related to the production of nitrogen. Higher prices meant fertilizer production was costlier, which would in turn affect agricultural production and consumption and create hunger. Economic difficulties meant countries could no longer cope by increasing their import bills. Nuclear contamination of soils could end their production capabilities for years. All the risks were framed by water stress and climate change.

33. The world must think differently about agriculture and agrifood systems. In the short term, Ukraine must be given humanitarian assistance and cash and inputs to maintain critical production and to support agrifood supply chains. Given that the food import bill had increased for 62 of the most vulnerable countries by more than \$49 billion, more support was needed for countries' balance of payments. The FAO proposal for a food import financing facility would help in that regard and would also minimize the potential risk of social unrest. To improve efficiency, soil maps would help to match the needs of the soil in order to reduce the loss and waste of food and fertilizer. Better social protection was required, not only through expansion, but through targeting the new costs of food insecurity. It was necessary to support reconstruction and increase resilience, particularly in vulnerable countries.

34. In the medium and long term, climate and economic resilience needed to be scaled up and the cost of nutritious foods must be lowered along the supply chain. It was necessary to address poverty and inequality, achieve sustainable consumption patterns, develop a portfolio of actions, accelerate and improve innovation, technology, science and data and involve institutions in order to be inclusive and to not create further inequalities.

35. **Mr. Powell** (Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations), panellist, said that war in Ukraine had compounded the COVID-19 pandemic, devastating lives, dragging down growth and pushing up inflation. High food and energy prices were weighing heavily on households around the world and tightening financial conditions were putting further pressure on highly indebted nations, companies and families. Countries and companies were re-evaluating global supply chains amid persistent disruptions and, combined with sharply increased volatility in financial markets and the continuing threat

of climate change, there was a potential confluence of calamities.

36. The 2007–2008 food crisis had demonstrated that the international community needed to take fast and well-coordinated actions by maintaining open trade, supporting vulnerable households, ensuring sufficient agricultural supply and addressing financial pressures. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) had been engaging its members and was working very closely with the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international partners to provide policy advice, capacity development assistance and financial support in order to catalyse and complement financing from other institutions.

37. The IMF trade policy tracker had identified some 20 countries that had imposed trade restrictions on food and agricultural inputs since the start of 2022. Such restrictions could lead to retaliation by other countries, exacerbate shortages, contribute to price pressures and generate higher market volatility.

38. IMF was working with country authorities on macroeconomic frameworks and policy priorities, including by focusing on assistance to improve social safety nets to protect vulnerable households from the imminent threat of food security, without resorting to export restrictions.

39. The Fund would bring to bear its new Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which it was hoped would be operational later in 2022 and which aimed to provide affordable longer-term financing for countries that included vulnerable and middle- and low-income countries, and small island developing States. Countries with acute financing needs could access emergency financing.

40. The Fund was intensifying efforts with the World Bank and other organizations to support debt restructuring, given that many developing countries faced significant fiscal pressures, elevated public debt levels and debt distress. It had recommended that the Group of 20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative be strengthened to provide greater clarity on steps and timelines, to introduce a debt service payment standstill during negotiations and to extend its eligibility requirements. IMF and the World Bank were together implementing a multipronged approach to debt with measures that included improved debt monitoring and early warning systems.

41. Work was ongoing to reprioritize IMF capacity-building efforts, focusing on its core areas of expertise, in order to help lay the foundation for a sustainable

recovery. IMF had recently approved a strengthened strategy for Fragile and Conflict-affected States after wide consultation across the United Nations system. The new approach would involve more field presence for IMF staff and closer cooperation with humanitarian, development and peacebuilding partners. The strategy acknowledged that macroeconomic policy was only one of many factors that could help such States to build resilience and exit fragility. Stronger relationships, therefore, with international bodies and civil society organizations would allow IMF to benefit from their insight and expertise.

42. **Ms. Fatima** (Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission), panellist, said that the Peacebuilding Commission had recently been working with countries to provide support for the durable solutions that they were seeking. Such support was grounded in the notion that peace, security, human rights and development were interlinked. It strengthened local, national and regional capacities to withstand, adapt to and recover better from stresses and shocks. The Peacebuilding Commission had also worked with the Peacebuilding Fund, which had provided \$903 million to projects in 65 countries between 2017 and 2021. Such engagements had given rise to several observations and suggestions.

43. First, urgent action was needed to ensure that food insecurity did not result in increased violent conflict. In 2022, about 180 million people globally could be facing acute food crisis or worse conditions and 49 million people were one step away from famine. If the current trends continued in terms of reduced food exports, restricted access to fertilizers, rising food, energy and delivery costs and financial distress, combined with deficits in international cooperation and governance challenges, an additional 19 million people were expected to face chronic undernourishment by 2023.

