**Call for inputs from the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to inform**

**thematic report to the 78th session of the General Assembly in October 2023**

**“The right to food in the context of post-covid recovery”**

| **NO.** | **QUESTION** | **COMMENT** |
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|  | Please provide information on existing or new local and national laws, policies and programs that proved to effectively ensure people had access to adequate food and nutrition in the past three years. (This may include, but is not limited to, measures such as direct cash transfers; universal school meals; support for territorial markets; support for food workers; support for peasants, pastoralists, fishers and other small food producers). | * In Malaysia, existing policies and programs that aim to effectively ensure people have access to adequate food are outlined in the 12th Malaysia Plan with focus on boosting productivity growth of the agriculture sector to enhance competitiveness of the industry and strengthen food security. Among the initiatives identified to drive productivity growth and improve efficiency of the agriculture sector are by increasing high value-added products, encouraging smart farming and precision agriculture technologies, improving market efficiencies and accelerating the adoption of green practices. Malaysia also encourages all efforts to increase the usage of green technologies that will intensify resilience against climate change and disasters. * At the same time, the framework to chart the future of the agriculture sector is also outlined in the National Agrofood Policy 2021-2030 (NAP 2.0). This policy outlines a vision to develop a sustainable, resilient and technology-based agrofood sector in driving economic growth, improving the well-being of the people as well as prioritizing food security and nutrition. Food security is also given utmost priority with the setting up of the Cabinet Committee Meeting on National Food Security Policy to specifically address issues and strategies to ensure the nation’s food security. Amongst the issues and challenges in the agrofood industry are production efficiency and cost, an unconducive environment, limited involvement of youth in agrofood industry, limited high value-added produce, threats from natural disasters and limited financial assistance for smallholders. * The policy thrusts will be supported by strategies and outcome-based action plans with specific focus on 4 subsectors, namely paddy and rice, fruits and vegetables, livestock, and capture fishery and aquaculture. The policy is based on 3 principles of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and is in line with the global and national aspirations, i.e. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 2030). |
|  | What food security policies from the past three years does your Government envisage converting into permanent programs? | * Malaysia’s food security policies from the past three years are outlined under theNAP 2011-2020, which focus on addressing food security and safety. These policies intended to ensure the availability, affordability and accessibility of food; the competitiveness and sustainability of the agrofood industry; and increased the income level of agropreneurs. * NAP 2011-2020 has outlined policies and strategies for modernising the agrofood sector. The initiatives and programmes that have been implemented are positioned to facilitate the development of a competitive and sustainable industry, protect and improve the welfare of producers and consumers as well as strengthen our food security. These policies have established expansions of granary areas, gazetted Food Production Permanent Park and Aquaculture Industry Zone as well as the introduction of Malaysian Good Agricultural Practises (myGAP) and Malaysian Organic (myOrganic) certifications to improve the quality of domestic food production. * Considering that the informal food business is one of the resilient modes of resolution for many that are affected by the COVID19 pandemic, authorities have the responsibility to educate this business community on regulatory requirements, food safety risks, improve approaches and hygienic practices accordingly. Authorities are committed to:  (i) supporting the informal market community through maximizing and streamlining existing resources and (ii) providing affordable and accessible tools for a sustainable food system. Pursuance of outreach programs, continuous information sharing and engagement, self-assessment tools, creation of support groups (icons) and targeted initiatives helps informal food businesses to strengthen their operations according to the requirements and facilitates the eventual upgrade of these businesses to formal establishments. * These programs increase the awareness of food safety among small businesses and reduce food poisoning incidence as well as facilitate economic development in the long run. These programmes also foster the industry’s competitiveness in meeting the standards or requirements of importing countries, including the international standard-setting bodies. |
