

Draft Plenary Statement for the Outcomes of the CFS Forum on Women's Empowerment

Intervention of Azra Sayeed – IWA, Pakistan on behalf of the CSM Working Group on Women

First of all we would like to convey to the CFS the huge expectation, commitment and engagement that the CSM women's grassroots organizations of smallholders, fisherfolks, agricultural and food workers, landless, consumers, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, urban food insecure and youth demonstrated towards this process since its early beginning.

We are today facilitating, once again the voices of millions of women from all over the world that call upon the CFS to urgently recognize, fulfill and protect women's rights, our rights, in order to finally pave the path towards the realization of the CFS vision and mandate of achieving the right to food and a world free from hunger.

Patriarchy, feudalism and the current neoliberal economic models are the three main root causes for women's inequality and food insecurity and malnutrition. Patriarchy, feudalism and neoliberalism are grabbing our lands, water, seeds, forests and natural resources, our territories, our bodies and rights; they ignore the ancestral knowledge of our indigenous sisters, criminalise our struggles, leave violence against women unpunished while opening the door to discrimination, conflict, crises, occupation, displacement and war.

Today, by endorsing the outcomes of this forum we are all together, women and men, finally contributing to advance women's rights agenda in the CFS and recognizing women's leading role in achieving food security and nutrition. By doing this we are collectively and firmly recalling, the spirit of the CFS Reform, within this unique multi-actor space.

Within our CSM constituencies we warmly welcomed the outcomes of the CFS Forum on Women's Empowerment for the following reasons:

First: because it recognized clearly and unequivocally that, women's empowerment, gender equality and women's rights are strongly interrelated. Each of them is necessary but cannot sufficient on its own. Finally CFS has recognized that the three elements need to move ahead together, and from now on will not step back from this important achievement in its future policy outcomes and processes.

Second: because it recognized the need for the CFS to include a feminist perspective at an early stage when producing documents that will result in policy outcomes.

Third: it demonstrated that women are not only able to critically analyze the persistent barriers and challenges they face as political subjects but are also able to propose concrete alternatives that do not oblige them to adapt to an agenda that do not comply with the full realization of their rights. Agroecology and food sovereignty are at the center of these concrete alternatives.

Fourth: it put existing international policy frameworks at the center that can guide and orient, without extending CFS mandate, the work of this committee in the future. CEDAW and particularly the General Recommendation 34, are key examples of such a synergy that also respond to the functions of convergence and coherence in the CFS.

Fifth: reaffirmed that the political will of governments and CFS members is fundamental to use and apply existing normative policy frameworks that contribute to the realization of

women's rights, equality and empowerment. We would also urge CFS to further strengthen and develop its monitoring function to ensure the achievement of its vision.

Sixth: it highlighted that the CFS can have a lively and vibrant debate among all its members and participants by courageously addressing controversial issues and naming root causes and drivers of change in an intellectually honest manner.

We would also like to take this occasion to deeply thank the CFS Chair, Ambassador Amira Gornass, for contributing with an inspirational attitude to the success of this Forum that has heard and finally listened to the voices most contributing to world food security and nutrition.

Thank you Madame Chair