44. Food insecurity was most serious in conflict-affected countries. For example, 60 per cent of the world's undernourished people lived in areas affected by conflict. The more prolonged a crisis was, the worse the food security outcomes, such as forced displacements, were, and conflict might return, disproportionately impacting women, children, persons with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations. To avoid acute food insecurity and famine risk and to ensure the proper functioning of food systems and markets, which were a critical element in addressing the root causes of conflict and poverty and in building a sustainable recovery, early action was necessary. International humanitarian law must also be fully respected.

45. Second, persistent regional inequalities required attention. In the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin subregions, climate change and environmental degradation had exacerbated the root causes of food insecurity. After sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean was the region with the highest number of countries facing the triple crises of food, energy and finance and, in that region, the lingering economic effects of COVID-19, weather extremes and insecurity continued to drive high levels of humanitarian food assistance needs.

46. Targeted approaches were needed to address the root causes of food insecurity and humanitarian emergencies and to tackle the adverse effects of climate change, including by strengthening adaptation capacities and mechanisms governing access to natural resources. The Peacebuilding Commission had noted the recommendations of local stakeholders, including increased financing for women and youth-led initiatives, and it had called for stronger alliances with financial institutions for more integrated and sustainable efforts, including by addressing the issue of over consumption.

47. Third, there was continuing demand for the Peacebuilding Fund's support in areas where displaced and returnee populations, and host communities, experienced tensions or conflicts related to access to arable land. Between 2017 and 2021, the Fund had helped countries, at their request, to tackle challenges, including transborder farmer-herder conflicts and the scarcity of natural resources. It was necessary to continue to identify creative peacebuilding, financing and non-financial contributions, such as capacity-building and technical cooperation, for lasting peace and sustainable development, including through regional, South-South and triangular cooperation.

48. Lastly, the consequences of conflicts, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change had pushed the most affected countries further off-track from meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 2 on zero hunger. National ownership and collective international collaboration were critical to advancing progress on the Goals. Communities needed to be able to absorb the effects of crises, overcome disruptions and adapt. There had been national and local calls for additional support, including in capacity-building and in responsive, effective and accountable governance. Coherent international action and effective financing mechanisms were necessary to support nationally-owned and nationally-led inclusive efforts for food security and peacebuilding.

49. **Ms. Guarnieri** (Assistant Executive Director of the Operations Services Department of the World Food Programme), panellist, in a pre-recorded video statement, said that the world was facing a year of unprecedented humanitarian needs, with a perfect storm of climate shocks, conflict, COVID-19 and spiralling costs of food, fuel and fertilizer, driving millions closer to starvation and creating a band of hunger hotspots around the world.

50. In just two years, the number of severely food-insecure people had doubled and the effects of the war in Ukraine were expected to drive the number of people facing acute hunger to 323 million. Record numbers of people were teetering on the edge of famine, with starvation and death a daily reality. The situations were particularly concerning in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, where, in the latter two countries, food rations had been cut due to funding constraints.

51. Inflation was driving up operational costs and funding for humanitarian action was not keeping pace with growing needs. Failing to address the unfolding food crises at the level required and across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus would have tremendous implications, which could include governance failures, social unrest and further displacements. Action and investment were needed to help mitigate and prevent famine.

52. The food security and nutrition of women and girls demanded particular attention. Women contributed to more than 50 per cent of food produced yet accounted for 70 per cent of the world's hungry. Economic shocks affected women and girls disproportionately, being the first to lose jobs, to reduce meals when food was scarce and to be pulled out of school or forced into early marriages. The root causes of gender inequalities must therefore be addressed and the economic empowerment of women and girls must be advanced in order to achieve zero hunger.

53. It was necessary to replace business-as-usual with a renewed focus and new commitment to working differently, together. The world was at a critical crossroads. If the challenge of meeting immediate needs while strengthening national systems and building longer-term resilience at scale was not met, bigger problems would arise. Success, or the effective reduction of humanitarian need, would be represented by increased resilience of populations, convergence of geographical coverage, a minimum level of stability to ensure access to services, appropriate structures to allow for programmatic flexibility and agility to accommodate

sudden shocks and partnerships based on comparative advantage and skillsets.

54. There was a wide proliferation of initiatives and networks to address the crisis in Ukraine and its global impact. It was necessary to connect the dots between them, to identify comparative advantages, to use limited resources efficiently and to work in concert, including cooperation between the United Nations and international financial institutions and across multilateral and bilateral stakeholders.