|  | What measures, if any, has your Government taken to address rising corporate power and profits in the food and agriculture sector, in terms of redistribution and avoiding excessive market concentration? | * To address rising corporate power and profits in the food and agriculture sector, there is a need to understand the context of Malaysia's food system, which is characterised by a complex web of interaction among various actors, each with an individual’s set of profiles, responsibilities, interests, and skills. * This consolidated national pathway is in line with the National Agrofood Policy (NAP) 2.0, the National Nutrition Policy of Malaysia (NNPM) 2.0, the Twelfth Malaysia Plan and the National Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Policy. It is designed to look into certain aspects of Food Systems Transformation through enhancing national economic development, competitiveness, and sustainability, as well as resistance to global shocks. The pathway also reaffirmed Malaysia’s resolute commitment towards ‘End Hunger’, by developing an agriculture nutrition-sensitive. Current food systems faced increasing challenges to provide adequate, safe, diversified, and nutrient-rich food due to resource scarcity and environmental degradation, unsustainable production, and an unhealthy food environment. * To avoid excessive market concentration, Malaysia understood that food security is a joint effort of many agencies with two (2) main ministries, namely the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and the Ministry of Health (MOH). The Food Safety and Quality Division (FSQD) and Nutrition Division of the MOH are tasked with ensuring food is safe and nutritious, whether produced locally or imported. The FSQD under the MOH is mandated as the competent authority for food safety in Malaysia and is responsible for conducting official control of all food premises and food operators involved in manufacturing, storage, distribution and transportation. The National Food and Nutrition Security Council has been working in close collaboration with various stakeholders to ensure access to safe, wholesome, and nutritious food. |
|  | Please provide information about any steps which have been taken in support of local small food producers to ensure stronger links between local producers and  consumers and improved access to healthy nutritious diets. | * Smallholders are the most important stakeholders in Malaysia's agrofood business, accounting for nearly 76 percent of the industry's players. However, the average household income in households where the head of home is working in agriculture is around 40% lower than the national average. Increasing income levels and improving the well-being of smallholder farmers and food producers are critical. * Malaysia has taken steps to support local small food producers through the provision of various support mechanisms, including services to boost production, efficient post-harvest management, and increased market access. Furthermore, stronger collaboration between smallholders and larger companies is required to instil trust as well as to stimulate the adoption of technology for innovation and progression through higher value chain. * Sustainable food production and agriculture are both fundamental to assure an adequate and stable supply of affordable healthy food for the population. In this regard, the Nutrition Division of MOH is tasked to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate plans of action and strategic initiatives on nutrition and healthy diets in the country according to the National Food Nutrition Policies. The NNPM 2.0 emphasises on elevating nutritional status, reducing diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and strengthening food and nutrition security. All strategies in NNPM 2.0 are translated into action via the National Plan of Action for Nutrition of Malaysia (NPANM), with the aim to sustain food systems and to promote healthy diets. |
|  | Please also describe any initiatives which have been undertaken to enhance  local governments’ capacity to fulfil the right to food. | * Among the initiatives undertaken to enhance local governments’ capacity to fulfil the right to food, were namely: (i) organise training programmes that address current and future skill shortages in the agrofood business the industry; and (ii) tap into potential technologies to harness the opportunities, which can result in a significant impact on agrofood business. The advancement of technology, can be capitalised via the development of training programmes for targeted groups. Therefore, building strong talents in the agrofood technology and other related sectors would set a strong foundation towards a stronger agrofood industry that can adapt faster to modern technology and produce food in greater quantity and quality to meet food security in Malaysia. |
|  | Currently many countries have developed national food pathways. How, if at  all, does this national food pathway of your country meet right to food obligations?  This includes issues such as the following:  (a) International cooperation and solidarity;  (b) Improving food production and conservation by enhancing cultural and  biological diversity in food systems;  (c) Supporting a holistic connection between traditional and indigenous local knowledge and scientific knowledge focused on agroecology;  (d) Reforming food systems to ensure that food is available and accessible in equitable terms and that labour rights are enforced;  (e) Ensuring that trade is equitable as a matter of food sovereignty and  labour rights, thereby establishing fair and stable markets. | * For Malaysia’s national food pathways to meet the right to food obligations, it continues to prioritise the development and modernization of the agrofood sector as the engine and driver of the economy. In the 12th Malaysia Plan, 5 priority areas have been identified as the focus for the upcoming 5-year agrofood development:   1. Accelerating modern technology applications;   2. Optimising farm size for productivity;   3. Establish an efficient agrofood value chain;   4. Strengthening industry specific produce; and   5. Enhancing value added in food industry and agro-related activities * The 5 priority areas are supported by 23 strategies and 48 initiatives with the aims to add value to the agrofood sector, increase farmers’ income and enhance local agricultural and food production. * To ensure that trade is equitable, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) continuously supports MAFS via the National Food Security Policy (DSMN) which was designed to address national food security issues based on the identified issues and challenges within the food supply chain ranging from agricultural inputs to food waste. The National Food Security Framework (KSMN) covers four (4) main components namely availability, accessibility, utilization and stability and sustainability. * MAFS as the custodian for national food security has three main objectives:  1. To ensure domestic food security by exploring alternatives source of supply; 2. To reduce import food dependency; and 3. To ensure continuous supply of raw materials as feedstock for further processed food and export market. |
