



**Statement by Dr. Florence Chenoweth,**  
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**Third Committee**  
**Sixty-first Session of the General Assembly**  
**Item 67 (b): Human Rights Questions**  
**Right to Food: Progress on Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines**

27 October 2006

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour for FAO to address the Committee on this important agenda item.

As Member States recall, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food were adopted by the FAO Council in November 2004. FAO welcomes the attention given to the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines by the General Assembly in the resolution adopted at its Sixtieth Session in March 2006.

FAO believes the Voluntary Guidelines are an extremely valuable instrument in assisting countries in the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. FAO has incorporated the Voluntary Guidelines in its programmes and activities and is seeking the cooperation of other UN agencies in applying the Guidelines.

FAO has established a Right to Food Unit in the Economic and Social Department to support the full realization of the human right to food through the implementation of the Guidelines. The strategy of FAO in promoting the right to food is to focus on five areas of action: advocacy and training; information and assessment; legislation and accountability; strategy and coordination; benchmarks and monitoring.

FAO would like to draw attention of Member States to current efforts of Brazil, Sierra Leone and Mozambique to implement the Right to Food. These countries have established innovative institutional mechanisms:

In Brazil, a National Rapporteur on Food, Water and Rural Land monitors the right to food situation and participates in the broad-based Food Security Council (CONSEA) which advises the President directly on policies. Furthermore, the National Congress has just approved the framework law text of the Federal Law on Food and Nutritional Security, which is a human rights based legislation

Sierra Leone has established a Right to Food Secretariat within the Office of the President to advocate for the right to food, facilitated coordination and to monitor progress towards the realization of the right to food, which is a top government priority

Mozambique is revising its Food Security and Nutrition Strategy and has established a Working Group on the right to food within the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN).

Other countries are adopting different institutions and legislative work

FAO looks forward to sharing the lessons learned regarding the implementation of the right to food and the Voluntary Guidelines in different countries that can be used to inspire others. On the occasion of the Committee on World Food Security meeting in October and November 2006, a Special Event on the Implementation of the Human Right to Food is being organized on 4 November, at which different stakeholders and states can showcase the work they have undertaken.

Mr. Chairman,

FAO has in the past profited from the contributions and cooperation of other UN agencies, in particular the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and World Food Programme, as well as a range of non-governmental partners, in the promotion of the right to food and the process of elaborating the Voluntary Guidelines. It is our hope to expand and strengthen such partnerships even further, to fill the missing elements in the strategies for promoting food security towards the Millennium Development Goal One and the target of the World Food Summit. It is well known what it takes to establish food security. The problem is that the hungry are also politically powerless and are not heard in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and policies. A human rights based approach to food security can empower rights holders to claim their human rights and hold duty bearers accountable.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, FAO has declared the right to food and the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines as one of its nine priority areas of work. We look forward to strengthening our cooperation with other UN system organizations and UN country teams as well as with Member States interested in strengthening the national implementation of the right to food through the use of the Voluntary Guidelines.

Thank you.