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Ensuring sustainable food security in times of crisis: strengthening resilience and access to food

Report[1]
Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development
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1. Reference to committee: Doc. 16064, Reference 4846 of 27 January 2025.

A. Draft resolution[2]

1. The right to food means that all human beings, both in times of peace and in times of war, must have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, adequate, safe and nutritious food that enables them to lead a healthy and active life. This right is under greater threat than ever, as overlapping crises – armed conflicts, climate shocks and the cost-of-living crisis – continue to undermine food security, food systems and nutrition worldwide.

2. The Parliamentary Assembly already sounded the alarm in Resolution 2577 (2024) and Recommendation 2286 (2024) "Guaranteeing the human right to food": it is necessary to examine the underlying characteristics of food markets that make food systems vulnerable to shocks and turn food into a strategic lever that is exploited as a form of pressure or warfare, as armed conflicts destroy agricultural production capacities, disrupt food supply chains and thus access to food.

3. The Assembly is alarmed by the consequences of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine for the food security of the Ukrainian population as well as of the rest of the world. The number of Ukrainians facing moderate or severe food insecurity was estimated at around 5 million in 2025. Prior to the Russian Federation's war of aggression, Ukraine was a major contributor to global food security, supplying food to around 400 million people worldwide and playing a critical role for food-import-dependent countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).The blockade of Ukrainian ports in 2022 caused major disruption to global food supply chains and contributed to a sharp rise in global food prices. The World Bank estimates the war-related damages and losses suffered by Ukraine's agricultural sector at more than 90 billion euros, a significant share of which is linked to the loss of access to land in occupied and frontline areas, destruction of storage infrastructure, agricultural machinery and production stocks, as well as mined and contaminated land, damaged irrigation systems and other productive assets, thereby compromising the world's current food security and Ukraine's long-term productive capacity.

4. The Assembly underscores that the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has severely destabilised global food security. The destruction of Ukrainian agricultural infrastructure and the blockade of Black Sea ports have disrupted grain exports and exacerbated the vulnerabilities of the MENA region, which is highly dependent on food imports. The Assembly notes that Russian attacks against Ukrainian port and agricultural infrastructure continue to disrupt exports and global food supply chains. The Assembly condemns the looting and illegal commercialisation of Ukrainian grain by the Russian Federation from temporarily occupied territories.

5. The Assembly notes with grave concern the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. According to Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) assessments, around 470 000 Palestinians were facing the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 5 (Catastrophe) levels of food insecurity in 2025, while the World Food Programme (WFP) estimated in April 2026 that at least 1.6 million people, representing 77% of the population, were facing high levels of acute food insecurity. At present, only 1.5% of arable land is accessible, fishing is banned and livestock numbers have been decimated, seriously jeopardising local food production and livelihoods, as well as the ability of Palestinians in Gaza to feed themselves for decades to come. Food assistance continues to enter Gaza at levels far below those envisaged under the ceasefire arrangements in October 2025, thereby heightening the risk of famine and further undermining food security. Special attention must be paid to the extreme vulnerability of children, mothers and the elderly, who bear the heaviest burden of this food insecurity.

6. In view of these alarming findings, the Assembly calls on member States of the Council of Europe to step up their support for Ukraine's 2026-2028 multi-year agricultural reconstruction plan drawn up together with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), as well as for the relevant humanitarian and food security programmes of the WFP, to take active participation in the *Food from Ukraine* initiative, and to support the documentation, sharing and dissemination of the expertise developed by Ukraine in the areas of agricultural demining, digital risk mapping and the rapid restoration of productive capacities. It calls too on member States to encourage the development, under the auspices of the FAO, of an international multi-year agricultural reconstruction and rehabilitation plan for Gaza.

