



Rome, 29 March 2021

Dear Mr Podselver,

I have the pleasure to refer to the joint letter of 19 March 2021 addressed to Dr QU Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), co-signed by 44 Non-Governmental Organizations promoting a shift towards plant-rich food systems.

The UN Food Systems Summit, to which the letter refers, will provide the opportunity for the co-creation of solutions to the current challenges facing food systems. The alleviation of these challenges will provide a major boost to countries' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

It is therefore essential that the solutions identified are relevant to specific country contexts. The solutions need to recognize that consumers have widely different nutritional statuses and that they face significant constraints to their consumption choices, which can restrict their ability to access affordable healthy diets. This is particularly the case in lower and middle-income countries confronting hunger and undernutrition.

In that regard, FAO supports national authorities in developing their Food Based Dietary Guidelines based on a rigorous review of the evidence in relation to the national nutritional and health situation at the country level. The resulting FBDGs are considered to be the expression of healthy diets capable of addressing the priorities identified in those countries. This process is nationally owned and is based on the collaboration and involvement of different sectors and multi-stakeholders. Non-Governmental Organizations dealing with food and agriculture are an integral part of this process.

Yours sincerely,

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