55. The World Food Programme could be counted on to meet immediate needs with food and cash support, to assist nations to strengthen safety nets, to make social protection systems and food systems more efficient and more inclusive, to work with partners to restore degraded land, to help communities adapt their livelihoods and to build resilience in the face of climate and other shocks.

56. **Mr. Rae** (Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations and Chair of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti), panellist, said that the Advisory Group comprised 19 Member States that were committed to making sure that the long-term development of Haiti was accompanied by socioeconomic recovery, reconstruction and stability. The two new members that had recently joined the Advisory Group, namely the Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, reflected the growing interest in the development of Haiti.

57. The complex and multidimensional challenges facing Haiti seriously threatened its prospects for sustainable development, and the situation had deteriorated over time. In addition to the global challenges, which were well-known, the assassination of the President of Haiti in July 2021 and reconstruction needs persisting in the aftermath of the natural disasters endured the same year had only compounded the country's troubles domestically, such that nearly half of its population now needed humanitarian assistance. Food insecurity and hunger at an emergency level were rooted in a high dependence on food imports, weak governance and poor performance of the agricultural sector. The overall situation had been exacerbated by the recent earthquakes and flooding, and shortages had caused prices to spike. Kidnappings, violations of human rights and sexual-based violence by heavily armed gangs also posed a threat to civilians, as well as United Nations and humanitarian workers, pushing more Haitians to leave the country and thus having dramatic implications for the region.

58. As previous attempts at solving the deep-seated structural problems in Haiti had absolutely failed, any viable solutions in the future must be led by the Haitian people themselves. He concluded by drawing attention to key recommendations contained in the most recent report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (E/2022/52), including on combating corruption, addressing the political crises and working towards the holding of credible, free, fair and transparent legislative and presidential elections. In confronting the challenges ahead in Haiti, despair was not an option and even though past efforts had failed, the people of the country had demonstrated their resilience and the international community should stand with Haitians now and in the future.

59. **Mr. Dieye** (Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel), panellist, said that time was of the essence in delivering results in terms of food security in the Sahel. There was no shortage of policy frameworks for the region, and in view of the commitments made at past conferences, there should now be a moratorium on studies and even conferences and more effort should be made towards action and implementation. Agriculture and food security should take their rightful places not only in development work but also as part of regional security agendas, and should feature prominently in national plans, budgets and cooperation frameworks. An effort equal to or greater than that made in the collective fight against COVID-19 should be devoted to combating food insecurity, and the current session of the Council should declare a "food pandemic" as a matter of urgency. Great work was being done by FAO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, among others, but it needed to be scaled up further. The areas of greatest return on investment, such as the FAO Digital Village Initiative, should be nurtured so that the younger members of the population would become more involved in food production and agriculture. Public policies must benefit communities and people on the ground, while the private sector, with its many resources, must also invest in food security as part of its corporate social responsibility.

60. **Mr. Quevedo** (General Manager of the Country Department for Central America, Haiti, Mexico, Panama and the Dominican Republic and Country Representative in Costa Rica at the Inter-American Development Bank), panellist, said that the current food crisis, combined with an increase in natural disasters, was also affecting Latin America and the Caribbean, and especially Central America and Haiti. In particular, the high level of food insecurity in Haiti had worsened over the previous few years and the substantial increase in the level of acute food insecurity in the country was proving

difficult to address. The challenges lay not only in the procurement of the food itself, but also in its distribution.

61. The Inter-American Development Bank had adopted a two-pronged approach to the situation. On the demand side, it worked to strengthen social safety nets, including social protection programmes such as the provision of conditional and unconditional cash transfers. While past efforts had focused on the poorest people, the Bank was currently trying also to help those who had already managed to escape from poverty but were at risk of falling back into it. There were special efforts to benefit women, minorities and migrants, who had been particularly affected by the crisis, and food vouchers or direct food transfers could be implemented as complementary measures. To those ends the Bank was preparing a \$60 million cash transfer programme for Haiti and a \$50 million programme for Honduras, both of which it expected to be approved later in 2022.

62. On the supply side, the region had previously had enough food available to sustain itself. However, the system needed to be adapted to changing production patterns and upward pressures on the prices of fertilizer. In that context, Governments should complement demand-side interventions with other programmes, such as providing agricultural vouchers to finance access to fertilizers or other technologies. Such vouchers could help to ease the liquidity constraints experienced by small and medium landholder farmers. In addition, some countries in the region had already implemented temporary reductions of import tariffs on agricultural inputs which, however, could have significant fiscal impacts.

63. All of the above solutions were intended for the short term; moving forward, it would be important to coordinate with the Council, multilateral development institutions and United Nations agencies to aid a transition from emergency measures to a medium-term framework.

