

**OPEX MEMORANDUM No. 112/2009**

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**SUBJECT:** RESHAPING THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM: LAUNCHING THE "MADRID PROCESS" OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE RIGHT TO FOOD AT THE FOREFRONT

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## **BACKGROUND**

In 2008, hungry people have reached 963 million, 70% of them living in rural areas. Despite years of international anti-hunger efforts, hunger is on the rise. The recent food crisis has unveiled the painful evidence that the figures of hungry people are relentlessly growing since 1990, with an increase by four million people a year. Or since the 1996 World Food Summit, when world leaders committed themselves to reduce hunger figures by half. This commitment was subsequently confirmed during the 2000 Millennium Summit, where this goal was re-worded as the Millennium Development Goal 1: "reducing by half the proportion of hungry people". Failure to redress the anti-hunger policies and programmes of the past two decades is making a mockery of this MDG. Instead of reducing the hungry to around 415 million, the food crisis and the subsequent financial crisis could grow the numbers to 1.1 billion by 2015.

This long-term increasing trend has been boosted by the recent 2007-2008 food crisis, yielding a gloomy figure of 115 million undernourished people<sup>2</sup> more. The food crisis aftermath has already curtailed all hunger-related progress achieved since 1990. Additional to that, there are 55 millions of undernourished children, out of those 20 millions are wasted<sup>3</sup> (suffering from acute malnutrition), what means they will likely pass away or, at best, will survive on the brink to death: 18.000 under five children die of undernutrition and associated diseases every day.

These days, there is a common understanding that world hunger is not a consequence of insufficient food availability but, instead, it is due to uneven food distribution or, more specifically, the insufficient income distribution that enable the poorest quintile of society to purchase a minimum food basket. The food crisis reflects a breakdown in our global food system that threatens to worsen poverty, hunger, climate change, and insecurity in the years ahead. It becomes a sour paradox that the food producers and rural dwellers (small-scale farmers, bushmen, pastoralists, landless) represent more than 75% of the hungry. For decades, trade and investment liberalization have undermined human rights and the environment. The food crisis should help us to understand that now it is time for a new vision of global cooperation, one that is democratic and accountable to people and the planet. Global institutions and governments are responding, yet their answers are vastly inadequate.

## **CONTEXT**

This food crisis was the result of a deadly combination of rapid growth in demand for food, animal feed and biofuels, coupled with disruptions in agricultural supplies caused by poor weather and crop diseases, plus export restrictions in key countries<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, irrational panic triggered by volatility of future markets in the Chicago Cereal Stock Exchange fuelled chaos in international markets, despite the fact that it was not largely a problem of food availability. As a consequence, the year 2008 witnessed many high-level events related with the major "world problem" during part of the year, the food crisis. Needless to say, this high-profiled and media-catching issue was overcome by the financial crisis later on the year.

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<sup>2</sup> FAO Newsroom (15/12/2008): <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/8836/icode/>

<sup>3</sup> Latest figures by WHO (2008) available on line: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

<sup>4</sup> Battisti, D.S. y R. L. Naylor (2009). Historical Warnings of Future Food Insecurity with Unprecedented Seasonal Heat. *Science*, vol. 323. no. 5911, pp. 240 - 244

The ***World Bank's New Deal on Global Food Policy*** was presented during the first term. It calls for building safety nets and increasing loans for agricultural production and trade liberalization. Most analysts suggest this agenda will expand trade flows and transnational agroprocessing consortiums rather than supporting small scale farmers.

In June, the United Nations launched the ***High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis***<sup>5</sup> (UN HLTF) and released a Comprehensive framework for action (CFA)<sup>6</sup>. The CFA recommended immediate steps to provide emergency food assistance, to boost smallholder production, and to adjust trade and taxation rules in support of national priorities. In the long term, the document recommended measures to ensure sustained growth in food availability through smallholder production, increased social protection systems, strengthened food security management systems and improved international food markets<sup>7</sup>. The CFA highly profiles the World Bank and the WTO as the two institutions that will contribute the most to help countries to escape from this food crisis, by means of boosting trade; rather than increasing food production and food access in order to guarantee the right to food to all human beings<sup>8</sup>. It gives the impression that dominant debate is still focused on investment and growth in agriculture based on privatization schemes, deregulation, and trade facilitation. This is exactly the approach that has failed.