7. The Assembly emphasises the geostrategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz for global food security. Instability in this area drives up energy, transport and fertiliser costs, thereby increasing agricultural prices. The FAO has warned that the closure of the Strait would trigger a systemic shock to global agrifood supply

2. Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 4 June 2026.

chains, already reflected in the rise of the FAO Food Price Index. This situation directly threatens the availability, affordability and stability of food supply, particularly in import-dependent regions. The Assembly calls for a swift opening of the Strait of Hormuz for goods that are related to food production

8. Drawing on United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018), which was adopted unanimously, the Assembly strongly condemns the use of starvation as a method of warfare, the unlawful denial of access to humanitarian assistance and attacks on assets indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, in particular agricultural and food infrastructure. These attacks include, in particular, the destruction of agricultural land, irrigation systems, storage facilities, ports and transport infrastructure essential to the production, storage and distribution of food, where such destruction jeopardises civilians' access to food. The Assembly calls on member States to strengthen international accountability mechanisms and to ensure that international law is fully and consistently applied.

9. The impact of crises on food security does not stem solely from global food availability. Crises amplify the structural vulnerabilities of food systems, both at international level – given the way the global agricultural commodities market functions – and at national level – given the way domestic food markets are organised and their level of resilience. The Assembly believes that it is more urgent than ever for member States to recognise the imbalances and dependencies created by the logic of the global food market, as well as the vulnerabilities arising from the way global and national markets are currently organised. The human right to adequate food should be prioritised over economic interests in order to guarantee stable, equitable and sustainable access to food for all people.

10. With regard to the instrumentalisation of food as a method of warfare, the Assembly calls on member States of the Council of Europe to:

10.1. support the courts responsible for investigating international crimes, including the use of starvation as a method of warfare;

10.2. refrain from obstructing the work of the International Criminal Court and, in the case of States Parties to the Rome Statute, co-operate fully with it;

10.3. reaffirm the obligation of aggressor States to compensate for all damages caused, including in the agricultural and food sectors;

10.4. ensure the effective implementation, in domestic law, of the prohibition under international humanitarian law on starving civilians as a method of warfare, including attacks on property vital to the survival of the civilian population;

10.5. condemn attacks on agricultural and food infrastructure, including farms, grain silos, irrigation systems, food storage facilities, markets, ports and energy infrastructure vital to food production and distribution;

10.6. strengthen the protection of humanitarian access and food supply corridors in situations of armed conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

11. With regard to preventing the use of food and agricultural dependency and deprivation of humanitarian aid as tools of pressure and conflict, the Assembly urges member States to:

11.1. maintain restrictive measures, including import and transit bans where appropriate, concerning agricultural inputs and fertilisers originating from the Russian Federation and Belarus, in order to reduce strategic dependencies that may be used for geopolitical pressure and to prevent trade from contributing, directly or indirectly, to the financing of the war of aggression against Ukraine;

11.2. use all available means, in accordance with international humanitarian law, to ensure the immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance, including food, water, medical supplies and fuel, to the civilian population in Gaza, and to ensure sustained, independent and unimpeded access for United Nations agencies and humanitarian organisations in order to avert famine and further humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

12. With regard to remedying violations of the right to food by means of documentation and accountability, the Assembly welcomes the recent expansion of the categories of claims relating to damage to infrastructure, production capacities, assets and economic losses suffered by legal entities and public authorities, enabling

the recording not only of individual losses, but also of broader economic damage sustained by business entities and the State of Ukraine as a result of the Russian Federation's aggression. It urges member States to:

12.1. join and encourage others States to join and actively support the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage for Ukraine;

12.2. support the development and the interpretation of the criteria of the Register of Damage to ensure that damage affecting agricultural production capacity, the livelihoods of the civilian population and food supply chains is properly documented and can be taken into account in future compensation and reconstruction efforts;

12.3. support the documentation and assessment of damage affecting agricultural production capacity, the livelihoods of the civilian population and food supply chains, as carried out by the United Nations in Gaza, with a view to establishing accountability and facilitating future reconstruction efforts;

12.4. reaffirm and uphold the obligation of aggressor States to provide compensation for all damage caused, including in the agricultural and food sectors.

