

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI, may God Assist Him



International Seminar on Parliaments & Food Security Challenges

Concept Paper

1. Background

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI, may God Assist Him, the House of Councillors of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Association of Senate, Shoora, and Equivalent Councils in Africa and Arab World (ASSECAA) organize the International Seminar on Parliaments and the Food Security Challenges, in partnership with, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at the House of Councillors on October 31st - November 1st, 2019.

This initiative comes within the framework of implementing the findings and the recommendations of the Afro-Arab Parliamentary Economic Forum that will be hosted by the House of Councillors on April 25th-26th, 2018, especially the ones aiming to contribute to the global efforts of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG2 which revolves around the eradication of hunger by 2030, achievement of food security and improved nutrition and enhancement of a sustainable agriculture.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), global hunger seems to be increasing as the number of malnourished people on the planet reaching roughly 815 million, one of every nine people, of which the overwhelming majority lives in developing countries with 12.9%.

Furthermore, this seminar seeks to inform and enrich the debate, dialogue and parliamentary consultation on food security issues and to make recommendations and drafts in order to pave the way for making rigorous efforts by parliaments, governments and various relevant sectors, mainly by:

- Encouraging investment by achieving the sustainability, abundance and quality of food production;
- Facing severe food shortages
- Addressing the obstacles to achieving the desired growth in terms of food production, especially in the context of extreme climate change events, namely drought, floods and the spread of diseases and epidemics;

- **Taking legislative and political measures to ensure the right to adequate, healthy and safe food, and to get rid of hunger;**
- **Exchanging information and experiences on strategies related to food security, nutrition, awareness, motivation and conducting studies and making proposals in this area.**

The Parliamentary Network of Food Security in Africa and the Arab World, which establishment was announced earlier this year, will hold its first meeting on the eve of the seminar; in addition, a training workshop for the network members will be organized and moderated by experts from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at the headquarters of the House of Councillors on October 30th, 2019.

2. Role of Parliamentarians in achieving food security

Parliamentarians are essential contributors in the fight to eradicate poverty and malnutrition, given their legislative, budgetary and policy oversight roles; they also represent an important stakeholder in the development process. Thus, parliamentarians are critical actors in establishing an enabling political and legislative environment to achieve food and nutrition security. In other words, the work of parliamentarians enables the creation of an effective and wide-ranging institutional framework that can secure the right to food and consolidate the management of agricultural development.

Parliamentarians have increasingly been engaging in debates both within and outside parliaments, as well as participating in the creation of national and international networks with a purpose of achieving food security.

The recent successful experiences of the Parliamentary front against Hunger in Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pan-African Parliamentary Food Security and Nutrition Alliance have made a priceless contribution to the global effort towards food security.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has forged close collaboration with Parliamentarians, building upon the experiences of the Parliamentary Front against Hunger for Latin America and the Caribbean (PFH LAC), which was established in 2009.

FAO has since engaged Parliamentarians in Africa and Europe, which resulted in the Pan-African Parliament launching a Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA-FSN) similarly to the several members of the European Parliament who established the European Alliance to Fight against Hunger. In addition, many similar national and regional initiatives have also been implemented in other countries and regions, such as the Spanish Cooperation, through its Agency for International Development & Cooperation (AECID).

Moreover, the World Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition held in Madrid, Spain, on the 29-30 October 2018, affirmed its commitment to the realization of the sustainable development goals as a plan of action for a better future to all, with a particular focus on Goal 2 pertaining to the eradication of hunger by 2030.

It also stressed the importance of the many international and regional instruments that formed the backbone of the collective efforts to eliminate all forms of malnourishment and to ensure the realization of the right of sufficient food for all.

The Summit called on parliaments, parliamentarians and Governments to support and strengthen the work of the UN international agencies such as FAO, IFAD and WFP, and to work

together with all States to achieve the sustainable development goals, with the second SDG as the main point of focus which stands for the elimination of hunger by 2030.

3. Meeting Agenda

First day: Wednesday, October 30th, 2019

- First meeting of the Parliamentary Network on Food Security in Africa and the Arab World
- Training workshop to be run by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Second day: Thursday, October 31st, 2019

- The Training workshop by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) resumes
- International seminar on parliaments and food security challenges
- **Opening statement: "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019, lessons learned from the FIRST Programme"**
- **Panel 1: "Global experiences of parliamentary networks on food security and their role in achieving goal 2 (SDG2) of the sustainable development goals (SDGs)"**

Third day: Friday, November 1st, 2019

- **Panel 2: "Impact of conflict on food security and nutrition"**
- **Panel 3: "Climate Changes and Food Security"**