The ***High-Level Conference on World Food Security*** was held in FAO Rome on 3-5 June. Although the core themes were initially "the challenges of climate change and bioenergy", it was mostly devoted to talk about the food crisis and measures to mitigate the effects. There were 181 official delegations, led by 42 Heads of State and Government and 100 Ministers, with 60 NGOs and CSOs. Although there were preparatory meetings, commissioned papers and consultations, no relevant decisions to rebuild the damaged global food system were made during that costly event, and only insufficient additional financial pledges were made by some countries, being Spain one of the most relevant<sup>9</sup>. The final declaration called on the international community to increase assistance to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries<sup>10</sup>, and world leaders reaffirmed the right to food, the international cooperation and the high positioning of hunger in the political agendas. If we compare the food crisis envelope (\$12.3 billion US dollars) with recent figures of the financial crisis bailed out envelope (more than \$5 trillion so far), or with the global food bill in 2008 (\$8.5 trillion), the "anti-hunger world effort" seems to be meager. Those funds could be rightly named as "peanuts" that reflect the political profile assigned to world food security in the political-economic agendas of this world in crisis<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> This task force comprises the UN agencies, the Bretton Woods Institutions and WTO, but not the civil society. This is very enlightening: the goal is reconstruct the food system without the producers and the consumers.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations (2008). Comprehensive Framework for Action. High-level Task Force on Global Food Security Crisis. New York

<sup>7</sup> The two-pronged approach is based on the Twin Track approach that was developed by the three Rome-based UN agencies (FAO, WFP and IFAD) in 2002, firstly presented in the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development.

<sup>8</sup> Spielfoch, A. (2008). The Food Crisis and Global Institutions. Foreign Policy in Focus Commentary. August 5, 2008. <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/5442>

<sup>9</sup> In total, over \$12 billion US dollars were pledged, with more than half being "old money" shifted out of health and education aid envelopes. Only nine countries and five international financial institutions made public commitments.

<sup>10</sup> Declaration of the High level Conference on World Food Security: the challenges of climate change and bioenergy. [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/foodclimate/HLCDocs/declaration-E.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/foodclimate/HLCDocs/declaration-E.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> One also notes the existence of a gap between rhetoric used so far and practical actions undertaken. In January 2009, financial disbursements are less than 20% of financial commitments made at this High-level Rome Conference.

The **Doha Development Round** collapsed in July over ongoing disagreements about whether WTO members had the right to protect their food security from import surges<sup>12</sup>. The same month, the 34<sup>th</sup> **G8 Summit** (Hokkaido, Japan) released a statement on global food security, calling for reinvestment in the agricultural sector<sup>13</sup>. Unfortunately, the fulfilment of G8 development-oriented commitments is rather bleak. Moreover, the third **High-Level meeting on Aid-Effectiveness**, held in Ghana in September, did not yield relevant progress either in political or economic commitments. No more funds but better use of current money and a higher donor alignment was the final summary.

**Spain** has had a sound and consistent commitment towards the eradication of hunger since President Zapatero took office in 2004. That very year, he became part of the Quintet against Hunger (formed by presidents of Brazil, France, Chile and the UN Secretary General), a political group whose aim was repositioning hunger in the world agenda and launching financial and technical initiatives to double efforts to end hunger<sup>14</sup>. Since then, Spain has become a major donor, rising its GDP percentage from less than 0.25% up to 0.5% (what amounts more than 5 billion Euro in 2009) becoming one of the major contributors to the UN system<sup>15</sup> and setting the objective of reaching 0.7% before 2012. Regarding hunger and the right to food, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) released the *Fight against Hunger Strategy Paper* in 2008, where Spain's priorities and objectives to eradicate world hunger were presented. In this Strategy, the right to food stands prominently as the structural element throughout the contents. Moreover, last year's extra-budgetary contributions to WFP, FAO and IFAD exceeded 50 million euros. During the High-level Rome Conference, President Zapatero announced a follow up high-level meeting to be hosted in Spain so as to continue advancing in the remedies for the food crisis and the new architecture of the "reformed" agricultural and food system.