13. With regard to strengthening the resilience of food systems globally, the Assembly urges member States to:

13.1. reinforce public mechanisms for regulating and co-ordinating agricultural markets, in particular through the establishment of food reserves, emergency mechanisms to protect against price spikes, transparency in market monitoring data and the strengthening of international food security monitoring and analysis systems;

13.2. reduce the concentration of food supply chains and agricultural input markets by diversifying sources of supply, strengthening local and regional capacities for food and fertiliser production, and encouraging regional food solidarity agreements, with particular emphasis on regions facing a high risk of drought and declining agricultural production due to climate change, as well as on food sovereignty for rural and indigenous communities. This includes strengthening local food systems in order to build shorter, more resilient and conflict-resistant supply chains, and developing sustainable alternatives to imported chemical fertilisers;

13.3. strengthen international co-operation to protect maritime food supply routes and humanitarian shipping corridors essential to global food security from geopolitical disruptions, including through support for the Ukrainian Maritime Corridor, the Food for Ukraine initiative and the European Union-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes; enhance the protection of civilian vessels and critical port infrastructure in order to safeguard the safety of navigation and the stability of food supplies; and strengthen tracking mechanisms to prevent the entry, transit or purchase in international ports of stolen Ukrainian agricultural commodities originating from temporarily occupied territories;

13.4. encourage the establishment and strengthening of permanent, inclusive public-private co-ordination frameworks, drawing on the model of the European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism, to ensure continuous risk monitoring, early detection of supply chain bottlenecks and synchronized responses between governments, international bodies and private food chain actors.

14. Lastly, in order to strengthen the resilience of the food systems in each member State, the Assembly encourages them to:

14.1. promote a balanced food market between local supply chains and exports, and support small and medium hold farmers, family farmers and other local food producers by providing them with diversified access to markets and stimulating demand for their products through targeted support and the introduction of criteria relating to local sourcing and community ties in public procurement, in particular as regards school catering, hospitals and care homes;

14.2. prioritise agro-ecological systems based on crop diversification, reducing external inputs and strengthening short supply chains and, in the context of Ukraine's accession to the European Union, provide financial, technical and logistical support for the sustainable and inclusive transition of the Ukrainian agricultural model, taking account of the diversity of production systems, rural livelihoods and long-term food security;

14.3. support the strengthening of local agricultural production capacity in regions facing food insecurity through training, industry exchanges, the sharing of agro-ecological knowledge and partnerships, including Ukrainian initiatives aimed at training specialists for African agro-hubs, as well

as youth-led, autonomous and digital-driven agricultural initiatives, including artificial intelligence and smart-farming technologies, with a view to promoting long-term food resilience, local self-sufficiency and sustainable food systems;

14.4. implement Resolution 2577 (2024), “Guaranteeing the human right to food”, which calls on member States explicitly to enshrine the right to food in their constitutions and to pass framework legislation on the right to food.

15. As well as measures to strengthen national resilience, the Assembly calls on member States to work collectively to promote sustainable and rights-based food systems, strengthen food security and resilience, and provide a model for democratic and rights-based food governance beyond the European region.

B. Explanatory memorandum by Ms Larysa Bilozir, rapporteur[3]

1. Introduction

1. The Global Report on Food Crises warned in 2022 in the following terms: “The number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihood assistance has increased for the fourth consecutive year.”[4] In other words, even if conflicts were to cease today, global food insecurity would persist. Neither geopolitical shocks nor climate shocks are the root cause; they are amplifiers of long-standing fragilities and of the systemic violence embedded in food systems.

2. Every food crisis results from interactions between the economy, climate, conflicts and governance. The disastrous effects on global food security of the war in Ukraine or of the blockage of the Strait of Hormuz are not anomalies in a global food model that would otherwise be robust. They merely exacerbate the structural vulnerabilities of food systems: the asymmetry of interdependence between States, excessive productive specialisation, insufficient diversification of sources of supply, the excesses of the financialisation of agricultural markets, and an approach centred on securing flows.[5] In simple terms: a few industrially produced staple foods, a limited number of exporting countries and a handful of private actors structuring value chains and trade.

