

**PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA, GENEVA**

**10<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food**

**STATEMENT BY INDIA**

Mr President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Mr Olivier De Schutter, for his first annual report to the Council that focuses on the contribution of development cooperation and food aid to the realisation of the human right to adequate food. The Special Rapporteur argues that the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted in 2005 can be further concretised if placed under a human rights framework, and explores the implications of this approach.

2. When the rising demand for food is not being met with a similar supply side response, the Special Rapporteur has highlighted appropriately the urgent need to reform both development assistance and food aid by re-orienting them in a human rights framework. As observed by him, the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) devoted to agriculture and the rural sector have fallen sharply between 1987 and 2007, while the dependency of the countries on food imports has grown significantly over the last two decades amidst a volatile international market that is now also impacted by climate change.

3. Mr President, from a human rights viewpoint, the Special Rapporteur has made an impressive case as to how the international human rights law imposes an obligation on the developed countries to make measurable progress towards contributing to the full realisation of human rights, including the Right to Food, by supporting the efforts of the developing countries, and not diminish pre-existing levels of aid that, in any case, should be non-discriminatory, untied and based on objective assessment of the identified needs in developing countries. The Special Rapporteur has also

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pointed out the shortcomings of the Food Aid Convention and, therefore, suggested provision of food aid to States based on adequate mapping of food vulnerability in each State, and a shift to Member States' food aid commitments under this Convention other than in wheat equivalents.

4. On the implementation of development assistance and food aid, the Special Rapporteur has suggested ways to change the bilateral relationship between donor and recipient into a triangular relationship that also includes the ultimate beneficiaries of the food aid. In this regard, he has reminded us of Paris Declaration's commitment to enhance recipient countries' accountability to their citizens and parliaments for their development policies and performance. He has equally underscored the need for disciplined and context-specific food aid that is targeted on the basis of needs identified through a rights-based participatory process involving local communities, including farmers' organisations. Further, the Special Rapporteur has emphasised the evaluation of development assistance and food aid policies through a joint human rights impact assessment by donors and recipients, as well as by independent bodies. We would, however, like to caution here that this should not mean any dilution of the obligation of the developed countries under the Covenant. Food Aid flows should be driven by needs of the recipients, and should not be governed by considerations of over or under production in the donor countries, or bilateral political considerations which sometimes lead to its misuse as a political weapon.

5. Mr Chairman, we welcome the Special Rapporteur's recommendation on the full implementation of Marrakesh Decision, ensuring that an increasing proportion of basic foodstuffs will be provided to least-developed and net food-importing developing countries negatively affected by the reform programme under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. At the same time, we continue to be deeply concerned at the trends in agriculture productivity and output. As a country supporting one-sixth of humanity on less than 3% of the world's arable land, we remain acutely conscious of challenges to food security and the Right to Food, and would, therefore, urge serious consideration of recommendations contained in the report.

Thank you, Mr President.