



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY DAVID NABARRO ON BEING SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE 2018

I am honoured to be one of the two people selected to receive the World Food Prize in 2018. As I see it, the award is in recognition of work undertaken in the past ten years from my different positions within the United Nations. Much of this work has been focused on helping people improve their Food Security and be well-nourished within an interdisciplinary context. I am grateful to the opportunities that I was given by successive UN Secretaries-General, heads of UN Agencies and their senior staff, as well as government ministers and officials and multiple partners from all over the world. All of you have made and continue to make extraordinary contributions. I thank you for giving me the space and opportunity to serve as coordinator on both food security and nutrition: to help you harmonize and then amplify your efforts. I am also grateful to governments and foundations that contributed financial resources for this work over the years.

Who has done the work? Throughout my professional career I worked with so many committed and great people who were helping people and organizations to work better together, and to continue improving over time. My role has usually been one of curator, coordinator or facilitator as the groups with whom I work establish narratives, build networks and find ways to be more effective. The people with whom I have worked come from within and outside the United Nations System, within and outside governments, from multiple communities in which I have worked or lived, and from many different disciplines. They know the important roles that they have played in the different initiatives within which I have been involved. I hope they can gain satisfaction from their efforts being recognized through this award of the World Food Prize.

Here is a summary of some of the efforts in which so many of us have been involved.

UN System High level Task Force for Global Food Security: I start with the food price crisis of 2008. At that time the leaders of many nations became increasingly concerned about the ways in which sudden rises in food prices affected the well-being of millions of people throughout the world. As numbers of affected households increased with reports of increased levels of malnutrition and suffering, the UN set up a Task Force. It led to concerted support for national efforts both to reduce this impact, and to minimize the risk that similar volatility would occur again. The Task Force contributed to harmonization of efforts within – and beyond – the UN system. I served as Task Force coordinator and led the team that supported the Task Force for three years.

Movement to Scale Up Nutrition: In 2009 leaders of several nations became aware of the growing evidence that good nutrition at the start of one's life is necessary for the achievement of full intellectual and physical potential in adulthood. They focused on the earliest years of a child's development – between conception and the second birthday. Nutrition leaders - from the research community, governments, the UN system and civil society – responded by proposing multiple ways to promote good nutrition for all - especially during this 1000 day early-development window. The main emphasis is on incorporating interdisciplinary action for better nutrition within all government sectors, engaging all who share the same objective and want to work in synergy - including businesses, civil society, youth, religious bodies, regional organizations, development partners, and the UN system. I led the group which devised this country-led Movement to Scale up Nutrition (SUN) as its first coordinator between 2010 and 2014 – it now includes 60 countries and three Indian states.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda): In 2012 Government representatives started to consider the development agenda after 2015 when the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) period ended. They wanted an approach which has people at its centre, is relevant to everyone everywhere, connects people and the planet, integrates the efforts of all and intensifies impact through partnering. The 2030 Agenda was approved by the leaders of all the world's nations in September 2015 after an intense period of technical briefings, consultations and negotiations. It is the plan for the people of our world and their planet, consisting of 17 goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and more than 160 targets. I supported the debates and negotiations that led to food security and nutrition being reflected across the whole agenda - with an emphasis on no-one experiencing long-term hunger, all households to be food secure with their members well-nourished and the widespread adoption of sustainable agricultural practices.

Milano Group: As the 2030 agenda was developed it was clear that it could not succeed unless people everywhere are well-nourished and food is sustainably produced. At the same time, one consequence of the agenda being attained is that all people are better able to be well-nourished. On World Food Day, October 2015, in Milan, the UN convened senior leaders in agriculture, food and health to consider how food production and consumption must change if the 2030 Agenda is to succeed. I chaired the Milano Group. In period 2015 - 2017 the group's members concluded that a systems perspective is essential and that the systems in which people produce, process, store, transport, market and eat food should fulfil four main purposes.

- First: Food systems should enable all people everywhere to be able to access and to afford the food they need to be well nourished, live healthy lives and achieve their full potential.
- Second: Food should be produced and made available in ways that regenerate ecosystems - conserving water supplies, maintaining soil quality, protecting the oceans, increasing forestation and promoting biodiversity.
- Third: Food production should minimize the amounts of greenhouse gas emissions that come directly from agriculture and from the conversion of land for agricultural purposes. Agriculture has enormous potential to capture carbon through forests or in soils and that potential must be harnessed.
- Fourth: Food production should lead to more employment for people in rural and urban areas. This especially applies to women and youth, enabling them to care for their families and live in dignity as well as to have livelihoods that are resilient in the face of increasingly volatile weather or in the event of conflict or disasters. This focus on rural development is especially important as well over half a billion people are involved in the production and processing of food. Many of them are small-scale producers, processors and traders often without rights to land or water. The majority are extremely poor and are finding it hard to earn a living.

