

The Republic of Belarus

Positions for the General Assembly Second Committee

I. Food Security in Economically Impoverished Area

The Republic of Belarus is fortunate enough to keep its citizens well-fed and expresses sympathy towards Member States unable to live in similar circumstances. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) describes food security as a state of having complete physical, social and economic access to food that satisfies dietary necessities. As a proud member of the FAO, Belarus is happy to continue its support within the organization. The UN emphasizes that all humans have a right to healthy proportions of nutritional foods hence the need to encourage food security, especially in poverty-stricken Member States who need the aid most. **Internationally**, Belarus has been a member of the FAO since 2005. In 1996, the FAO created the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS). This program focuses on achieving realistic goals by increasing production of staple foods to reduce hunger in Low-Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDCs). These goals include looking at the newest technologies available in the area, its farming land conditions, and promoting career fields in agriculture. Between 1996 and 2002, SPFS covered a total of 68 LIFDCs and in 2013, only 62 Member States remained on the list of LIFDCs, four less than in 2012. Food security is improving internationally due to the works of the SPFS. **Regionally**, 90% of Belarusian food exports are sent to other Member States within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Belarus, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan all claim food security as an integral part of national security. Turkmenistan created a state monopoly on trade in food products and Uzbekistan has a subsidies for consumers policy, which entails lower-priced options for goods in certain locations. Each country has established an assortment of food items with the goal of having 100% self-sufficiency. **Nationally**, Belarus has a limited need for food security unlike some Member States. The Belarus Telegraph Agency explained that 8.4 million tons of grain need to be collected in order to achieve food security. Having only harvested 9% of fertile land, 660,000 tons were collected; this leaves potential for the collection of 60 million tons of grain. As of 2016, out of the 9.513 million people only 0.8% of the population of Belarus is undernourished. Despite Belarus's lack of need, Belarus still strongly advocates for support to be made available to those in need.

As the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, once stated in Gomel, at a state seminar, economic issues associated with agriculture derive from the increasing prices for the energy and fertilizers necessary for agricultural food production. Producers lack incentive to reduce prices on food if they see their profit decreasing due to the growing price for utilities. Belarus proposes that the UN provide an incentive to fertilizer and infrastructure manufacturers, or offer more readily available fertilizers in the form of the **Growing Regional Agriculture in an International Network (G.R.A.I.N.)**. The purpose of the network will be to distribute fertilizer provided by the FAO to Member States affected by high utility prices. Incentives for the manufacturers will include international recognition with product labels addressing their association with the UN and financial incentives. The financial incentives will be based off those provided in the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme's project to protect the endangered marine mammal species, the dugong. An increase in fertilizer options, or reduction of price, will lead to lower prices in goods, which citizens and charities can better afford. G.R.A.I.N. will also contribute to horticulture activities. The majority of some agricultural goods in Belarus (e.g. potatoes, wool, vegetables) are produced in household plots. These plots are an innovative way to reduce hunger and can be mimicked in LIFDCs. Through G.R.A.I.N., there will be a larger distribution of lower priced fertilizers and infrastructure utilities, as well as more home-grown produce. President Lukashenko confirmed that Belarusian agriculture covers Belarus' needs for food security, but other Member States cannot confirm similar standings. The World Bank strongly warns against complacency of high prices; it is in the UN's best interest to appeal to agricultural manufacturers for more progress in increasing food security in Member States in need.

II. Enhancing Economic Development with Information and Communication Technologies

The Republic of Belarus has a long and proud history of supporting the use and development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the international stage. Belarus has declared several times the strong belief that Member States must cooperate so that those who have been left behind may be brought forward. Belarus has worked to support all initiatives that have been available to Belarus to aid other Member States in this effort. Belarus has not changed from its dedication to expand the use and strength of ICTs. The use of these technologies to strengthen and aid the citizens of Member States is an important extension of the actions that have been taken in the past. It is a goal, which Belarus is proud to see, has not only begun but is being continued. To use ICTs to develop the people of the world who are in need is a goal that Belarus will support and has worked towards this with previous efforts. **Internationally**, the Republic of Belarus was delighted to take part in and act on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) which was a result of UN Resolution A/RES/56/183 under the direction of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Belarus has worked hard on fulfilling the goals which were established at this conference. Belarus has supported the continuing line of UN resolutions whose purpose is for the promotion of ICTs for development beginning with A/RES/56/183 and, its most recent iteration, A/RES/71/212. At the UN Internet Governance Forum the Belarusian representative further expressed the continued desire of Belarus with the statement of the standing policy to achieve cooperation between developed and developing Member States and to support these action wherever possible. **Regionally**, in continued agreement with the UN, and in conjunction with continued collaboration with the ITU to the further support of ICTs to aid the citizens of Member States and the States themselves, Belarus hosted the Connect CIS Summit in 2009. This summit's purpose was to strengthen the cooperation between governments, businesses and civilians within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). One of the most important projects to come out of this conference was the Transnational Eurasian Information Super Highway project which planned to supply 20 countries of the region with high-speed Internet access and telecommunication systems. The Connect CIS Declaration stated that there is a "common desire to build an inclusive and development-oriented information society, where people can achieve their full potential and improve their quality of life." The declaration also realized that there is an "important contribution of ICT in stimulating economic growth, employment and broader sustainable development in the region," **Nationally**, within the Republic of Belarus, as of July 2015, there were 11.4 million cell lines in use and 62.2% of the population with easy internet access the nation continues to expand and improve the infrastructure. With State support, the High Tech Park in Minsk now hosts over 160 ICT companies within this park alone. Belarus has actively supported these companies and their development of forefront supercomputers, education and medical software, space and micro/nanotechnologies. Belarus' National Strategy of Sustainable Economic Development, which was adopted in 2015, places ICT development as a priority till 2030 and was accompanied with the promise of at least 1 billion in financial support to ICT development before 2020. Belarus understands the importance of ICTs for the people to grow and prosper and thus continues to support ICT growth, especially within Belarus.

There are over 30 large international Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4Dev) organizations at present. These are both UN/Member State supported organizations or large Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). These vary between helping specific regions, to working across the globe to use ICTs to promote economic and social growth, each with their own unique method. The Republic of Belarus proposes that the Member States which have a prosperous technology sector be urged to take on the role of supplying incentives to these companies within their borders to supply ICT4Dev organizations with support. These incentives will be in the form of tax breaks or financial aid and, respecting sovereignty, this decision to act will be at the discretion of the Member States. In return, Belarus proposes that the Member States provide money to the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force (UN ICT TF) that will supply this money as a subsidy to the Member States providing the incentives to the companies. By following these guidelines, and with further action from Belarus and fellow Member States, the citizens of the world will prosper.