



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

Statement by Mr. Rodrigo de Lapuerta,  
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**OPENING AND WELCOME**

**Do Good Save Food!**

**Educating Future Generations for a Zero Waste World**

Organized under the auspices of  
The European Parliamentary Alliance on the Fight against Hunger  
And  
The EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable  
Development

Brussels, 21 February, 2019  
Room A 3H1, European Parliament

- As delivered -

Honourable Members,

Excellencies, Speakers,

Colleagues,

Good Morning!

I am also very pleased to welcome you on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to today's meeting.

The fact that the room is packed at 8.30 is a sign of the importance and timeliness of discussing food waste.

Let me first of all thank MEP Biljana Borzan and MEP Angélique Delhaye and the Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development for organizing this event with us under the auspices of the European Parliamentary Alliance on the Fight against Hunger.

Food is wasted in many ways and in many places; particularly in developed countries.

For example:

- Fresh produce that deviates from what is considered perfect in terms of shape, size and color, is often removed from the supply chain, during sorting operations. Ugly food is usually great food!
- Foods that are *close to-, at- or beyond- the best-before date* are often discarded by retailers and by consumers.
- And large quantities of edible food are discarded from household kitchens and eating establishments.

Food waste has significant social, economic, environmental costs. And more than everything, food waste is ethically unacceptable.

As Mrs Borzan stated, less food waste would lead to more efficient land use, better water resource management with positive impacts on climate change, biodiversity and livelihoods.

With the increasing trends in hunger across the globe, an increase of 26 more million hungry people between 2015 and 2017, we firmly believe that there is no room for food waste.

In this regard, I am very happy that there is a proposal under discussion in FAO to have an International Day on Food Losses and Waste. And we are very hopeful that this proposal will also be endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly and that we will mark the day on 29 September 2020.

As you know, FAO is very active on this issue and my colleague Rosa Rolle will provide you with more details on that, but let me also inform you that this year's FAO Flagship publication on the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) to be released in October will be dedicated to the issue of food waste and losses.

FAO is also an active Member of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste and collaborates very closely with the Directorate-General SANTE as well as with AGRI and ENVI on this matter.

We are also working with the Romanian Government, holding the current Presidency of the Council, on a possible event on Food Waste during the FAO Council in Rome from 8 to 12 April 2019. So, as you can see, very active on many fronts!

Today our discussions will focus on a wide range of actions to reduce food waste.

Let me however briefly focus on the key role of children and young people as the consumers, citizens and decision-makers of the future.

We believe that investing in their education to reduce food waste, will tremendously help in creating a culture of change, toward sustainably addressing the problem.

This is precisely what the education manuals "**Do Good Save Food!**" produced by FAO in collaboration with the International Food Waste Coalition being presented today intend to do!

We count on the support and efforts of everyone here, to ensure that these education materials are used to bring about a culture change with school aged children, so that they value food and reduce food waste, for the long term benefit of everyone and the planet.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

*Let me end by quoting the Director-General of FAO, Jose Graziano de Silva who said "Making Children aware of world food challenges is about involving them in building the future we want".*

Thank you very much.

## CLOSING REMARKS

Honourable Members,

Dear Speakers and Guests,

On behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization, let me thank you very much for joining us today, for sharing your insights with us and providing us with food for thought and so many examples of initiatives on how to effectively tackle the food waste challenge.

I agree with Mr. Ivanov, Eurocoop, that the situation is catastrophic.

At FAO we are convinced that each and every one of us has a key role to play:

- In your presentations, we have heard how public policies at the international, the European, the national, the regional and the municipal level can help to reduce food waste and support the re-use of food products.
- Bringing consumers on board is crucial and we all can all make an important contribution in our daily choices.

- But we have also seen today that retail sector as well as the industry play an important role in the challenge to half food waste by 2030.

I myself are very much pleased with the nine easy tips to fight food waste, where you find copies at the entry. Let's use them, and share them with friends and colleagues. It is all about a culture of change. All of us need to act.

Regarding the educational package, as you have heard, in addition to English, they will soon be available in French and with the office of MEP Biljana Borzan we are currently working on a translation to Croatian. Our FAO office in Hungary is also working on additional translations as well.

We encourage you to make use of these documents and support us in the translation in order to assure a maximum dissemination possible for all schools in Europe and beyond.

I very much hope, that today's discussion have inspired all of us to take action and make our personal contribution to address the issue.

Thank you very much!

