



## **C7 Statement ahead of the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Development, 22 - 24 October**

*16 October 2024*

An increasingly confrontational and dangerous international context demands an unprecedented global effort to re-establish a multilateral system that promotes paths of peace and international law, not drifts toward more war.

The world is experiencing an ominous series of interconnected conflict and climate crises, whose structural causes remain unresolved, driving shocking levels of hunger, sexual violence, and displacement, and requiring multi-donor funding to enable independent humanitarian action, as well as greater collaboration between humanitarian, development, peace and climate action. The G7 can be part of the problem, if it unilaterally promotes the interests of the most developed economies, or part of the solution, if it defends human rights and the common interests of humanity and the planet for a more peaceful, just and secure future.

The international civil society gathered in the Civil 7 (C7) believes this is a critical moment, and it is the responsibility of all actors, including the G7 and its Presidency, to take action with utmost urgency.

The dramatic flagrant and unpunished violations of International Humanitarian Law lead to massive suffering of civilians. The lack of action of the G7 and other States paves the way for a silent complicity that enables the continued devastation of Israel's bombardment of Gaza without distinction, proportionality and precaution that has so far killed over 42,000 and wounded close to 99,000 Palestinians. A further estimated 20,000 people are either unidentified, missing or buried under the rubble resulting from continued indiscriminate shelling of civilian homes, hospitals, schools, refugee camps, mosques and other buildings. This crisis has allowed this terror to spread regionally, resulting in an escalation of war in Lebanon, resulting in over 2,100 deaths, over 10,000 injured, and an estimated 1.2 million people displaced from their homes to save their lives from heavy bombardments. It has allowed famine and a scourge of rape and violence to once more threaten women and children in Sudan, with over 8 million people displaced within Sudan, and over 2 million people fleeing to neighbouring countries. It has enabled the relentless bombardment of civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. It enables the continued tragic deaths of migrants risking their lives to cross warzones and seas.

We cannot fail to remember that Civil 7 asked global leadership to introduce a paradigm shift in development, with democratic processes to address the root causes of the current polycrisis.



Food inequality and poverty, aggravated by armed conflicts and related insecurity conditions, continue to grow, along with the exploitation of small-scale producers and workers.

We reaffirm that Food systems are central to ecosystem health, social justice and well-being, food and nutrition security, culture and landscape protection, and planetary rights. The current model of industrialised agriculture is posing critical challenges regarding biodiversity loss, overconsumption of water, greenhouse gas emissions, groundwater pollution, and antibiotic resistance phenomena, with very serious implications for human, animal and environmental health. Food systems today are impacted by pandemics associated with reduced natural spaces and biodiversity. The climate crisis severely affects agriculture and food production, and the G7 countries are among those that need to be held accountable for their contributions to this phenomenon. Globalised food systems are affected by financial speculation and corporate concentration. The serious weaknesses of global supply chains are increasingly being exposed. The crisis is not one of global availability, but of unequal and inequitable access to food. The causes are structural and addressing them requires a deep transformation of our food systems.

The G7 food strategy outlined in the Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué (AFSI) is based on i) investments (PGII) and policies in a multi-stakeholder framework, ii) support for multi-stakeholder programmes, and iii) renewed initiatives to tackle child malnutrition.

The leaders reaffirmed their commitment of \$600 billion (USD) to PGII by 2027, which includes initiatives such as the EU Global Gateway, the Mattei Plan – Italy's flagship proposal for cooperation in Africa – and aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063 to promote green investment in Africa and address the climate-food systems nexus.

Among the key programmes supported by the G7 and aligned with African continental plans, the Apulia initiative highlights the Technical Cooperation Collaborative to implement the "COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action", the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils, and a G7 Public-Private Initiative on Coffee.

As per the Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué, malnutrition will be addressed through multi-stakeholder engagement and innovative financing solutions such as debt swaps, risk mitigation mechanisms and rapid response financing, including insurance solutions, for food security and food systems in low-income countries.

The Communiqué also defers the detailed actions for the AFSI to the G7 Development Ministerial.

The C7 views AFSI as an inadequate approach to promoting a food justice and food system transformation for which we advocate in this statement. Formulated without consulting small-scale food producers and other most concerned constituencies, the initiative risks targeting the geo-political and economic interests of the G7 countries and their corporations rather than the needs of the so-called beneficiary countries.