## ANALYSIS

The food crisis is not over yet<sup>16</sup>. And another long-term food crisis is already forecasted in next decades, as higher growing season temperatures can have dramatic impacts on agricultural productivity, farm incomes, and food security, reducing food availability in many tropical developing areas by 40%<sup>17</sup>. Although the credit crunch has lowered the food prices, the global economic depression will likely have strong and long-lasting effects on emerging economies, developing countries and the most vulnerable sectors, namely the poor and hungry. Recession will curtail income and employment of the most vulnerable and it will surely undermine investment in agricultural production. And we all know how meagre was investment in rural areas in the last two decades. As public spending in agricultural research and development in low- and middle-income countries

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<sup>12</sup> Spieldoch, A. (2008). The Food Crisis and Global Institutions. Foreign Policy in Focus Commentary. August 5, 200. <http://www.fpif.org/fpifxt/5442>

<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, the G8's credibility is low because they still have not met their 2005 aid commitments, and the millionaire pledge to help Africa.

<sup>14</sup> The practical efforts triggered by that Presidential Group were followed up by a task force of foreign affairs officers, the International Action against Hunger and Poverty, that developed several ideas on how to raise additional funds through alternative mechanisms, and how to better spend those funds. So far, they have established UNITAID, a fund to fight against malaria and tuberculosis mostly in Africa. Unfortunately, the original goal to fight against world hunger seems to have been dropped out temporarily.

<sup>15</sup> As relevant benchmarks, one could mention the 500 million Euro MDG Fund established at the UNDP, or the FAO-Spain Fund for Food Security in Latin America.

<sup>16</sup> FAO and OCDE foresee that food prices will certainly fluctuate and rise again in coming years.

<sup>17</sup> Mostly in areas where more than 3.000 million people live at present. See Battisti, D.S. y R. L. Naylor (2009). Historical Warnings of Future Food Insecurity with Unprecedented Seasonal Heat. *Science*, vol. 323. no. 5911, pp. 240 - 244

decreased from 3% in the 1980s to 1.9% in the 1990s, global grain productivity growth declined from 3% to 1%<sup>18</sup>. The billions spent on subsidies would be better invested in fostering agricultural growth and food production in rural areas, scaling up social programmes, school feeding and early childhood nutrition interventions<sup>19</sup>.

This growing hunger pandemic is not a time-restricted famine but the sudden worsening of a chronic problem that has affected millions of people for ages. Every human being starving to death produces a political and economic impact in his/her community, region and nation. In that sense, two recent reports have pointed out the bold implications that food insecurity and hunger have to world security: they are a threat to peace<sup>20</sup>. Migration is also spurred by deprivation and hunger in the countries of origin. Hunger is a structural problem and therefore it demands structural solutions, with consequences for institutional development and the governance of the food system. Despite these challenges, the international community so far lacks consensus on what type of global food system is needed to guarantee enough and nutritious food for an increasing population, produced in such a sustainable way that reduces the oil-dependency and helps coping with climate change.

The dominant diagnosis as to the causes of the persistence of chronic hunger and, in particular, on the causes of the 2007-2008 food crisis, is rather biased towards production-dominated explanations. This mistaken diagnosis on food availability leads to privilege large-scale agricultural production and consistently neglects nutritional issues, small farming and the right to food. There is a growing concern on the unwillingness to question the direction taken by trade liberalization in the sense that food is solely considered as a commodity and not as a livelihood or human right. The failure of right to food compliance barely appears in the public speeches.

There is a common understanding that the root problem was largely food access, however solutions presented so far are focused on food availability and increasing production. Too little attention has been paid to what kind, where and by whom is food production made, as well as the issues of land tenure and the importance small local farming. One should welcome the relevance underlined by the recent IAASTD report on the small farming and the need to higher investments in agriculture<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, now it stands clear that trade liberalization has destabilized local food systems and hurt farmers, contributing to both the long-term and short-causes of the food crisis.

Furthermore, the Twin Track approach to food security, as developed by FAO, IFAD and WFP<sup>22</sup>, that is compounded by a) immediate assistance for the poor and hungry by means of safety nets with b) long-term development programmes that boost productivity, create employment and increase the value of people's assets, seems to be more relevant than ever. However, a Third Track dealing with institution-building, human rights and governance should be added to guarantee the long term efforts towards the fulfilment of right to food.