3. As Nobel Prize-winning economist Mr Amartya Sen already showed in 1981, food insecurity in times of peace as in times of war results less from overall food availability than from the loss of access to food, poverty and pre-existing structural vulnerabilities. These deep-seated characteristics of markets make food systems vulnerable to climate and geopolitical shocks and, in some cases, turn food into a strategic issue liable to be instrumentalised as a means of pressure or as a weapon of war.

4. My report gives particular attention to the consequences of Russia’s large-scale invasion of Ukraine on the global food system and to the additional strain it has added to the already multidimensional global food crisis. However, it is not the only conflict causing record levels of food insecurity. The humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza resulting from the hostilities and Israel’s military operations has become one of the most emblematic examples and illustrates the devastating consequences of war on food security.

5. The conceptual framework of my report is set out in Assembly Resolution 2577 (2024) and Recommendation 2286 (2024) “Guaranteeing the human right to food”. Guaranteeing the human right to food implies that “all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that enables them to lead a healthy and active life”.[6] All the measures advocated in this resolution are incorporated into my proposals to strengthen food resilience and improve resistance to crises.

6. In drafting my report, I relied on the committee’s hearings with Mr Taras Vysotskyi, Deputy Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine; Mr Jean-Martin Bauer, Director of Food Security and Nutrition Analysis at the World Food Programme (WFP); Mr Michael Fakhri, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food; and Mr Fabrice Santini, Head of Unit for Agri-food Market Governance at the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission. Ukrainian farmer, Mr Viktor Hordiienko, representing frontline agricultural area along the military contact line and demined land and Mr Dmytro Solomchuk, member of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Committee on Agrarian and Land Policy, were also heard. I also attended the Black Sea Security Forum held in Odessa from 29 to 31 May 2026.

2. Food as an instrument of war against civilian populations

7. Food systems are not neutral; they are used as instruments of domination, pressure and deprivation in times of crisis.

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3. This explanatory memorandum is drawn up under the responsibility of the rapporteur. Its original French version was translated into English by a machine translation tool.
4. 7th edition of the Global Report on Food Crises (2022).
5. The work of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) is the global reference for understanding these interactions and is based on the technical work of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IFAD, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in particular: HLPE, Nutrition and Food Systems, “HLPE Report” series, No. 12, 2018.
6. FAO definition.

8. Even before the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion in Ukraine in February 2022, food insecurity in Ukraine was already significant: according to analyses by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), between 2019 and 2021 approximately 9.9 million people were in a situation of moderate or severe food insecurity, particularly in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Since then, the continuation of the war has profoundly aggravated the country's economic and social situation. The WFP estimates that around 5 million Ukrainians were still facing moderate or severe food insecurity in 2025, while 10.8 to 12.7 million people required humanitarian assistance.[7]

9. Russia's instrumentalisation of food in the context of the war is multidimensional, as I have explained to our committee on several occasions. It began with the siege and destruction of cities strategic for agriculture such as Mariupol, repeated bombardments of the port facilities of Odesa, the destruction of the Kakhovka dam in June 2023, which caused massive flooding and the loss of irrigated agricultural land, the degradation of the production capacities of the Kherson region in southern Ukraine, and the disruption of the logistical function of the Dnipro as an inland river corridor linking the agricultural regions of the south to the Black Sea ports. The Black Sea ports have been particularly affected, with military blockades, attacks on grain storage facilities and access restrictions that paralysed part of commercial flows. Finally, the occupation of the territories of Donbas (Donetsk and Luhansk) has been accompanied by the confiscation and appropriation of land and agricultural assets by the occupying forces, which seize harvested products for export to their own benefit.[8]

10. From 2023 onwards, Russia also began targeting Ukraine's energy system. As processing agricultural products and producing food are energy-intensive activities, these attacks had a major impact on the activity of many enterprises. Each time the cold returned, Russia intensified its attacks on the energy sector and logistics, targeting electricity production and transmission systems, as well as natural gas extraction and transport systems. These attacks destroyed Ukraine's national oil production and refining capacities and destroyed more than 60% of its natural gas production capacity.

