

Background for the Global Parliamentary Summit against hunger and malnutrition to be held in Madrid on 29 and 30 October 2018.

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I - Introductory Note

On the 29th and 30th of October 2018 the Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition will be held in Madrid. This Summit is a joint initiative of the Spanish Senate, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger. Its main goal is to advance the political will, as expressed by parliaments, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) in order to face the fight against hunger in a world where the estimated number of undernourished people increased to 815 million in 2016¹ and the epidemic of obesity and overweight, that particularly affects medium developed and developed countries is on the rise, reaching more than 1.9 billion of adults overweight in 2016. Of these over 650 million were obese².

The Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger and Malnutrition were born in 2009 in Latin America in response to the need for legislation on food issues and to ensure food security, as well as to contribute to the SDG2 of the UN Agenda 2030. FAO seeks closer collaboration with Parliamentarians, supporting and enhancing the creation of Parliamentary groups/alliances to work towards meeting the mutual commitments on food security and nutrition. In this context, it would be highly appreciated if you could inform the respective Parliament on the abovementioned Global Summit and revert back to us by 02 July 2018.

The brief document below will provide updated information on the: (ii) The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the world; (iii) the Role of Parliamentarians; (iv) The Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition in Madrid and (vi) FAO and Parliamentary Alliances.

II. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the world in 2017³

Key messages

- After a prolonged decline, world hunger appears to be on the rise again. The estimated number of **undernourished** people increased to **815 million** in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015.
- Much of the recent increase in food insecurity can be traced to the greater number of conflicts, often exacerbated by climate-related shocks.
- Even in some peaceful settings, food security has deteriorated as economic slowdowns challenge access to food for the poor.
- The worrying trend in undernourishment is not yet reflected in levels of chronic child malnutrition (stunting), which continue to fall – but at a slower rate in several regions.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

² <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>

³ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7695e.pdf>

- Despite the decline, in 2016 **stunting** still affected **one out of four children** under the age of five years, or **155 million children**. In some regions, stunting affects **one-third** of children under five.
- Wasting continues to threaten the lives of almost **52 million children (8 percent)**.
- Almost **one-third (33 percent)** of women of reproductive age worldwide suffer from anaemia, which also puts the nutrition and health of many children at risk.
- Multiple forms of **malnutrition** are coexisting, with countries experiencing simultaneously high rates of child **undernutrition** and adult **obesity**.
- Child **overweight** and **adult obesity** are on the rise, including in low- and middle-income countries.
- Worldwide, an estimated 41 million children under five were considered overweight in 2016, up from 5 percent in 2005.
- The global prevalence of obesity more than doubled between 1980 and 2014. In 2014, more than 600 million adults were obese, equal to about 13 percent of the world's adult population.
- In 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight⁴

III – The Role of Parliamentarians

Evidence has shown that the improvement in food security and nutrition is principally due to policies, programs and frameworks that are anchored in legislation. Parliamentarians, as fundamental custodians of political commitments on food security and nutrition, are critical partners in achieving food security and nutrition. They actually have an essential role in promoting and/or enact as appropriate, legislative and other measures to address specific issues on food security and nutrition; raising awareness on the aforementioned issues, including with their constituencies; providing a dedicated space for dialogue and discussion; and promoting dialogue and exchange of experiences with other Parliamentarians and Parliamentary bodies around the world.

Several governments worldwide are considering interventions to improve Food Security and Nutrition, among them for instance, the Chilean government has recently approved a regulation (law 20606/2012), aimed at improving consumers' knowledge on the content of food products'

⁴ <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>

nutrients, by including front-of-packages labelling in products high in sodium, total sugar, saturated fat, and energy.

The Law 20.606 establishes the conditions related to the production, import, processing, packaging, storage, distribution and sale of food intended for human consumption, ensuring that the process of food preparation observes good manufacturing practices and that the packaging or labels specifies the ingredients contained. Furthermore, **the law 20.869** establishes provisions related to food advertising. In particular, it is forbidden the advertising that encourages the consumption of food labeled as high in calories or high in salt (according to the Law No. 20,606). In line with this, it also establishes the following form of labeling: an octagonal symbol with a black and white border and text "high" followed by "saturated fat," "sodium "" sugar "or" Calories".



Another relevant example of parliamentary work is represented by the [Model Law on Family Farming](#) of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), developed with the support of the FAO and the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID). The law is aimed at providing legal and technical instruments to the lawmakers so that the importance of family farming is reconsidered, in terms of facing issues regarding hunger, malnutrition, and obesity. The provided legal framework will serve the States to define and implement policies and strategies on the preservation, promotion and development of family farming. The model law consists of 31 articles including various elements such as the definition and guiding principles up to the State's obligations; representativeness and participation of civil society; the monitoring and evaluation system; the necessary resources and the adequate financing mechanisms to strengthen family farming.

IV - The Global Parliamentary Summit in Madrid, 29-30 October 2018

The aforementioned scenario makes it an imperative for all stakeholders to be involved in order to achieve food security and nutrition and the SDGs as a whole. This includes governments, Parliamentarians and non-State actors such as Civil Society and the Private Sector. Parliamentarians are best placed to position the issue of food security and nutrition at the highest level of the political and legislative agenda, given their legislative, budgetary and oversight responsibilities, among others. In line with this the FAO has intensified its efforts to support Parliamentarians to work towards meeting the mutual commitments on food security and nutrition, including enacting good laws and advocating for the implementation of related policies and programs that contribute to their effective implementation.

In this context, the *Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition*, to be held in Madrid, aims to bring together parliamentarians from around the world to consolidate the parliamentary political commitment in achieving the SDG 2 at international level, based on the following specific objectives:

- Highlight the specific role and the need for legislative bodies to achieve a world without hunger by 2030;
- Identify and share experiences of good policies and legislative practices, which are fundamental in the fight against hunger and malnutrition;
- Build a network of parliamentary alliances that contribute to the achievement of SDG2: Zero Hunger, progress towards the commitments of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), and the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable people and territories.

V – FAO and Parliamentary Alliances

The Parliamentary Front against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC PFH) was established in 2009 and until today 23 among regional, subregional and national fronts have been established. It is a multi-partisan platform bringing together regional and national legislators interested in the fight against hunger and malnutrition with the aim of positioning food security at the highest level of the political and legislative agenda.

FAO recognizes parliamentarians as key stakeholders for implementing political commitments in the area of food security and nutrition above all when it comes to drafting laws and approving public budgets. Indeed, the FAO Partnerships Unit has enhanced its partnership with this sector at regional and national level facilitating the establishment of more than 30 parliamentary alliances covering several regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean).

A program of technical cooperation with the Pan African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA-FSN) has been developed encouraging the creation of national alliances in Madagascar, Benin and the Republic of the Congo. In the European context, the partnership between FAO and the EU has been strengthened through political dialogue with the parliamentary committees and the establishment of the Parliamentary Alliance “fight against hunger” inside the European Parliament. An Italian parliamentary alliance for food security was also created.

Outreach efforts in the Asian region led to the establishment of the FAO Parliamentarian Friendship League in Japan and a similar perspective in the Philippines.