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<sup>18</sup> World Bank (2008). World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development. World bank, Washington, DC.

<sup>19</sup> Von Braun, J. (2008). The food crisis isn't over. Nature vol. 456: 701, 11 December.

<sup>20</sup> European Commission (2008). Climate change and international security. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council. Doc 7249/08, 3 March 2008. [http://euractiv.com/29/images/SolanaCCsecurity%20reportpdf\\_tcm29-170886.pdf](http://euractiv.com/29/images/SolanaCCsecurity%20reportpdf_tcm29-170886.pdf)

World Economic Forum (2008). Global Risks 2008. A global risk network report. World Economic Forum, Davos, January. [www.weforum.org/pdf/globalrisk/report2008.pdf](http://www.weforum.org/pdf/globalrisk/report2008.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) Global Summary for Decision Makers, South Africa 2008

<sup>22</sup> FAO/IFAD/WFP. Reducing Poverty and Hunger: The Critical Role of Financing for Food, Agriculture and Rural Development. Paper prepared for the International Conference on Financing for Development. Rome, February 2002.

The food crisis and its aftermath should be capitalised as a world-wide triggering event that paved the way for a new architecture of the global agricultural and food system, whereby a new structure geared towards feeding the human beings is put in place. What we had up to now was a system geared towards selling food to the market, maximizing revenues for intermediaries, minimizing income for the food producers, being oblivious of the agroecological environment, increasing oil-dependency and treating food as a commodity.

Since 2005, FAO, IFAD and CGIAR are subject of international independent evaluations that have generally showed governance shortcomings and programmatic, administrative and personnel failures. The outcomes of those evaluations could shed light on elements for the new architecture and a better representative governance of the global food system. To date, we have seen manoeuvres to shift decision-making power regarding food and agriculture issues from the Rome-based agencies toward the US-based institutions, namely the UN Secretariat in New York and the Bretton Woods agencies in Washington<sup>23</sup>. Considering the huge power leveraged by the US in those two headquarters, by means of veto power in the UN Security Council, a blockage minority in the World Bank and practical control in the IMF, one could see a purportedly movement to seize the one country-one vote decision-making power that so far controls the global food system, so as to turn it into big stakeholders' decision making power. This power shift would allow economically-developed countries (donors), newly-arrived rich players (philanthropic foundations) and huge agribusiness and food retail companies exert a giant control on the governance of the XXI century food system.

Along those lines, the recent G8 proposals to reshape the food and agriculture system are perceived as progressive steps in that direction. There could be a new steering group on world food security, under the Secretary General's UN HLTF, that would be composed by international agencies, scientists, agribusiness companies, private foundations and civil society. It is not clear yet either who would be seated in that group, or what would be the selection criteria. However, any proposal that undermines UN member states' decision making power should be seen cautiously, specially when powerful and benefit-motivated stakeholders (i.e. agribusiness) and major private donors are mixed with small-peasants' associations, consumers and States. Neither private companies nor philanthropic foundations are accountable to anybody. They do not have human rights obligations or are held accountable vis a vis the citizens or the constituency. Two new institutions (a scientific panel and a Global Facility for Food Security) were also proposed.

This process of thinking and agreeing a new global food system is a matter of utmost interest to everybody, as we all eat for living and have food as a cultural element. There are compelling challenges ahead for the whole humanity (climate change, scarce natural resources, diminishing oil and water, growing population, poverty and hunger on the rise). Therefore, building a global food system whose goal is securing the right of food and producing more food in a more sustainable way is important to me, to you and to anyone. Let's broaden the table for a more and better participation, in a process that could be known as "the Madrid Process".

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<sup>23</sup> ETC Group (2008). Ciao FAO: another "failure-as-usual" food summit. Translator vol 5, n°1, June. ETC Group, Ottawa, Canada. [http://www.etcgroup.org/en/materials/publications.html?pub\\_id=698](http://www.etcgroup.org/en/materials/publications.html?pub_id=698)

### ***The contribution of the right to food to global food system governance***

The right to food offers a coherent framework to address critical governance dimensions in the fight against hunger. It provides voice to a wide array of relevant stakeholders and establishes principles that govern decision-making and implementation processes, as participation, non-discrimination, transparency and empowerment. In addition, it provides a legal framework, the concepts of rights and obligations, as well as mechanisms for increased accountability and the rule of law (justiciability). It enhances governmental action by introducing administrative, quasi-judicial and judicial mechanisms to provide effective remedies, by clarifying the rights and obligations of rights holders and duty bearers, and by strengthening the mandate of the relevant institutions.