64. **Mr. Zhang** Qingfeng (Chief, Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the war in Ukraine had come at a time when the world, and the Asia-Pacific region in particular, was already suffering from record-high food prices. Unsustainable farming practices, climate change, social unrest and economic shocks such as COVID-19 had already led food prices in Asia to a very high level in February 2022.

65. Russia and Ukraine ranked among the top three global exporters of essential commodities, including wheat, maize, sunflower oil, sunflower seed, rapeseed and barley. Thirteen countries in the Asia-Pacific region

imported more than 30 per cent of at least one essential commodity from either Russia or Ukraine. While countries such as Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Myanmar were already facing acute food insecurity, it was important to note that other countries in the region, such as the Philippines, Pakistan and Mongolia, were also highly dependent on imported staples from other countries. The war in Ukraine had significantly increased the cost of agricultural production in the Asia-Pacific region, and restricted fertilizer supplies from Russia had caused further increases in prices.

66. The Asian Development Bank was now addressing the food crisis and short-term responses in four concrete ways. First, it was supporting its developing member countries, particularly those facing food crises and food insecurity, in order to provide a social safety net. In Sri Lanka, for instance, the Bank was repurposing its existing sovereign loans of approximately \$200 million to support social protection and provide a social safety net. In Afghanistan and Myanmar, it was continuing to work with partners, particularly the World Food Programme, to address severe food insecurity through emergency food assistance and food-for-work and cash transfer programmes to improve purchasing power for such assistance.

67. Second, the Bank was strengthening its Countercyclical Support Facility to provide fast disbursing financing to its developing member countries in order to mitigate the impact of major shocks to food security. Such facilities for the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were currently being prepared.

68. Third, the non-sovereign private sector operations of the Bank were now engaged in supporting the responses to the food crisis in an amount of approximately \$2 billion, which was being provided to address the food supply chain issues. That support included direct agribusiness lending for staple food working capital and liquidity in 15 developing member countries; financial institution lending to food and agriculture micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises borrowers in seven developing member countries; trade and supply chain financing programmes to provide guarantees and loans to banks for food-related transactions in 15 developing member countries; and microfinancing programmes as guarantees to banks for lending to microfinance institutions in six developing member countries.

69. The fourth measure taken by the Bank was to mitigate current fertilizer shortages in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and other countries by providing procurement support, particularly through commodity companies, to

increase fertilizer imports. It was also using policy-based lending to help the Philippines to enhance fertilizer use efficiency.

70. For the medium and long term, the Bank was adopting climate-smart agriculture, digitalization of agricultural value chains and nature-based solutions to create future food systems that were stronger and more resilient. It was now developing an innovative natural capital financing facility to attract natural capital investments to build better food systems that would be more sustainable and resilient and involve fewer chemicals.

71. **Ms. Gros** (Deputy Country Director in Burkina Faso for Action Against Hunger), panellist, speaking via video link, said that Burkina Faso was suffering from chronic hunger and poverty, among other issues, which were compounded by climate change, COVID-19 and the conflict in Ukraine. Humanitarian responses to the crises were becoming more difficult as the space for their work was shrinking in the Sahel. Armed actors were imposing de facto blockades in certain localities, impeding humanitarian assistance and preventing access to pasture, crop fields and harvests.

72. In order for everyone to work in the same direction, all participants at the present meeting should recognize and tackle the root causes of hunger and food insecurity, conflict, climate change, social and gender inequality, a lack of basic social services, food sovereignty and weak governance systems. The importance of coordination and multisectoral approaches could not be understated, particularly in conflict settings. The current food crisis required not only the delivery of food aid, but also health care, nutrition, safe water, sanitation and hygiene. If work continued in silos, people would keep selling their food rations to pay for health care; without access to water and sanitation, food distribution would not end malnutrition. All actors must commit to respecting the principles of impartiality and neutrality and to disconnect the political and security agenda from food safety imperatives.

73. In designing sanctions and implementing counterterrorism measures, it was crucial to take into account their effects on peoples' livelihoods. It was also vital to reduce the reliance on humanitarian aid through innovative means. Indeed, many households would rather receive support to launch a small business or restore livestock than receive a food ration for a couple of months. However, they could not afford to wait for results of strategic approaches over 30-year time spans. Anticipatory action and early-warning systems needed to be strengthened and financed. Waiting for

consolidated data meant that action would be taken too late.

74. Women and girls were the most affected by hunger as a result of institutionalized discrimination and were the first to adopt negative coping strategies, such as eating less, and last. Their lack of participation in decision-making at all levels meant that their needs and struggles often went unnoticed.