The Milano group proposed a profound four-part transformation of food systems that are advanced locally in ways that take account of global agreements like COP 21 for Climate and successive conclusions of the Rome-based United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS): I have always been an active supporter of the CFS. I believe in the collective energy that can be generated when representatives of governments, private sector, civil society, scientific organizations and farmers come together to work on improving food security and nutrition. In the CFS they have the opportunity – together - to analyse challenges, align policies and encourage greater coherence in implementation.

Food and Land Use Coalition: Different stakeholders are exploring how they can best work together to accelerate the four-part transformations of food systems. Where entities agree on the change needed and the means to make it happen, they form coalitions to accelerate impact. I am presently advising the Food and Land Use Coalition as it supports governments who are making their food and land use systems more sustainable. Entities that do not agree on means of implementation seek ways to enable greater agreement.

Food Systems Dialogues: One novel approach is an ambitious series of structured and facilitated Food Systems Dialogues (FSDs). These FSDs will be advanced in multiple locations with outputs being synthesised and dialogues linked together to increase collective action for food systems transformation. I am the initial coordinator of FSDs initiated by EAT, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum. I hope that Food Systems Dialogues can be conducted in ways that give primacy to the interests of people (especially women and children) who find that they are unable to access the food they need, unable to ensure a decent living from their work in food production and processing, and unable – for whatever reasons – to eat the kinds of food that will enable them to be well-nourished and healthy. There should be space for farmers, fishers, foresters and livestock keepers, as well as those without assets, as well as officers from local and national governments, scientists from multiple disciplines, members of youth and women’s groups, civil society and consumer organizations, and faith groups as well as to people from small-scale enterprises and larger businesses.

Working for Synergy: Throughout my professional life I have seen how different entities – including government departments, international and local organizations and businesses working across food value chains – are frequently committed to similar goals for sustainable futures. However, they often face difficulties with working together. In my different roles I have worked with these different actors as they clarify their common approach, align their efforts in a transparent way and find ways to work in greater synergy. This enables them to better respond to the interests of people who are disadvantaged, are unable to realize their rights and are more likely to be left behind or even excluded.

Capabilities needed for the 2030 Agenda: Achieving the 2030 Agenda calls for integrated approaches that engage multiple stakeholders: these should include local communities who are often disempowered in ways that recognize the contributions they make including their innovative know-how. Systems thinking and novel leadership skills are needed everywhere for delivering on the 2030 Agenda. Leaders who are responsible for advancing the agenda draw on the skills needed to work across disciplines while always putting the interests of disadvantaged people first. Other important skills include building coalitions whose members can act together with agility and responsiveness, fashioning diverse yet productive partnerships, and working confidently within living systems. I am now relentlessly focused on the challenge of shifting food systems so that they better contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Imperial College London and 4SD, Vaud, Switzerland: I am delighted to find numerous opportunities for contributing to the collective effort for developing these skills in my new position at the Imperial College London. A group of us with similar passions is establishing a social venture to mentor professionals responsible for the 2030 Agenda in different settings. It is based in Vaud, Switzerland and is called 4SD (which stands for Skills, Systems and Synergies for Sustainable Development).

A word about my fellow World Food Prize laureate for 2018: Lawrence Haddad is an exceptional person. His priority is enabling all people to enjoy their autonomy and use it for the benefit of all. I have never seen him constrained by orthodoxy or ideology. He makes the person the centre of his attention. His actions combine the skills of an economist with a passion for demonstrating outcomes, an appreciation of living systems and unconditional love for people. He has redefined human nutrition as an integrated science and clearly explains its complexity. He shows the value of action that transcends sectors. And he is never scared to set precedents. He led multiple researchers as they aggregated diverse data sets for the first Global Nutrition Report. He encourages principled public-private partnerships if they bring real benefits to people while calling out all who are unprincipled. He encourages business to support government policies, engages civil society regularly and innovates with young people – always seeking benefits for those with greatest needs while challenging unhelpful orthodoxies.

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