|  | Has your Government taken or plans to take any steps towards a just transition  to agroecology? | * In order to achieve a just transition to agroecology, the Malaysian government is cognizant of the fact that the agrofood business must adopt sustainable practices in order to protect the delicate balance of the environment and ecosystem, and at the same time safeguarding the environment from excessive pollution. In view of this, the following are aspects to be considered for sustainable farming:  1. Strategies and processes for increasing soil productivity while reducing negative impacts on climate, soil, water, air, biodiversity, and human health; 2. Minimising the use of non-renewable and petroleum-based inputs and replacing them with those derived from renewable resources; 3. Ensuring that the basic nutritional requirements of current and future generations are met based on the Malaysian Dietary Guidelines; and 4. Reducing the agricultural sector’s vulnerability to adverse natural conditions (e.g. flooding), socioeconomic factors (e.g. economic downturn) and other risks; and 5. Reducing the use of non-environmental friendly pest control chemicals and encouraging the practice of responsible pest control management that takes into account the food safety and environmental after-effect. |
|  | Please provide information on any recent agrarian reforms or other policies which your Government has initiated with the aim of protecting tenure rights and  access to land for peasants, farmers and agricultural workers. This also includes  programs that ensure Indigenous peoples’ free, prior and informed consent is sought for any action that would affect their lands, territories or rights. | * For land tenure and property rights, the government has ensured that regulatory matters such as norms, rules, and regulations; financial services; physical infrastructure and digital connectivity, as well as end-to-end value chain linkages, particularly between the upstream and downstream segments, are incorporated key areas of the ecosystem in the context of Food Systems. * One example outlined in the 12th Malaysia Plan, is to reinstate the important role of the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) in enhancing the welfare of Malaysia citizens. The focus of 12th Malaysia Plan involves financial restructuring of FELDA and strengthening the socioeconomic status of settlers. The Government’s aspiration is for FELDA to become a leader in smart farming and food production in the country, by being a role model in transforming rural areas into modern and progressive communities. |
|  | Please share any other general challenges and lessons learnt from the pandemic that can inform long-term solutions for tackling national and international food insecurity | * Government of Malaysia attaches great priority to food security, where various policies, plan of actions and strategic initiatives have been introduced in the past to address food security. * The culmination of these policies, programmes and initiatives resulted in the establishment of the National Food Security Policy, which encompasses four clusters as follows:  1. Availability Cluster under the Secretariat of the National Agricultural Advisory Council (MPPN), Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry; 2. Accessibility Cluster under the Secretariat of the National Subsistence Action Council (NACCOL), Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs; 3. Food Safety and Nutrition Cluster under the Secretariat of the National Food Safety and Nutrition Council (MKMPK), Ministry of Health Malaysia; and 4. Stability and Sustainability Cluster under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry and the National Security Council.  * Multiple agencies involved in food system are united under this national policy on food security to address the issues effectively, on a consolidated platform. For example, the Food Security Cabinet Committee chaired by the Prime Minister. The National Food Safety and Nutrition Council (MKMPK) is the principal advisory body dealing with all matters related to food safety and nutrition. It is chaired by the Health Minister and comprises of members from various Ministries and regulatory body, food industry associations, consumers associations (FOMCA) as well as professional bodies and academia. The FSQD division under MOH acts as the Secretariat as well as the Central Competent Authority for food safety. * The establishment of MKMPK is crucial to the country as the safety and quality of food can be improved at all stages of food production starting from the farm, processing, distribution until the food is served (from Farm to Table). This is to ensure the health of the people is guaranteed by strengthening food safety at all levels of food chain and to ensure the people of this country achieve the optimal nutritional standards. * Lastly, the global pandemic situation has tested the national preparedness and response in securing food for its people while at the same time trying to minimize disruption in trade that affect the country’s economy and sustainability. Hence, it is important to ensure and enhance food security of all people, especially vulnerable groups via sustainable food systems during emergencies and disasters. |