75. Basic income for the first thousand days of a child's life and access to universal health coverage, including nutritional care and sexual and reproductive health care, would prevent more households from falling into poverty and enable treatment of the malnourished. Sustainable and equitable food systems were also necessary to safeguard the livelihoods of small-scale producers and promote safe, healthy diets and nutrition for all.

76. Over the previous year, several political initiatives on food insecurity had emerged at the global level, but they were heavily politicized and did not meaningfully listen to the voices of local communities and front-line organizations. States must politically and financially strengthen the Committee on World Food Security, the most inclusive body to work on the issues, and use it to advance the appropriate solutions.

77. **Mr. Sillie** (Observer for the Dominican Republic) said that armed conflict, climate change and the difficulty in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic had undeniably deepened food insecurity, thus necessitating the transition from humanitarian aid to sustainability in line with the 2030 Agenda. Investment in anticipatory action needed to be increased substantially, flexible and sustainable resources should be provided, and the most vulnerable groups should be helped in mitigating the impacts of crises. The international community must not turn away from the complex and multidimensional problems in Haiti, which had originated in poverty, marginalization, inequality and violence, particularly the violence inflicted by criminal gangs that intimidated a large part of the population. A joint approach to the humanitarian, development and peace dimensions, as had been taken in South Sudan and the Sahel region, could not be postponed. Hence the appeal to the United Nations system and donor countries to increase their assistance and support.

78. Faced with that reality, it would be unethical to look the other way. In the coming weeks all countries should work closely with the Security Council to overcome the chaotic crisis in Haiti by expanding and adjusting the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti

to support the country on a safe path towards stability, progress and peace.

79. **Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom) said that in order to save lives and livelihoods, countries must heed the recent warning of the Secretary-General about the greatest impending cost-of-living crisis in a generation, which could cause an unprecedented wave of hunger and destitution, as well as economic and social chaos. Demonstrating its role as a leader in humanitarian funding, the United Kingdom had launched a new international development strategy which included £3 billion over the subsequent three years and emphasized the determination to help countries build their own resilience.

80. Better early-warning systems would be important for anticipating new crises and building resilience for protracted and current ones. His country was working with the World Food Programme, FAO, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network to track and share many types of key data. International financial institution funding and innovative finance should be leveraged to build economic resilience. To that end, the United Kingdom had worked with international partners to secure the largest-ever World Bank financial commitment, \$170 billion, to help low-income countries, of which \$30 billion would be dedicated to tackling the problem of food insecurity. A coherent international response was needed, and his country supported the work of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance and was fully committed to efforts by the United States of America and by the Group of Seven under the German presidency.

81. It was also important to ensure the free flow of food and fertilizers to international markets and his country supported the efforts of the Secretary-General in that regard for Ukrainian and Russian exports. The illegal invasion of Ukraine and the blockading of its ports by the Russian Federation were having a severe impact on food security and must end.

82. Lastly, his delegation wished to know what more the United Nations system could do to ensure that its resources were prioritized to those countries at greatest risk.

83. **Mr. Yousfi** (Observer for Morocco) said that the alarming situation of famine and food insecurity required a comprehensive and coordinated response across all relevant stakeholders. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the positive findings contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/233](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of

operational activities for development of the United Nations system ([A/77/69-E/2022/47](#)).

84. There was always room for improvement, however, especially in difficult contexts where humanitarian development and peace challenges intersected. Putting in place the right financial mechanisms and solutions was vital for reinforcing humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts and reducing vulnerabilities in the context of food insecurity. His delegation therefore welcomed the steps taken by the United Nations development system to maximize coherence and thus the impact across existing pooled funds. The importance of a whole-of-system approach for tackling the current food insecurity crisis could not be overemphasized.

85. Lastly, Morocco continued to call for strengthening collaboration among the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, including through thematic dialogues such as in the current meeting.

86. **Ms. Wong** (United States of America) said that the current crises had pushed all countries to examine and improve their ways of working and to develop forward-leaning policies, innovative financial models and capacities and technologies to meet the challenges. The United States was urgently scaling up multisectoral humanitarian assistance, including through new commitments made at the recent Summit of the Americas, responding to the immediate needs of countries facing high food insecurity, and investing in data analysis to anticipate food security crises on the horizon. It was working with the Famine Early Warning Systems Network of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other groups to forecast the impacts of rising prices of food, fertilizer and oil and was making efforts to improve access to basic services, such as health care and water, in protracted crises.

