



**OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS**



**The right to food**

**Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/19**

*The Commission on Human Rights,*

*Recalling* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for her/his health and well-being, including food,

*Recalling also* the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

*Recalling further* the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

*Bearing in mind* the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit, held in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996, and bearing in mind also the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later - International Alliance against Hunger, held in Rome from 10 to 13 June 2002,

*Recalling* all its previous resolutions in this regard, in particular resolution 2003/25 of 22 April 2003,

*Recognizing* that the problem of hunger and food insecurity has global dimensions and that they are likely to persist and even to increase dramatically in some regions unless urgent, determined and concerted action is taken, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the strain on natural resources,

*Reaffirming* that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, both at a national and an international level, is the essential foundation which will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

*Reiterating*, as did the Rome Declaration as well as the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations which endanger food security,

*Convinced* that each State must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals in implementing the recommendations contained in the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security in a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies, where coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential,

*Stressing* the importance of reversing the continuing decline of official development assistance devoted to agriculture and rural development, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance,

*Reaffirming* that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity and, therefore, requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;

2. *Also reaffirms* the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger so as to be able fully to develop and maintain their physical and mental capacities;

3. *Considers* it intolerable that there are around 840 million undernourished people in the world and that every seven seconds a child under the age of 10 dies, directly or indirectly, of hunger somewhere in the world when, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the world produces more than enough food to feed its entire population;

4. *Stresses* the need to make efforts to mobilize and optimize the allocation and utilization of technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies;

5. *Recognizes* that the promises made at the World Food Summit in 1996 to halve the number of undernourished persons are not being fulfilled, and invites once again all international financial and developmental institutions, as well as the relevant United Nations agencies and funds, to give priority and provide necessary funding to realize the aim to halve by the year 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, as well as the right to food;

6. *Encourages* all States to take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right to food, including steps to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and as soon as possible enjoy fully the right to food, as well as to elaborate and adopt national plans to combat hunger;

7. *Requests* all States and private actors, as well as international organizations within their respective mandates, to take fully into account the need to promote the effective realization of the right to food for all, including in the ongoing negotiations in different fields;

8. *Takes note with interest* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food (E/CN.4/2004/10 and Add.1 and 2) and commends the Special Rapporteur for his valuable work in the promotion of the right to food in all parts of the world;

9. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Special Rapporteur for his effective contribution to the follow-up process of the World Food Summit: five years later;

10. *Encourages* all States to engage actively in the ongoing negotiations of the intergovernmental working group on the elaboration of a set of voluntary guidelines on the

progressive realization of the right to adequate food and also encourages the Special Rapporteur to continue mainstreaming a gender perspective in the fulfilment of his mandate;

11. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all necessary human and financial resources for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

12. *Welcomes* the work already done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food, in particular its general comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food (art. 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), in which the Committee affirmed, inter alia, that the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfilment of other human rights enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights and is also inseparable from social justice, requiring the adoption of appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both the national and international levels, oriented to the eradication of poverty and the fulfilment of all human rights for all;

13. *Takes note* of general comment No. 15 (2002) on the right to water (arts. 11 and 12 of the Covenant) adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in which the Committee notes, inter alia, the importance of ensuring sustainable water resources for human consumption and agriculture in the realization of the right to adequate food;

14. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session and to report to the Commission at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution;

15. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector, to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of his mandate, inter alia through the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;

16. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter at its sixty-first session, under the same agenda item.

*51st meeting*

*16 April 2004*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 51 votes to 1,  
with 1 abstention. See chap. X - E/2004/23 – E/CN.4/2004/127]