



Roundup

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS)
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NGOs Prepare For The World Food Summit: Five Years Later

Originally scheduled to take place from 5 to 9 November 2001, the World Food Summit: five years later (WFS:fyl) will now be held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome from 10-13 June 2002. The meeting will consider the progress achieved since the 1996 World Food Summit, and ways and means to accelerate the process of reducing the number of the world's hungry.

1996 WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

During the 1996 World Food Summit, Heads of State or Government and high-level representatives from 185 countries and the European Community committed themselves "to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015." WFS:fyl will reaffirm the commitments made by world leaders to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, adopted at the Summit.

Civil society played a prominent role in the World Food Summit. Non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGOs/CSOs) contributed to the World Food Summit documents and pre-Summit consultations. Some 500 national and international NGOs/CSOs attended the Summit itself, while a parallel NGO Forum brought together 1,300 NGO representatives from 80 countries. These events and activities have stimulated national, regional and global networking on food security issues throughout the follow-up of the World Food Summit.

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: FIVE YEARS LATER

FAO's latest assessment of the global food security situation shows clearly the slow progress being made towards the reduction of hunger in the world. During the 1990s, the reduction in the number of undernourished people was six million people a year on average, compared to the 22 million people a year needed in order to meet the World Food Summit target, according to the latest figures from FAO's *State of Food Insecurity*

in the World (see *Go Between* 88). FAO says it is all the more crucial that governments, with the support of NGOs/CSOs, take measures to accelerate the pace of change. "Only through the direct involvement of decision makers and those that lobby governments to effect urgent changes in policy, will it be possible to mobilize the necessary political will and ensure that vital decisions are taken by leaders in a position to influence policy at every level," says FAO.

The four-day Summit in June will include a plenary debate as well as three Roundtables involving Heads of State and Government, and a multistakeholder dialogue in which civil society participants and other stakeholders will exchange experiences and views with government delegations.

The WFS:fyl will be preceded by the 28th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), whose dates have been brought forward from September 2002 to 6-8 June 2002 to coincide with the Summit. The CFS will consider two documents related to the Summit—the *Assessment of the World Food Security Situation* and the *Report on Progress in Implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action*.

The outcome documentation of the Summit is being considered by an Open-Ended Working Group, which submitted a draft proposal to the FAO Council at its 120th Session in June 2001. The CFS will reconvene the Working Group at its session in June 2002 and will forward the results of their work to the Summit. The negotiated outcome is expected to be a renewed declaration of commitment to the World Food Summit goals and to the actions that are required to achieve them.

Background Documents

Among the documents which are available for the WFS:fyl is a compilation document entitled *The World Food Summit: five years later, Mobilizing the Political Will and Resources to Banish World Hunger*. This is composed of three background documents on the themes of:

- *Fostering the Political Will to Fight Hunger;*
- *Mobilizing Resources for Agriculture in Support of Food Security;* and
- *New Challenges to the Achievement of the World Food Summit Goal.*

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