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|  | **FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  **Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**      **PRESS RELEASE** |
| **FOR INFORMATION MEDIA**  **NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD**  **Members of the Asia and the Pacific region:**  Afghanistan  Australia  Bangladesh  Bhutan  Cambodia  China  Cook Islands  Democratic People's  Fiji  France  India  Indonesia  Islamic Republic of Iran  Japan  Kazakhstan  Kiribati  Lao People’s Democratic Republic  Malaysia  Maldives  Marshall Islands  Micronesia  Mongolia  Myanmar  Nauru  Nepal  New Zealand  Niue  Pakistan  Palau  Papua New Guinea  Philippines  Republic of Korea  Russian Federation  Samoa  Solomon Islands  Sri Lanka  Thailand  Timor-Leste  Tonga  Tuvalu  United States of America  Uzbekistan  Vanuatu  Viet Nam  **Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**  Maliwan Mansion  39 Phra Atit Road  Bangkok 10200, Thailand  Tel: (66 2) 697-4000  Facsimile: (66 2) 697-4445  E-Mail: FAO-RAP@fao.org | APRC/30/04  **Asia-Pacific groups meet to build consensus on food security**  **Civil society organizations to play greater role**  **Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, 1 October 2010 –** Small food producers and civil society organizations (CSOs) from across the Asia-Pacific region are today one step closer to direct participation in the newly reformed Committee on World Food Security (CFS), following two-days of deliberations held in conjunction with the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.  The CFS, established in 1974, is an intergovernmental body that serves as a forum in the United Nations System for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security including production and physical and economic access to food. In 2009 the CFS began implementing reforms that welcomed the participation of private sector, civil society and non-governmental groups concerned with hunger, nutrition and food security.  FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf said, “The purpose of CFS reform is to improve the governance of world food security, using existing structures and programmes and creating effective partnerships.” Dr Diouf called the new CFS “a global forum of discussion to foster a convergence of views on the causes and consequences of food insecurity.”  “It is open to all stakeholders: governments, regional and international institutions, economic and financial partners, farmer organizations, the private sector, NGOs, foundations and civil society will all be represented,” said Dr Diouf.  Noel De Luna, Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security, noted, “The participation of CSOs and NGOs is critical in the fight against food insecurity and hunger because more than anything else, they are based at the grassroots level and have a highly organized network which can complement the contributions of other stakeholders such as the government.”  No new structures are envisaged, but the CFS Secretariat – linked-up with the FAO regional offices – will further study proposals for an ad hoc steering group to pay attention to budgetary and financial implications, terms of reference, including composition and representation.  A side event at the FAO regional conference brought together representatives of national governments, regional bodies, private sector institutions, research and academia as well as civil society organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.  A panel presentation, followed by contributions from the floor, provided an opportunity for interested parties to share their best practices and lessons learned in promoting multi-stakeholder participation in institutions and mechanisms for food security and nutrition at the national and regional level. The Asia-Pacific mechanism that would allow multi-stakeholder participation in the CFS will be based at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.  CSO groups met in Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, working to establish institutional mechanisms that will help them to participate in the on-going CFS reform process, ensuring the meaningful participation of all constituencies at the international and regional levels.  Speaking on behalf of Asian farmers, Danilo Ramos, a farmer from the Philippines and regional representative of the Asian Peasant Coalition, said: “If we want to address the root causes of the unprecedented hunger in the world today, we need a global strategic framework that respects the freedom and sovereignty of the people, not free markets; we need respect for bio-diversity and science for the people, not corporate monopoly and control; we need justice, not charity.”  Irma Yanny, an Indonesian farmer, member of La Via Campesina and representative from the civil society meeting, said: “There is great support for the CFS reform process.” She praised on-going efforts to reform CFS for their inclusiveness, particularly of smallholder family farmers, artisanal fishers, herders, pastoralists, indigenous communities and agricultural and food workers as well as NGOs that are involved and depend on food and agriculture production.  = = = = = = = = = =  For more information about the 30th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, see <http://www.fao.org/world/regional/rap/conference_30th_APRC.asp>  Media accreditation and registration: <http://www.fao.org/world/regional/rap/conference_30th_APRC_News_room.asp>  Media follow-up inquiries can be addressed to:  Diderik de Vleeschauwer  Tel: +66 81 899 7354 or +82 10 7364 8003  Email: Diderik.deVleeschauwer@fao.org | |
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