11. In addition, hundreds of thousands of hectares of agricultural land are contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war. This contamination not only prevents immediate access to the land, but also has long-term effects on soils (erosion, chemical pollution, destruction of the structure of arable land) and therefore on production capacity. Land demining has become the invisible front of the war, and farmers are risking their lives to clear their fields of mines. Our committee heard the testimony of the son of Ukrainian farmer from the Kherson region, who continues his father's work under constant danger. Before being killed in Russian drone attack while working in the fields, Mr Hordiienko had cleared thousands of mines from agricultural land and neutralised more than 100 Russian drones, thereby protecting both agricultural production and civilian lives. I would like to highlight that Ukraine has, under urgent circumstances and on an unprecedented scale, developed cutting-edge expertise in agricultural demining, including the use of drones and satellite mapping, counter-drone protection and coordination between public authorities, international organisations, and local farmers.[9] This exceptional experience could eventually serve as a model for other countries facing war and its consequences.

12. The rapporteur is particularly concerned by the destruction of wetlands and ecosystems of international importance resulting from the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. According to recent assessment made by the conference of the Contracting Parties to the UN Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (2 February 1971) such damage will have major long-term consequences for biodiversity, water systems, agricultural resilience and food security in Ukraine[10].

13. In terms of damage, the most recent assessments by the Kyiv School of Economics, supported by data from the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, estimate direct losses in the Ukrainian agricultural sector at over 10 billion US dollars (approximately 8.5 billion Euros), mainly due to the destruction of storage infrastructure, agricultural machinery and production stocks. Numerous surveys, including those by the FAO, document a general deterioration in the productive and logistical capacities of farms. Independent analyses based on satellite imagery estimate that around one fifth of the country's grain storage capacity has

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7. WFP, Country Brief Ukraine, May 2026.
8. I learned that significant quantities of stolen wheat had been sold by the Russians to Israel ("How grain stolen from occupied territory in Ukraine has been sold to Israel", Haaretz, 10 July 2023).
9. Center for Strategic International Studies, "Demining Ukraine's Farmland: Progress, Adaptation, and Needs", 4 December 2024.
10. Report "Implementation of Resolution XIV.20: Final assessment report of environmental damage on Wetlands of International Importance in Ukraine stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression", presented at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 23 to 31 July 2025.

been affected by the conflict.[11] The World Bank estimates the war-related damages and losses suffered by Ukraine's agricultural sector at more than 90 billion Euros, mainly linked to the loss of access to land in occupied and frontline areas, mined and contaminated land, damaged irrigation systems and other productive assets, thereby compromising the country's long-term productive capacity.

14. On 9 October 2023, Israel announced and implemented a total siege on Gaza and immediately blocked the entry of food, water, electricity and fuel into Gaza. Given that IPC analyses prior to 7 October 2023 indicated that approximately half of Gaza's population was already suffering from acute food insecurity and that more than 80% depended on humanitarian aid provided by UNRWA due to the blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt, the total siege posed an immediate risk of famine. According to the IPC analysis published on 21 December 2023, around 577 000 inhabitants of Gaza had fallen into Phase 5 (catastrophe) of food insecurity, with a high risk of famine, representing more than 80% of those classified in that category worldwide at that time.

15. Before the start of the war, Gaza had significant agricultural production (fruits, vegetables, poultry and fish). Since October 2023, repeated bombardments, blockades and population displacements have largely destroyed its production capacities: according to an FAO-UNOSAT assessment of 9 August 2025,[12] only 1.5% of cropland remained accessible and undamaged, while almost all cattle and poultry had been decimated. Offshore fishing has been prohibited. In addition, Israel created a buffer zone along its border with Gaza and across parts of the Strip, reportedly effecting up to on 32% of Gaza's territory, and thereby reducing cultivable land. As for the limited food supplies available, their price has soared: according to the Palestinian chamber of commerce, flour costs thirty times more than before the war. This situation has been compounded by severe disruption by the Israeli forces of the humanitarian system supporting the occupied population, particularly in terms of food supplies.

