



Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food

2 September 2019

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I am pleased to share with you highlights from the past few months and to preview some exciting events coming up in 2019.

For those who have newly subscribed to the mailing list,ⁱ these newsletters are part of a greater initiative to improve the visibility of the work carried out under the right to food mandate and to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to all partners. Mailing list members will also receive occasional email-blasts recapping my missions or participation in noteworthy events. I welcome any feedback, suggestions for relevant reports, or op-eds, etc., via email at srfood@ohchr.org and invite you to follow me on Twitter [@HilalElver](https://twitter.com/HilalElver). I also encourage you to explore my blog, <https://hilalelver.org>, which not only serves as an information hub on the right to food, but is also regularly updated to feature breaking news and activities relevant to the mandate.

Here are some of the latest summer activities of the right to food mandate:

Annual Meeting of Special Procedures. From 17-21 June, I attended the annual meeting of Special Procedures mandate-holders in Geneva to discuss, *inter alia*, how to protect economic, social and cultural rights, promote the prevention of conflicts and unrest and the role of the Special Rapporteurs in United Nations human rights process, in general. While in Geneva, I had an opportunity to engage with a number of key stakeholders, including the Deputy High Commissioner of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Ms. Kate Gilmore, with whom I discussed the importance of ensuring greater coherence of food policies developed in Rome and human rights-based initiatives in Geneva. I also participated in an internal workshop-consultation with the OHCHR team and regional human rights officers on the role of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) and the prevention of conflicts and unrest. You can read a brief synopsis of this workshop and a recap of my contribution in the [latest email blast](#) from the SR Food Team.

Collaboration with CFS. This summer, I have continued to work closely with CFS, contributing to their workstream on Food System and Nutrition, which is currently drafting Voluntary Guidelines. My written comments on the existing drafts are available on the [CFS Working Space](#). In June, I also attended a Bureau and Advisory Group (B&AG) of the CFS in Rome to discuss the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2020-2023. I have continually expressed support for workstreams on 'gender equality and women's empowerment,' 'youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems' and 'reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition' and have strongly encouraged the CFS to adopt a human rights-based approach to the guidelines. You can stay apprised of these and other CFS-related activities on my [website](#).

Future of Food Symposium. From 10-11 June, I attended the ['The Future of Food' symposium](#) at FAO in Rome, providing opening panel remarks to an audience of academics, researchers, policymakers,



representatives from civil society and private sector, parliamentarians and government agencies. The symposium provided an opportunity for participants to discuss potential pathways to a sustainable future of food and healthy diets for all. The Symposium also served an important purpose, as it was the last opportunity for the participants to discuss the legacy of José Graziano da Silva, now former Director General of the FAO. I sought the opportunity to remind the audience that human rights must be at the center of a meaningful food system transformation, even while also using technological innovation and biotechnology as important toolboxes for change. You can read my full remarks [here](#).

Food Governance Conference. On 3 July, I presented the keynote address at the Food Governance Conference at the University of Sydney Law School. The conference brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to explore how law and policy shape our food systems and influence access to nutritious, equitable, and sustainable food. More information about the conference and my remarks are available [here](#). While in Australia, I also had the opportunity to provide a public lecture at the University of Western Australia's Institute of Advanced Studies on the right to food and met several academics, as well as civil society organizations to discuss strategies for future collaborative work to raise consciousness about the right to food in Australian society.

Other events and publications. This summer I engaged with country-based right to food initiatives, providing a video message to a meeting in Portugal with FIAN Portugal and ACTUAR, signing onto a letter from the Scottish Food Coalition to the First Minister in support of Scotland's Good Food Nation bill. A comprehensive account of recent events are captured on [my blog](#) and the [OHCHR website](#). With respect to recent publications, I was pleased to provide a chapter in the former FAO Director-General's book, *From Fome Zero to Zero Hunger: A global perspective* on the impact of the Fome Zero program on right to food in Brazil and globally. As always, you can access my latest publications, opinion editorials and commentaries from the SR Food Team on [my blog](#).

Looking forward, here are some key upcoming events:

Call for Submission: Country Mission to Azerbaijan. From 1-11 October 2019, I will be conducting an official mission to Azerbaijan upon the invitation of the Government, in order to collect information and examine issues relevant to the right to food mandate and to engage in dialogue with the Government, civil society and academia on efforts to ensure the enjoyment of the right to food and new developments to implement Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) in Azerbaijan. In preparation of this visit, I am inviting submissions from all relevant stakeholders to inform the thematic and geographic focus of the visit and subsequent reporting. [For more information and instructions for submission](#), please refer to the Call for Submission currently posted on the front page of my [blog](#) and on the [OHCHR site](#).

Presentation of SDG Report at UNGA 3rd Committee. I have recently completed my latest thematic report on the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the right to food, which I will present to the 3rd Committee of the UN General Assembly in October. The report focuses on the potential for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the cornerstone of the *2030 Agenda* to advance the realization of the right to food as well as other economic, social and cultural rights. The report asserts that addressing inequality and adopting a holistic, integrated and human rights-based approach are necessary preconditions to successfully implementing the SDGs and progressively realizing the right to food. I wish to express my gratitude to those who provided their insights and expertise during the drafting process; the full-text of the report will soon be made available on the OHCHR website and on my blog, which will also feature a



summary and an extended version. In the meantime, you can read my previous thematic report on fishery workers [here](#).

CFS46. From 14-18 October, I will participate in the 46th Session of the Committee on World Food Security, delivering a keynote address on the SDGs and right to food based on my findings from my latest thematic report. I look forward to contributing to side events, including those hosted by the Friends of the Right to Food Group and the ESN/Nutrition Division, and attending the FAO Right to Food's launch of their 15 Year Review, among others.

As always, thank you for your work in promoting the universal right to food and for defending those for whom it is not yet fully realized.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hilal Elver".

Hilal Elver
UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food

ⁱ If you have received this newsletter by mistake and would like to unsubscribe, please email srfood@ohchr.org with the subject "Unsubscribe."