87. A key component of the response was to bring in new donors, foundations, development actors and the private sector. Recognizing the importance of the international financial institutions, the United States wished to leverage their data, research and development tools for the benefit of stressed populations who should be included in development programming. USAID and the United States Government were putting local actors in the lead, especially women and other marginalized groups and their knowledge, so that they would no longer be left out of conversations about their own futures. It was important to fundamentally reimagine how to work in fragile contexts and recognize that

assistance was just one component that needed to be complemented by diplomacy, security cooperation, economic statecraft and other policy levers.

88. **Mr. Louis** (Observer for Haiti) said that his delegation fully endorsed the recommendations contained in the most recent report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (E/2022/52). It called on the international community to support his country financially and technically on the path towards food security and to adequately invest in agriculture, education and health care in Haiti. Despite the efforts and initiatives undertaken by the authorities in Haiti to implement sustainable development and eradicate poverty and hunger, the country was confronted by major challenges and vulnerabilities. His delegation therefore encouraged the international community to invest and mobilize the resources necessary to relaunch the economy of Haiti, including by supporting job creation, broadening social protection and creating a sustainable food system.

89. **Mr. Milambo** (Observer for Zambia) said that his delegation was deeply concerned about the loss of life, humanitarian impact, displacement of persons and rising food insecurity brought about by conflict, including in Ukraine. It was also concerned about the increasing costs of certain grains, agricultural chemicals and commodities such as oil, which contributed to instability in Zambia. Against the backdrop of efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the shocks in the global economy had left many of the least developed countries food insecure and saddled with high debt burdens. His delegation appreciated the remarks made by the IMF representative regarding debt and encouraged the Fund to move ahead with the Fund's Resilience and Sustainability Trust and its strategy for Fragile and Conflict-affected States.

90. In Zambia there were efforts to address food loss and food waste and to enhance social protection through support from the World Bank. At the global level, his delegation supported the call for action made by the United States and supported the statements of the United Kingdom and Morocco that a comprehensive and coordinated approach was needed.

91. Investment should be made in sustainable food and nutrition security by strengthening food systems and making them more resilient to increasing risks such as conflict, climate change, plant pests and diseases, trade disruptions and economic shocks. His delegation encouraged dialogue among stakeholders to build consensus and commitment and to facilitate unhindered food trade and avoid export restrictions that affected global food prices. On the supply side, there should be

a focus on the use of efficient fertilizers and repurposing public policies and expenditures to better support farmers. The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme should be replenished to support smallholder farmers and increase their productivity. Consumers should be supported by scaling up nutrition and social protection programmes. Decisive collective action on the issue was important and FAO and other agencies based in Rome were encouraged to continue with their analyses.

92. **Mr. Koba** (Indonesia) said that in the immediate term, adequate humanitarian assistance needed to be provided for the benefit of people living in conflict areas, without reducing commitments to provide development assistance. Access to humanitarian relief must be allowed and facilitated by States that were parties to conflicts. The available stockpiles of food commodities from Ukraine and the Russian Federation should be brought to the market to address the current food crisis. Indonesia supported the efforts of the Secretary-General as detailed in the relevant policy briefs. Hunger must not be used as a method of warfare and parties to conflict must continue to respect international law, including international humanitarian law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. Collaboration should continue to be strengthened in the area of humanitarian development, as it was the only hope for addressing such enormous challenges.

93. **Mr. Sapkul** (Thailand) said that it was more important than ever to keep the global food supply chain intact and open for seamless cross-border delivery of food and fertilizers and to ensure that agriculture systems were more resilient to future uncertainties. His delegation also called for all countries to refrain from food export restrictions in any manner inconsistent with the WTO rules.

94. Thailand was committed to refraining from imposing export bans on foodstuffs purchased through the World Food Programme. Food should not be a part of United Nations sanctions. As one of the world largest food exporters, his country championed best practices, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, and advocated the "bio-circular-green" economic model as a new paradigm for sustainable growth and resilience-building. Thailand was also committed to the Food Security Road Map Towards 2030 emanating from the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial Meeting on Food Security, and had conducted a project to enhance the competitiveness of green micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and promote waste reduction in the food supply chain. Only concerted and coordinated efforts would enable

the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by the end of the decade.

95. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) said that his country was greatly concerned by the food crisis but that the risks had been known by the United Nations two years ago. Recently increasing food prices were the consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the short-sighted energy policies of major Western economies, trade wars, unfavourable weather conditions, illegitimate unilateral sanctions by the West against the Russian Federation and underinvestment in the food industry. According to data and information from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, there was no physical deficit of foodstuffs. The unilateral and illegitimate restrictions imposed on his country by the West had created significant problems in areas such as the supply chain, cargo shipping, transactions and customs.