16. The first deaths linked to malnutrition and dehydration were reported as early as February 2024 by the Gaza Ministry of Health. In August 2025, Gaza entered the famine phase according to the IPC, and at least 461 people had died from causes linked to malnutrition and dehydration, mainly children and older persons.[13] Nevertheless, Humanitarian organisations such as Médecins Sans Frontières consider that this toll is probably underestimated due to the collapse of the health system.[14] The WFP representative heard by our committee stated that today, after the famine that lasted until the end of 2025, the majority of Gaza's population remains, according to the IPC, in Phase 4 (emergency) of acute food insecurity, with a risk of sliding into Phase 5 (catastrophe/famine) in certain areas.

17. Our committee also heard the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food on the situation in Gaza. He warned that the situation in Gaza had reached levels of acute food insecurity among the most severe observed in recent contexts of armed conflict and that the capacity of Palestinians in Gaza to feed themselves had been weakened for decades[15], which is also extensively documented by the FAO.[16] The World Bank and the United Nations also noted that the shock suffered by Gaza's economy as a result of the current siege was one of the largest recorded in recent economic history and that addressing it would require recovery measures unprecedented since 1945.[17]

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11. KSE Agrocenter / World Bank / European Commission, "Assessment of Damages and Losses in the Agricultural Sector of Ukraine Due to the War", *Kyiv School of Economics*, 2024. FAO Ukraine, "Impact of the war on agricultural enterprises – Findings of a nationwide survey", October-November 2024; World Bank, "Ukraine Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment", RDNA4 and RDNA5, 2025. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), "The Destruction of Ukraine's Agricultural Infrastructure and Global Food Security Implications", 2022.
12. FAO-UNOSAT report, "Gaza Strip: 98.5 percent of cropland unavailable for cultivation as famine looms", August 2025.
13. Figures considered reliable by several international organisations such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs or the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Assma Maad, "Morts à Gaza: pourquoi les chiffres du ministère de la santé du Hamas sont considérés comme fiables par l'ONU et certaines ONG", *Le Monde,* 9 October 2024 (French only)).
14. MSF, "Gaza: des taux record de malnutrition aiguë dans deux centres MSF", 11 July 2025 (French only). ""Le système de santé est en ruines": à Gaza, un médecin MSF témoigne", 19 August 2025 (French only).
15. Michael Fakhri, "A/79/171: Starvation and the right to food, with an emphasis on the Palestinian people's food sovereignty", 7 July 2024; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; Global Report on Food Crises 2025.
16. Rapports FAO sur Gaza: On the ground in Gaza – In Focus.
17. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Over one hundred days into the war, Israel destroying Gaza's food system and weaponizing food, say UN human rights experts", press release, January 2024; World Bank, "Gaza and West Bank Interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment", Summary Report, 2024; United Nations, "Report: Gaza Strip Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment – European Union, United Nations and World Bank", 20 April 2026.

18. These tragic realities lead me to encourage member States to act on several levels:

– strengthen their financial, technical and institutional support for the 2026-2028 multiannual agricultural reconstruction plan developed by the FAO together with the Ukrainian State, and therefore for programmes aimed at demining agricultural land in regions affected by the war.[18] The expertise developed in Ukraine in the demining of agricultural land, digital risk mapping and the rapid rehabilitation of production capacities could be supported, documented and shared with other territories affected by armed conflicts.

