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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 3 April 2024

55/4. The right to food

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling all previous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the right to food, and all resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights on the issue,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her health and well-being, including food, the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular Millennium Development Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals on ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition, achieving food security and improved nutrition, promoting sustainable agriculture and ending poverty in all its forms everywhere,

Recalling further the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

Recalling the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, one of the strategic thrusts of which is focused on increasing funding efforts to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition, support sustainable agriculture and food systems, revitalize the agricultural sector, promote rural development and ensure food security and nutrition,

Recalling also the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and that they must be treated globally, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Bearing in mind the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, adopted at the World Food Summit in November 1996, the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted on 13 June 2002, the



Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2004, and the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security, adopted on 16 November 2009, and reaffirming the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, and the recommendations and commitments made therein,

Stressing the importance of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its Framework for Action, adopted at the second International Conference on Nutrition, held in Rome on 21 November 2014,

Taking note with appreciation of the United Nations Food Systems Summit, convened by the Secretary-General and held on 23 September 2021,

Taking note of the work done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food,

Acknowledging that the right to food has been recognized as the right of every individual, alone or in community with others, to have physical and economic access at all times to sufficient, adequate and nutritious food, in conformity with, inter alia, the culture, beliefs, traditions, dietary habits and preferences of individuals, and that is produced and consumed sustainably, thereby preserving access to food for future generations,

Reaffirming that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment at both the national and international levels is the essential foundation that will enable States to give adequate priority to food security, nutrition and poverty eradication,

Recognizing the urgent need to realize the right to food through a coordinated and sustained effort, using the advantages and synergies offered by international cooperation and solidarity to find comprehensive solutions to the common present and future problems facing humanity,

Reiterating that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, and the absolute necessity of refraining from unilateral measures that are not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger the food security and nutrition of affected countries,

Reaffirming that food security and nutrition are a national responsibility, and that any plan for addressing food security and nutrition challenges must be nationally articulated, designed, owned and led, and built on consultation with all key stakeholders,

Recognizing the urgency of strengthening the multilateral system in the channelling of material, financial and human resources and in the promotion of policies dedicated to fighting hunger and all forms of malnutrition,

Recognizing also the complex character of food insecurity and its likely recurrence owing to a combination of several major factors, such as the effects of the global financial and economic crisis, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, desertification and the impact of global climate change, drought, natural disasters and the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as poverty, excessive population growth, armed conflicts, excessive volatility in commodity prices and the lack in many countries of the appropriate technology, investment and capacity-building necessary to confront its impact, in particular in developing countries, including landlocked developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States, and the need for coherence and collaboration between international institutions at the global level,

Expressing its deep concern at the negative effects of all armed conflicts on the enjoyment of the right to food,

Expressing its deep concern also at the number and scale of human-made and natural disasters, diseases and pest infestations, as well as the negative impact of climate change, and their increasing impact in recent years, which have, in combination with other factors, resulted in substantial loss of life and livelihood and threatened agricultural production and food security and nutrition, in particular in developing countries,

Recognizing in that regard that the crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity, including through its devastating impact on the livelihoods of people, agriculture and food systems, value chains, food prices, food security and nutrition,

Recognizing also that urgent steps are needed to address food insecurity for the poorest people and people in the most vulnerable situations, and that measures aimed at providing immediate support to satisfy people's dietary needs should be put in place, including the provision of food and nutrition assistance, as appropriate,

Expressing its deep concern at the negative effects of the double burden of malnutrition, experiencing a rapid upsurge in non-communicable disease risk factors, such as obesity and overweight,

Emphasizing the need to urgently assist countries that are disproportionately affected by climate change and are facing drought, plague, starvation and famine-related threats that could affect millions of people, most of whom are women and children,

Stressing the need to increase official development assistance devoted to agriculture, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance, and recognizing that small- and medium-scale farmers and artisanal and small-scale fishers in developing countries need to receive technical, technology transfer and capacity-building support to strengthen their economic participation and to secure their income and financial means,

Recognizing the importance of the protection, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in guaranteeing food security, nutrition and the right to food for all,

Emphasizing the role of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as an essential agency of the United Nations system in leading international efforts to end hunger, achieve food security for all and ensure regular and permanent access to quality food, in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other essential needs, based on health-promoting food practices respecting cultural diversity that are environmentally, culturally, economically and socially sustainable, and in supporting the efforts of Member States to achieve the full realization of the right to food, inter alia by providing technical assistance to developing countries for the development of their national priority frameworks,

Recognizing the role of the Committee on World Food Security as an inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards eliminating hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings,

Acknowledging the contribution of relevant inter-agency mechanisms, such as the quadripartite collaboration among the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Organization for Animal Health, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, to promoting cooperation and guidance towards safe and sustainable food supplies and practices,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity, and therefore requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;

2. *Also reaffirms* 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, so as to be able to fully develop and maintain his or her physical and mental capacities;

3. *Expresses deep concern* that 345 million people suffered severe food insecurity in 2023 and 783 million suffered from extreme hunger, according to the World Food Programme;¹

4. *Also expresses deep concern* at the existing setbacks to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2, aimed at eradicating poverty, hunger and all forms

¹ World Food Programme, "A global food crisis", available at <https://wfp.org/global-hunger-crisis>.

of malnutrition, and at the imminent and increasing danger that the targets outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be missed;