96. His delegation supported the work of the United Nations towards an open dialogue to resolve the situation in the world market for foodstuffs. The purpose of such negotiations should be to normalize conditions to increase Russian exports of foodstuffs and fertilizers, a challenge that was directly connected to the unilateral sanctions, which undermined global food security and affected many countries, including those in Africa. Any assistance should be fully in line with the national priorities of the beneficiary countries and enable them to achieve self-sufficiency in food, including through the development of school food programmes, wherein the roles played by FAO and the World Food Programme were very important.

97. **Ms. Deoz** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the current situation was a result of food systems that had not been reformed, and Switzerland intended to apply the lessons learned during the pandemic to address it. It would be important to identify the resources and the value added by each institution as part of a coherent response. Several alliances and national pathways born of the Food Systems Summit, and well as the Global Alliance for Food Security, had shown the way forward. More efficient, resilient and durable food systems were needed, which meant reinforcing systems and preserving past investments.

98. In the short term, humanitarian actors should invest more in the protection of, and accountability towards, those affected, including through the “localization of aid” agenda, which was intended to diversify the humanitarian community. Making the most of the abilities and knowledge of local actors, particularly women, was central to the priorities of Switzerland. In the medium term, a nexus approach

must be favoured and, in the long term, resilience, food-for-assets and circular economy programmes must become more commonplace. Her country was committed to ensuring easy access to markets for farmers and the private sector.

99. Improving efficiency was a major challenge because the resources currently invested were insufficient. The quality of funding needed to be improved through flexible funds of partner organizations to achieve a leveraging effect and greater benefit for a reformed global food system centred around the consumer. As a future member of the Security Council, Switzerland was fully committed to resolving conflicts and breaking the cycle of hunger. It would be necessary to prevent armed conflict, respect international humanitarian law and ensure that humanitarian aid reached its destinations. Her delegation called on all parties to armed conflict to assume their primary responsibility to address the needs of the civilian population and, failing that, to authorize and facilitate rapid humanitarian access that was safe, sustainable and unhindered to the populations in need.

100. Accountability was essential for dissuading potential violators and bringing them to justice. Cases where the crime of famine had been committed in armed conflict settings could now be referred to the International Criminal Court. Her delegation therefore strongly encouraged the States parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to ratify the relevant amendment to the Rome Statute, whereby the intentional starvation of civilians would be treated as a war crime in a non-international armed conflict. She also called on United Nations Member States to criminalize such acts in their national legislation.

101. **Mr. Rupende** (Zimbabwe) said that national ownership of transition processes was a key factor in successful and sustainable recovery, development and peace. Disaster risk reduction and management must be included in development programming to mitigate the devastating consequences of unexpected conflicts and disasters. Humanitarian assistance should build a solid foundation to complement long-term development objectives. Zimbabwe, a landlocked developing country, was at high risk of impact from the global climate and food security crises, particularly as a result of drought, and was also faced with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and the unilateral coercive measures imposed on the country by some Western powers. His delegation remained grateful to the partners who continued to work with his Government to respond to those complex situations, and through Government-led coordination structures, Zimbabwe was providing

multisectoral, life-saving services to affected communities.

102. **Ms. Tangen** (Observer for Norway) said that humanitarian access was often an enormous challenge in conflict-induced crisis situations, and was being continuously hampered by violence, insecurity, corruption and bureaucratic constraints. The links between climate change, conflict and hunger must therefore be recognized and addressed. Member States must increase their high-quality financing and flexible funding to support responses to sudden crisis and to enable anticipatory action and the use of funds where they were most urgently needed. Her delegation called for close cooperation among actors across the nexus between humanitarian, development and peace efforts. The countries closest to the brink of conflict-induced famine were often facing protracted crisis situations where humanitarian intervention was not enough. Food assistance and cash interventions must be supported by actions to protect livelihoods. Investment in sustainable food systems must target those most in need, particularly female small-scale farmers. Gender equality must also be at the forefront of a coordinated response.

103. **Ms. Sandller** (Argentina) said that food insecurity was a multifaceted challenge that was making it difficult to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2. Agricultural business historically had faced many barriers because of distorting subsidies, which meant that efficient producers like Argentina were not able to properly invest and increase production. Her delegation was concerned that WTO did not discuss such matters adequately to end food insecurity. If world trade in farming was not reformed it would not be possible to achieve the Goals. Argentina was therefore working constructively to ensure that WTO had the leadership it needed to reform agriculture in a way that would be based on rules and no longer on distortion. The existing rules had been agreed more than 25 years ago and needed to be updated. Those distorting subsidies had increased in recent years and made it impossible to achieve global food security, thereby affecting human health. Multilateralism should provide solutions by taking into account local realities and national situations while respecting the principle of common but shared responsibilities. Reform should be sustainable, and no one pillar of sustainable development should be favoured over any other. Her country wanted to fulfil its role as a producer and exporter of nutritional food as it had done during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the hope that it could contribute to ending poverty and hunger while raising incomes through the sustainable use of natural resources.

