



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement

by

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**Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand
to the United Nations**

**at the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on
Famine and Conflict-Induced Global Food Insecurity**

New York, 3 August 2023

Madam President,

1. I wish to congratulate the United States in assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month of August and to express appreciation to Secretary of State Blinken for convening and chairing this morning this important open debate on Famine and Conflict-Induced Food Insecurity. Our thanks also go to the United Kingdom for the fruitful Presidency of the Council last month. And we appreciate the insights provided by the briefers for today's discussions.

Madam President,

2. What do the 2023 Global Report on Food Crisis (GRFC), the latest UN Secretary-General's Report on protection of civilians in armed conflict and the most current data of the WFP have in common? Well, they all point to armed conflict and war being the most significant driver at present of hunger and food insecurity.

3. The 2023 GRFC released in May showed that over a quarter of a billion people are facing acute hunger, with economic shocks, extreme weather and conflicts contributing to the increase in this number.

4. The report of the Secretary-General issued in May 2023 amplifies the connection between armed conflict and violence and conflict-induced food insecurity.

5. And the report of the FAO and WFP warns that acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate further in 18 hunger hotspots in June to November this year, most of which are in conflict situations. And the WFP has indicated that 70 percent of the world's hungry people live in areas affected by war.

6. The conclusions are clear: the bad global situation regarding food insecurity is made even worse by war and armed conflict. And there are immense humanitarian consequences. That is why Security Council resolution 2417 of 2018 which condemns the starving of civilians as a method of warfare -- as well as the unlawful denial of humanitarian access -- is so significant.

7. The urgency is pressing. The responsibility is ours. We need to strengthen collective efforts to addressing greater food insecurity exacerbated by armed conflict. To this end, our focus should be on the following three areas.

8. **First is the primacy of protecting civilians in all situations, especially in situations of armed conflict, from hunger and starvation.**

9. Thailand stands against the use of food as a weapon of war and calls on parties directly involved in conflicts to commit to taking action with the aim of ensuring that food and starvation of civilians will never be employed as a tactic of warfare.

10. We call on every UN Member State and all parties to conflict to respect and fulfill their obligations, humanitarian and legal, to protect civilians in conflict situations and to ensure their food supply. Infrastructure indispensable to the survival of civilians, including objects related to agricultural and food production and distribution, must also be safeguarded.

11. **Second is having a more resilient and better functioning food system to prevent widespread food insecurity and starvation.**

12. The impacts of conflict on food system are more pronounced now than ever and extend far beyond the areas of conflicts due to the global nature of the food supply chain. Food insecurity induced by conflicts has disproportionate impacts on low-income and developing countries as they are most exposed to the disruptions on trade in food, agricultural products and fertilizers. These same countries are also most vulnerable to the fluctuations of food and energy prices, resulting from conflicts and instability.

13. It is therefore vital to strengthen our global food system and ensure the sustainability of the entire food supply chain. We need to ensure both food affordability and food availability in order to prevent the problem of hunger from escalating to becoming the problem of famine.

14. In this connection, rules and regulations under multilateral trade frameworks need to be conducive to promoting international trade in agricultural and food products. The supply chain should remain open for unimpeded flow of essential goods such as food, fertilizers and energy. And in certain cases, food assistance and concessional financing should be provided for those in need.

15. **Third is promoting more effective climate action for greater food security.**

16. Climate change and extreme weather events are threat multipliers. As the Secretary-General has put it, the era of “global boiling” has underscored the catastrophic consequences of biodiversity loss, extreme weather, and unpredictable weather patterns on food production and transportation. Climate related supply shocks such as crop failures and damage from flooding can drive up food prices even further.

17. Science and technology should therefore be leveraged to ensure sufficient food supplies as well as improve food storage. Sustainable production of food and agricultural products needs to be promoted to mitigate the risks of vulnerable agricultural areas, food supplies and transportation infrastructure and routes.

18. In the long-run, investment in effective climate action is an investment in the security of the production of food and agricultural products and therefore an investment against hunger and starvation.

Madam President,

19. In closing, enhancing food security and the need to prevent starvation and hunger as a result of armed conflict is not only a humanitarian imperative; it also highlights once again the inextricable linkage between sustainable development and international peace, security and stability.

20. Starvation and hunger in conflict situations remind us that without peace, security and stability, sustainable development will be out of our reach and so will be the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

21. So let us try to, at the very least, minimize, if not eliminate, the starvation of civilians as a consequence of armed conflict. Because this remains central to our continuing and committed efforts – to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict and to promote food security for all, for the long haul.

22. Thank you, Madam President.