The Right to Food approach adds value to food security interventions through the process of policy formulation and implementation. Regarding the process, the approach contributes to strengthen relevant public institutions, integrates partners such as civil society organizations, human rights commissions, parliamentarians and government sectors other than those dealing with agriculture, and provides further justification for investment in hunger reduction. It contributes to create and maintain political will.

The enforcement of international treaties (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ICESCR<sup>24</sup> and the Convention of the Rights of Child) and the influential leverage exerted by the supplementary mechanisms (the General Comment 12 and the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food) have proven to be useful means toward the realization of the right to food for all. And yet they are insufficient to deter hunger and even to curb the rising trend of recent years. The Optional Protocol to the ICESCR, already approved by the UN General Assembly, will allow those who have been denied their right to food to present a complaint. The adoption of this Protocol will have repercussions on national jurisdiction and help strengthen the protection of human rights worldwide.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Short-term Outcomes***

Considering the great expectations and the right momentum, and despite the reduced preparatory arrangements, the four major outcomes that could make the Madrid High-Level Meeting to be considered a success are the following:

#### **1.- A clear message in the final declaration: the right to food should be the pivotal element and the final goal of the new global food system.**

Since the 1996 World Food Summit Declaration, the political profile of the right to food, as recognized in international law, has not seen such "good times" as those we are living these years. The "Madrid Declaration" should explicitly confirm the right to food in the same terms as it was done in World Food Summit 1996 and 2002. This fact will send a strong message about the human rights dimension and about right to food as framework for future events geared towards reaching a consensus on how restructure the Global Food System.

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<sup>24</sup> International Covenant of the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

## **2.- Define a common route map for the interim period, so as to enable an ample participation and a stronger consensus**

This event could define major guidelines for the process of reshaping the global food and agriculture system, reorienting its compass from the former driving force "food for the market" to a new driving force "food for the people". This route map should define stakeholders and different levels of participation. There is a need to facilitate enough space to small and big producers, consumers, NGOs and CSOs, ecologists, private foundations, academia, and private sector enterprises (small-enterprises associations and big transnationals). Those stakeholders, with a stake and diverging interests in the global food system, should participate in consultative meetings and general conferences, although decision-making events should be restricted to States. A calendar of preparatory meetings at regional and sector-wise level could be drafted, and financial support to enable an ample and high-level participation in those meetings should be committed. Needless to say, this route map could end in a final Presidential Summit where heads of state would endorse the previously agreed architecture of the XXI century global food and agriculture system. If the Madrid event succeeds in setting the stage, the players, the rules, the calendar and the objectives of this process, it will be highly commended and this worthy event will mark a cornerstone of this surely long and winding road.

## **3.- Launching the Intergovernmental Panel on Food and Hunger**

During the meeting, initial talks could be held on possible members, terms of reference, working period and expected outputs, secretariat mandate and the UN host institution, so as to present the idea in the final Madrid declaration. The objective is to organize an Intergovernmental Panel (or Assessment) on Food and Hunger, similar to that of IAASTD<sup>25</sup> or the IPCC<sup>26</sup>, to elaborate ideas, compile and analyze current and coming international assessments on food and agriculture institutions (i.e. FAO, IFAD, CGIAR), commission papers and, finally, reach a consensus on recommendations to restructure the global food system. This panel would provide backstopping to the different stakeholders involved in the Madrid process (the route map) as long as the process carries on. Hence, one may foresee this process lasting several years and involving several hundreds scientists, senior policy makers, think tanks, and independent experts from the civil society and private sector.

