

Fifty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development

Draft declaration on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development
in the context of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

We, the representatives of Governments, on occasion of the fifty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development, at the time of an unprecedented crisis caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic,

1. *Express concern* that the COVID-19 pandemic, which has spread all around the globe, presents a threat to human health, safety and well-being and that it has unprecedented and multifaceted effects, including the severe disruption to societies, economies, global trade and travel, and food and agricultural systems, and has a devastating impact on the food security, nutrition and livelihoods of people.
2. *Recognize* that the poor and the most vulnerable people are the most affected by the pandemic and that its impact will have repercussions for development gains, making the prospect of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 more difficult.
3. *Underscore* the urgent need to provide adequate safety nets to support those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations, including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants ensuring that no one is left behind, with an endeavour to reach the furthest behind first, and protecting human rights for all.
4. *Note* that economic slowdown, gender inequalities, conflict, humanitarian emergencies, diseases and pest infestations, drought and the adverse effects of climate change, including more frequent and extreme weather events, are among the key factors contributing to a reversal in the long-term progress in fighting global hunger, hampering progress in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
5. *Commit* to strengthening multilateral cooperation and solidarity to combat the consequences of the pandemic and to intensifying our contributions to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
6. In this context, *reaffirm* the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development¹ and the key actions for its further implementation², and the outcomes of its reviews, and note the outcome documents of the regional review conferences, stressing that the outcome documents of the regional review conferences provide region-specific guidance on population and development for each region that adopted the particular outcome documents.
7. *Note with concern* that disease outbreaks can affect food supply and demand through various channels, including by disrupting global trade, and that the COVID-19 pandemic is strongly impacting the food security and nutrition situation of urban populations, and that in rural areas, livelihoods are at risk, because food supply chains and markets are being disrupted due to lockdowns and restrictions of movement.
8. *Stress* the importance of ensuring the movement of foods and food-production related items, maintaining functioning food value chains, and allowing freedom of movement of agricultural and food workers to avoid food shortages.
9. *Emphasize* that emergency measures designed to tackle COVID-19 must be targeted, proportionate, transparent, and temporary, and that they must not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains and must be consistent with WTO rules.
10. *Encourage* local authorities to take actions that aim at enabling access to nutritious food for all, while at the same time complying with sanitary provisions and food safety standards and *emphasize* the need to support family farming.

11. *Note* that people in food crises often have higher rates of underlying health conditions, including non-communicable diseases and malnutrition, which weaken their immune system and increase their risk of contracting COVID-19.
12. *Call* for expanding food security monitoring, preserving critical humanitarian food, livelihood and nutrition assistance to vulnerable groups, positioning of food in food-crisis countries to reinforce social protection systems, and scaling up support for food processing, transport and local food markets.
13. *Note* that, while more men are dying as a result of COVID-19, the health of women and girls may be adversely impacted by the pandemic through the reallocation of resources, which will have a negative effect on ending preventable maternal deaths, the unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence and harmful practices by 2030.
14. *Endeavour* to align investments in strengthening national health systems and supporting progress towards universal health coverage with the 2030 Agenda to help ensure a sustainable recovery from COVID-19, as well as pandemic preparedness and the prevention and detection of and response to any future outbreaks.
15. *Commit* to ensure, by 2030, universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, and ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development¹ and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.²
16. *Note* that in countries with school closures, more than 350 million schoolchildren who normally rely on school meals for a reliable source of daily nutrition, might not have access to regular school feeding and nutrition services during the pandemic and that children who, triggered by the pandemic, drop out of school altogether will face a higher risk of child marriage, child labour and teenage pregnancies.
17. *Stress* that proper nutrition helps to ensure healthy growth, strengthen immune systems and improve cognitive development as well as reduce the risk of becoming overweight or obese, contracting infectious diseases or developing chronic diseases later on in life.
18. *Emphasize* the nutrition needs of pregnant and lactating women, women of reproductive age and adolescent girls, and of infants and young children, especially during the first 1,000 days, including, as appropriate, through exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months, with continued breastfeeding to two years of age or beyond, with appropriate complementary feeding.
19. *Call* on the United Nations system, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, to work with all relevant actors, including the private sector, in order to mobilize a coordinated global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on all societies, particularly in developing countries, and to ensure women's equal representation in all COVID-19 response planning and decision making.
20. *Call* on Member States to consider the Food Systems Summit in 2021 a critical opportunity to move toward more inclusive, sustainable and resilient food systems to deliver healthy diets for all.
21. *Request* the Secretary-General to continue his substantive work on population and development, to pursue further improvements in the accessibility and timeliness of disaggregated population data, and, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to continue assessing and reporting on progress towards the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

¹ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

² *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.