– encourage the development, under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization, of an international multiannual agricultural reconstruction and rehabilitation plan for Gaza Strip, based on international humanitarian law, the protection of civilian infrastructure essential to the survival of the population, and the right to food.[19]

3. The framework of international law and accountability issues

19. The situations described in the previous chapter are not only tragic; they also breach law and liable to sanctions.

20. The use of methods of warfare based on food is clearly condemned by contemporary international law. At the normative level, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2417 (2018), the first thematic Council text establishing a direct link between armed conflict and food insecurity. This resolution condemns the use of starvation as a method of warfare, the unlawful denial of humanitarian access and the destruction of objects indispensable to the survival of civilian populations, in particular agricultural and food infrastructure. It also recalls the obligations of the parties to the conflict under international humanitarian law, including the prohibition on targeting or rendering unusable resources essential to the survival of civilians. I echo in this regard the view of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food that famine should not be understood solely as a humanitarian consequence of armed conflict, but as the result of prolonged systems of restriction, control and destruction of food production and distribution capacities.[20]

21. These elements, which fall within the framework of international humanitarian law under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and their Protocols[21], are reinforced by international criminal law Article 8(2)(b)(xxv) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court criminalises the act of “intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival”, including by wilfully impeding relief supplies. This crime is recognised in situations of international armed conflict and, since 2019, also in non-international armed conflicts. This provision therefore provides a direct criminal-law basis for the prohibition of famine as an instrument of armed conflict, beyond its classification solely under humanitarian law.

22. In the context of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine, these norms have been actively mobilised by international mechanisms. The International Criminal Court opened, on 28 February 2022, an investigation into the situation in Ukraine following referrals by several States. While the arrest warrants mainly concern the unlawful deportation of children, the ongoing investigation also includes the examination of other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including those that may amount to crimes involving the deprivation of resources essential to the survival of civilians. In this regard, I welcome the fact that crimes involving attacks on essential infrastructure, the destruction of food systems, and the obstruction of humanitarian aid are now among the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court’s investigative priorities in conflict situations.

23. With regard to Gaza, the mobilisation of international law norms has mainly crystallised in the contentious proceedings brought by South Africa before the International Court of Justice. In its order of 26 January 2024 in the case *South Africa v. Israel*, the Court recognised the existence of a plausible risk of violation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948 and ordered binding provisional measures, including the obligation to ensure the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid. By an order of 28 March 2024, the Court strengthened these measures, specifying the

18. FAO Report, “Ukraine: Emergency and Early Recovery Response Plan 2026–2028”, 2025.
19. FAO, “Gaza: Immediate action must combine emergency relief with the restoration of local food production”, 28 January 2025.
20. A/79/171 cited above.
21. In particular, Article 54 of Additional Protocol I prohibites the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. Article 14 of Additional Protocol II also prohibits the destruction or appropriation of objects that are essential for the survival of civilian populations, such as foodstuffs, water or seeds.

requirement of effective protection of the conditions of survival of civilian populations. These proceedings fall within litigation concerning the international obligation of prevention, which is one of the central mechanisms of the Convention.

24. In light of the above, I propose that we rely on Recommendation 2245 (2023) "The Reykjavík Summit of the Council of Europe – United around values in the face of extraordinary challenges" and Resolution 2609 (2025) "Global peace under threat: halting the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and addressing the wider conflict in the Middle East" to urge, again, member States to act consistently in all circumstances:

– support the work of international and national courts whose mandate is to investigate genocide, war crimes, violations of international humanitarian law and crimes against humanity committed in the context of aggressions, and to prosecute perpetrator;

– refrain from obstructing the work of the International Criminal Court and, for States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, co-operate fully with it;

– support the work of United Nations bodies and agencies and ensure compliance with the rules laid down in the aforementioned Geneva Conventions.