104. **Mr. Torero Cullen** (Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that the problems were clear and that sustainable solutions were now needed. To transform the agrifood system it would be necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable countries, involving a combination of not only direct cash and food assistance, but also inputs and support to agrifood system supply chains.

105. Improving resilience would require early warning systems to cope with known risks, and increasing countries' absorption capacities would ensure that the global food supply system would be on a better footing than it had been during the current conflict in Ukraine. Another key component of the overall solution was increased investment in agrifood system infrastructure to improve preparedness.

106. Lastly, improving efficiency required reducing food loss and waste. Waste could be reduced quickly through behavioural change and policy, while loss would take longer to address in a more targeted manner. It would also be necessary to increase efficiency in the use of inputs, especially fertilizer, and improve access to trade.

107. **Mr. Powell** (Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations), responding to the question posed by the representative of the United Kingdom, said that all United Nations system agencies adhered to their mandates and focused on their comparative advantages. Strategies should be comprehensive and prioritized, and country ownership was absolutely critical for long-term development. Exchange of information among agencies was also important, particularly in the field. Resident coordinators from the United Nations development system should work closely with their counterparts from IMF and the World Bank. More broadly, there was already good coordination among the international financial institutions, and, as evident from the current discussion, there was sufficient common understanding of the challenges.

108. **Mr. Dieye** (Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel) said that it was clear from experience with the pandemic that collective investment during development emergencies produced high returns, hence the integrated nexus approach to intervention. The solutions were known but the resources needed to be scaled up; where resources were already available, more coordination, integration and action were needed. Countries should also ensure that food security and agricultural production were prioritized in national budgets, and investment by the private sector in

agriculture should be considered a matter of corporate social responsibility.

109. **Mr. Quevedo** (General Manager of the Country Department for Central America, Haiti, Mexico, Panama and the Dominican Republic and Country Representative in Costa Rica at the Inter-American Development Bank) said that the Inter-American Development Bank had a solid track record of providing financial and technical assistance to address food insecurity in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, and would continue to do so. The Bank would also strengthen food system resilience using a medium-term approach to avoid future crises and continue to coordinate with other international financial institutions.

110. **Mr. Zhang Qingfeng** (Chief, Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank), speaking via video link, said that cooperation on food security needed to be enhanced among Governments in the Asia-Pacific region, and in the short term they should be convinced not to ban food exports. In the long term, trade barriers should be dismantled to create stronger agricultural value chains and empower agribusiness to become more resilient producers and distributors of food. The 350 million smallholder farmers in Asia, who produced around 30 per cent of the food for the region, should be supported during the transformation of the food production system as they transitioned to crops and methods that were less dependent on chemicals and less damaging to the environment. The important roles of digital technologies and early warning systems should also be recognized and fully utilized.

111. **Ms. Gros** (Deputy Country Director in Burkina Faso for Action Against Hunger), speaking via video link, said that a multisectoral and multi-level response was needed to the current crisis, including by supporting the Committee on World Food Security. At the same time, localized and contextualized approaches that accounted for feedback from affected populations, particularly women, should be implemented. Priority should be given to developing universal health care coverage and basic income security during the first thousand days of a child's life. Food systems should be transformed to achieve food sovereignty based on agro-ecology and small-scale producers. Legal and administrative barriers to immediate life-saving interventions and humanitarian assistance should be lifted to ensure universal access to basic social services.

112. **Ms. Rainne** (Co-Chair), in her concluding remarks, said that it would be necessary to build the long-term resilience of vulnerable populations, address

the structural causes of hunger and reduce needs over time, all of which required the use of innovative financing for investment in development. The areas currently at highest risk of famine were those where conflict had become protracted and lawless, and development actors needed to be able to operate better in such places.

113. **Mr. Pary Rodríguez** (Co-Chair), in his concluding remarks, said that in view of the current situation, a collective response of development and humanitarian assistance was needed. Inequality had been exacerbated by a combination of factors and it was one of the main causes of poverty, conflict and food insecurity. The data presented and specific experiences of Haiti, South Sudan, the Sahel and Burkina Faso clearly showed the long-standing gaps in development in terms of access to natural resources, water and land. Reversing those discrepancies should be the central aim of the multisectoral approach. Production and distribution systems should be stabilized and the food security system should be more diversified and resilient.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.