**For these reasons, we urge the G7 Development Ministers and governments to take action in the following areas.**

1. Respect and ensure respect for IHL and its principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, including to unequivocally and without ambiguity condemn all violations of IHL by any actor in every conflict and war, regardless of their political status or affiliations. This is particularly urgent in the case of Gaza. Additionally, uphold the commitments of the 2021 G7 famine prevention and humanitarian crises compact on respect for IHL and protection of civilians and use all political, legal, economic and humanitarian diplomacy avenues to advocate with states including the G20 to make similar, public commitments.
2. Ensure compliance with all UN Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1894 on protection of civilians in armed conflicts, 2175 on protection of humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel in armed conflict, 2286 on protection of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict, 2601 on children and armed conflict, and 2417 condemning the starving of civilians as a method of warfare, as well as resolutions on women, peace and security, sexual violence in armed conflict, protection of education in armed conflict, and protection of persons with disabilities in conflict.
3. Ensure development, humanitarian, peace, and climate actors work in full collaboration, understanding their specific but complementary roles, and proactively bring substantive and sustainable resources to work strategically to reduce needs over time, including through strengthening resilience at local and regional levels to manage risk to prevent, respond and recover more effectively from crises.
4. Increase predictable, flexible and non-earmarked, multi-year humanitarian funding to international and local organisations and civil society groups, based on needs and free from political agendas, including for protracted and often forgotten crises, leading by example and advocating collectively and individually with other states, including the G20, for increased humanitarian funding, to respond to humanitarian needs of most at risk and vulnerable population, in line with Accountability to Affected People. The Financing for a Shock-driven Food Crisis Facility must ensure transparency and provide flexibility to ensure the most effective response and enable local actors to access anticipatory action funding for early action, to develop anticipatory action frameworks with key stakeholders, including governments, integrated with reliable early warning systems, and ensuring adequate information reaches local actors and local communities in order to reduce losses and damages. Reallocate part of the funds from the Green Climate Fund toward anticipatory action and humanitarian responses related to climate change impacts, given the urgent levels of need.
5. The AFSI must ensure a rights-based approach to food security and nutrition, embracing inclusivity, transparency and civic participation also on definition of clear and measurable targets. Right-based processes and principles of mutual accountability considering the impact on marginalised groups - including women, youth, Indigenous Peoples - and smallholder farmers, must be front and centre of AFSI. Fair prices and wages for agriculture production as



well as sustainable and territorial food systems and accessible financing should be considered rights, and not privileges, conferred onto low-income countries and farmers.

6. The AFSI must align with and strengthen the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS), as the multiplication of initiatives risks leading to the fragmentation of food governance. G7 members must recognize and support the CFS as the leading international, multi-actor, and intergovernmental policy platform on food security and nutrition, which can ensure quality analysis, independence, and democratic participation in decision-making processes on food systems.
7. The G7 must improve international financial architecture and fiscal space for food security and nutrition by ensuring accessible adequate climate finance to smallholders; cancelling unjust and unsustainable debt to make fiscal space for critical health, climate, food systems transformation and SDGs investments by governments in the Global South; providing quality finance that avoids exacerbating debt crises, by increasing the share of grants instead of loans and by focusing on the provision of public finance for food systems transformation instead of relying on profit-driven private investment; ensuring a robust IDA21 replenishment; supporting tax revenue collection by LIC governments, and allocating sufficient SDRs for LICs.
8. The PGII shouldn't pave the way for the use of public funding to subsidise the private sector in infrastructure development. Major shortcomings in many similar initiatives are the lack of consultation with local communities - which increases the risk of displacement, human rights violations, and unfair & inadequate compensation - the risk that the choice of the infrastructures to be financed be influenced by private sector interests, and the danger of increasing the indebtedness of the host countries. In our vision, blended finance approaches and collaboration with the private sector should be replaced with support for public sector policies and accountable and transparent public sector financing.
9. Initiatives aimed at improving access to seeds and improving soils health should enhance sustainable food systems through agroecology and privilege support to peasant seed systems and regenerative approaches to soil management.

In short, as called for in the C7 Communiqué, supporting democratic policy-making rooted in a human rights framework, redirecting trade agreements, market regulations and investments to support food justice, ensuring Policy Coherence for Development, sustaining the agroecology transition and resilient territorial food systems, supporting gender justice, preventing food crises and allocating and operationalising adequate resources for food crises should guide G7 policy and programme engagement.

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