## **4.- Financial commitments to support the route map**

In order to render operational the previous outcomes, financial commitments to guarantee the widest participation, level of representation, negotiation capacity and technical support should be guaranteed. This process will surely cost a considerable amount of money (i.e. one could use the IAASTD or IPCC as a reference), and funds shall be risen amongst major donors, international financial institutions and philanthropic organizations. If the process aims at having country-level delegations from all (or most) countries, including the small and least-developed ones; as well as ample participation from civil society groups, small agro-processing enterprises consortiums, farmers´, fishermen´s, bushmen´s and indigenous people´s associations, women´s groups and consumers organizations, financial support has to be provided to enable them to prepare themselves and attend the several meetings and conferences due to take place.

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<sup>25</sup> The *International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development*, which 58 governments approved in South Africa in April 2008, is the result of a six-year process that involved over 400 experts. The main recommendations are as follows: (1) the need to redirect agricultural science and technology to support small scale farmers in developing countries; and (2) the need for massive investment in agriculture, both in physical infrastructure and non-physical, such as extension services, access to markets and credit provision ([www.agassessment.org](http://www.agassessment.org)).

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.ipcc.ch>

### ***Mid-term outcomes for 2009-2010***

#### **5.- Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR**

Once this Protocol enters into force, it will certainly imply the beginning of a new era in relation to access to international remedies for violations of economic, social and cultural rights, among those the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger. The Protocol establishes a new quasi-judicial function for the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, allowing it to receive communications from individuals and groups of individuals alleging violations of the right to food. It also establishes a trust fund for the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. One strongly recommends its adoption and rapid ratification by all States.

#### **6.- Research and training challenge to Universities: the 1000 Universities Initiative.**

The rights-based approach to development should be part of the research and training agendas on development undertaken by universities and research centres. There is an urgent need to mobilize the participation of professors, researchers and students in the fight against hunger. Universities have a great potential to networking, so as to promote state-of-the-art research and to disseminate knowledge. Greater efforts should be made to create partnerships between research centres in developed and developing countries (North-South, South-South), specially in those countries more affected by food insecurity. The 1000 Universities Initiative aims at creating a network of universities researching, training and raising awareness on political, economic and technical ideas to eradicate hunger and achieve sustainable food security for all. Particularly, Universities and Academia should be encouraged to establish undergraduate studies on Hunger, Nutrition and Right to Food, open to all students. Moreover, the establishment of graduate studies at MSc and PhD level should be encouraged so as to prepare technicians, experts and professionals with sound knowledge in the fighting against hunger. These studies should have an interdisciplinary vision, including law, agricultural knowledge, rural development, business. To date, few Universities in the world have departments or research groups specifically dedicated to hunger, right to food and food security studies.

#### **7.- An Anti-wasting Global Fund: higher and predictable funds to avoid child deaths**

There are 55 millions of undernourished children, out of those 20 millions so severely undernourished that are about to die soon. It is of utmost importance to set a Global Fund to treat those children with therapeutic feeding, so as to prevent them dieing as a first step. The bulk of financial resources to guarantee the right to be free from hunger should come from the countries with undernourished citizens (to the maximum of its available resources) as well as from the international cooperation. An estimation on the total cost of interventions to avoid a single child to die of hunger should be undertaken immediately using current channels and institutions to implement already-proven actions to treat wasting.

#### **8.- A Code of Conduct or a Citizen's Charter on Food Security and the Right to Food**

In order to further develop legal approaches to the right to food and the eradication of hunger, Codes of Conduct on food security for development practitioners, academia, civil society and governments should be charted, whereby citizens' rights could be expressed and different guarantees, duties and obligations developed. These Code of Conduct or Citizen's Right to Food Chart could draft the skeleton with minimum elements to be later on adjusted by each interested country.

**9.- To strengthen the conceptual and legal elements of the Right to Food in the UN system**

Considering the importance of the right to food as a fundamental approach to end hunger, Right to Food units or teams in FAO, WFP, IFAD and the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights should be strengthened (mandate, funds and human resources). Moreover, as the human rights approach to development becomes the norm within the UN family and the right to food is better known and monitored, it makes sense to build a Right to Food interagency department formed by officers from FAO, IFAD, WFP, Bioversity, CBD, UNDP and UNHRHC. Meanwhile, the FAO Right to Food Unit, as one of the core pillars of FAO mandate<sup>27</sup>, should be given a higher profile and more budgetary resources.

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<sup>27</sup> FAO mandate: "Achieving food security for all to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives".

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