5. *Considers it intolerable* that, as estimated by the United Nations Children's Fund, nearly half of all deaths of children under the age of 5 are attributable to undernutrition, which puts children at greater risk of dying from common infections, increases the frequency and severity of such infections and delays recovery;

6. *Expresses its great concern* that, while women contribute more than 50 per cent of the food produced worldwide, they also account for 70 per cent of the world's hungry, that women and girls are disproportionately affected by hunger, malnutrition, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality and discrimination; that, in many countries, girls are twice as likely as boys to die from malnutrition and preventable childhood diseases; and that it is estimated that almost twice as many women as men suffer from malnutrition;

7. *Encourages* all States to mainstream a gender perspective in food security and nutrition programmes and to take action to address de jure and de facto gender inequality and discrimination against women and girls, in particular where such inequality and discrimination contribute to the malnutrition of women and girls, including by taking measures to ensure the full and equal realization of the right to food and taking steps to ensure that women and girls have equal access to social protection and resources, including income, land and water, and their ownership, and full and equal access to health care, education, science and technology, to enable them to feed themselves and their families, and in this regard stresses the need to empower women and to strengthen their role in decision-making;

8. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food;²

9. *Recognizes* the importance of giving due consideration to the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food;

10. *Reiterates* that improving access to productive resources and responsible public investment in rural development, taking into consideration the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, as endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security, is essential for eradicating hunger and poverty, in particular in developing countries, including through the promotion of investment, including private investment, in appropriate small-scale irrigation and water management technologies in order to reduce vulnerability to and recover from droughts, tackle water scarcity and ensure the preservation and sustainable use of ecosystems;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of smallholder and family farmers, peasants and artisanal and small-scale fishers in developing countries, including women, and Indigenous Peoples, in ensuring food security and nutrition, reducing poverty and preserving ecosystems, and the need to assist their development;

12. *Reaffirms* the need to ensure that programmes delivering safe, sufficient, nutritious and culturally accepted food are inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities;

13. *Encourages* States to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and, as soon as possible, to enjoy fully the right to food, and, where appropriate, to consider establishing appropriate institutional mechanisms and adopting national policies to combat hunger;

14. *Recognizes* the advances made through South-South and triangular cooperation in developing countries and regions in connection with food security and nutrition and the development of agricultural production for the full realization of the right to food, while reaffirming the key role of North-South cooperation;

15. *Also recognizes* the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, inter alia, traditional seed supply systems, and access to locally adapted seeds, including for many Indigenous Peoples and local communities;

² A/HRC/55/49.

16. *Stresses* that the primary responsibility of States is to promote and protect the right to food, including in humanitarian emergencies, and that the international community should provide, through a coordinated response and upon request, international cooperation in support of national and regional efforts by providing the assistance necessary to increase food production and access to food, in particular through agricultural development assistance, the transfer of technology, capacity-building, technical assistance, the fulfilment of official development assistance commitments, food crop rehabilitation assistance and food aid, achieving food security, with special attention paid to the specific needs of women and girls, and promoting support for the development of adapted technologies, research on rural advisory services and support for access to financing services, and to ensure support for the establishment of secure land tenure systems;

17. *Calls upon* States to consider reviewing any policy or measure that could have a negative impact on the realization of the right to food, in particular the right of everyone to be free from hunger, before instituting such a policy or measure;

18. *Recalls* the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, and acknowledges that many Indigenous organizations and representatives of Indigenous Peoples have expressed in different forums their deep concern over the obstacles and challenges to the full enjoyment of the right to food that Indigenous Peoples face, and calls upon States to take action to address those obstacles and challenges and the continuous discrimination against Indigenous Peoples;

19. *Recognizes* the contributions of peasants, smallholders, family farmers, other people working and living in rural areas and artisanal and small-scale fishers in all regions of the world to development and in ensuring the right to food, food security and nutrition, which are fundamental to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the 2030 Agenda;

20. *Stresses* that all States should make every effort to ensure that their international policies of a political and economic nature, including international trade agreements and tariff and non-tariff measures, do not have a negative impact on the right to food in other countries;

21. *Invites* all relevant international organizations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to avoid any actions that could have a negative impact on the realization of the right to food;

22. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to continue to take into account the links between human rights and trade policy perspectives, agriculture, artisanal and small-scale fisheries, food systems and global governance, and to cooperate with relevant international organizations to ensure that the international trade regime and the global economic architecture are geared to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to food;

23. *Also encourages* the Special Rapporteur to continue to mainstream a gender perspective in the fulfilment of his mandate, and encourages the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and all other United Nations bodies and mechanisms that address the right to food and food insecurity to integrate and effectively implement a gender perspective in their relevant policies, programmes and activities regarding access to food;

24. *Further encourages* the Special Rapporteur to continue his collaboration with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and international financial institutions, and to facilitate the cooperation among them, in order to contribute to ensuring that the right to food is promoted further within these organizations, in accordance with their mandates, including for the advancement of smallholders, agricultural workers and artisanal and small-scale fishers in both developing and least developed countries;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide all the human and financial resources necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

26. *Calls upon* all Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur by supplying all necessary information requested by the mandate holder, and to

give serious consideration to responding favourably to the requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries to enable more effective fulfilment of the mandate;

27. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of the mandate through, inter alia, the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;

28. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to report annually on the implementation of the mandate to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly in accordance with their programmes of work;

29. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter under the same agenda item in accordance with its programme of work.

*53rd meeting
3 April 2024*

[Adopted without a vote.]
