

**RIGHT TO FOOD**

**RIGHT TO ADEQUATE SHELTER**

My delegation would like to commend the High Commissioner on the report on the right to food. The report draws attention to the fact that women, who are the main breadwinners in the households, are handicapped in their access to food. This is very worrying, in view of its implications for whole families.

A great deal of lip service is being given to Gender equality, but, as we can see from the report, this rhetoric need to be translated into action. We believe that all the factors which hamper women's access to food needs to be analyzed and remedial action taken. Women's access to education, employment, financial resources and to participation in governance are all important elements in ensuring access of whole families to food. States, international organizations, private sector should all work together to address all shortcomings.

The report on the right to shelter focuses on security of tenure as a component of the right to adequate housing. A detailed look at land tenure systems in member states should reveal the shortcomings in their systems which hamper the rights to adequate housing.

While there can be no denial of the need for land tenure systems that guarantee these rights, attention also needs to be drawn to the fact that, in the case of urban slum dwellers, the right to tenure cannot always be encouraged in cases where squatting on land prone to natural disasters are involved. Thus, settlements on river and sea banks, on mountainside which could be subject to soil erosion and landslides cannot be endorsed through the granting of security of tenure.

It is obvious that situations of securing land tenure in the different countries need to be studied on a case-by-case basis. Solutions should not only be limited to seeking guarantees for the status quo to be confirmed, but that, in seeking for solutions a detailed examination of the advisability of encouraging human settlements in fragile lands, should be taken into account.

In crowded urban areas, where access of land space is limited, it is the responsibility of government to provide advice and options to facilitate decongestion and avert potential loss of life in the event of disasters. In cases where populations fled to urban areas as a result of war, incentives need to be provided to facilitate return to areas of origin through guaranteeing security of land tenure in these areas and promoting livelihoods for persons returning to the land and farming.