25. Likewise, the Assembly should reaffirm, as it did in Resolution 2539 (2024) "Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine", that the aggressor State has an obligation to provide full compensation for the damage, losses and injury caused by its internationally wrongful acts, including the destruction of infrastructure and economic hardship and other adverse effects. To this end, it must also recall its Resolution 2605 (2025) "Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine" and reiterate that any future peace negotiations aimed at ending the aggression must include a comprehensive and fair mechanism for reparation of the damage caused. In this context, I would like to highlight the essential role of the Register of Damage for Ukraine as the first operational component of an international compensation mechanism. Against this background, I particularly welcome the recent expansion of the categories of claims relating to damage to infrastructure, production capacities, assets and economic losses suffered by legal entities and public authorities, enabling the recording not only of individual losses, but also of broader economic damage sustained by business entities and the State of Ukraine as a result of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.[22]

26. In the same vein, it is also crucial to maintain a complete embargo on the import and transit of agricultural inputs and fertilisers originating from the Russian Federation and Belarus where their trade contributes, directly or indirectly, to the financing of the war of aggression and to the instrumentalisation of food and agricultural dependency as tools of geopolitical pressure.

27. While the Assembly already expressed abhorrence and condemnation "in the strongest terms [of] the devastating toll inflicted – with over 55 000 deaths according to figures reported to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [and of] reported Israeli attacks on civilians seeking aid, the obstruction of humanitarian aid, the mass displacement of communities and the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, including housing, hospitals, schools and religious and cultural sites", in its Resolution 2609 (2025), I consider that further attention and action by the Assembly remain necessary. As the Assembly has already stated in its Resolution 2582 (2025) "The absolute and urgent need to end the humanitarian crisis for women, children and the hostages in Gaza", observer and partner for democracy status with the Assembly entails the duty and responsibility to uphold the values of the Council of Europe. The instrumentalisation of food contributing to famine conditions in Gaza is in total contradiction with these duties and responsibilities.

4. Lessons from the war in Ukraine in the light of the human right to food and food security

28. Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has strikingly revealed structural shortcomings in both global and national food systems, shortcomings that alignment with the human right to food can help overcome. I am convinced that the lessons to be drawn from this apply to all types of crises and enhance resilience and access to food in the face of them.

22. News "Register of Damage for Ukraine Announces Launch of Claims Categories B1.1, B1.2, C1.1, C1.2 and C3.1 for Legal Entities and the State of Ukraine", The Hague, 29 April 2026.

4.1. Remaining integrated into the global food market while reducing market logics

29. At the beginning of 2022, Ukraine was one of the world's leading exporters of wheat, maize and sunflower oil and a major guarantor of global food security, and supplied food to about 400 million people worldwide particularly for food-import-dependent countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and East Africa. As such, before the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the country supplied almost 50% of the WFP's cereal stocks.[23] Russia also remains the world's largest exporter of wheat and increasingly instrumentalises low-cost grain and fertiliser supplies to expand geopolitical influence and create economic dependencies across parts of the Global South. Russia also instrumentalised war to expand its influence over food-import-dependent markets in the MENA region, creating artificial shortages and supplanting traditional European and Ukrainian suppliers. As a result of the war, Ukraine lost approximately 70% of its wheat market share in Egypt for example.

30. It is this strong integration of Ukraine into global food circuits that explains the scale and speed of the consequences of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on agricultural markets worldwide. The geopolitical shock immediately translated into a global inflationary shock. I wish to emphasise that the brutality of this shock was not due to the level of global food stocks. At the beginning of the war, these were in fact generally sufficient: the wheat export shortfall, for example, represented only 0.9% of the global harvest. This brutality reflected above all the high level of uncertainty that emerged the day after the invasion regarding the future availability of agricultural products and inputs. In other words, the scale of the price surge was explained more by expectations, fear and panic behaviour of financial market operators, as well as by speculative dynamics.[24][25] As other food crises had already revealed, this large-scale invasion showed that the financialisation of globalised agricultural markets makes them structurally more vulnerable to geopolitical shocks.

31. From the perspective of the human right to food, I believe that Member States must recognize that the heavy reliance of global agricultural markets on concentrated and financialised supply chains makes food security highly vulnerable to geopolitical shocks and must be counterbalanced by strengthening public regulatory and coordination mechanisms. I therefore propose inviting member States to follow the recommendations made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, as well as the FAO and the WFP, aimed at ensuring that the human right to food takes precedence over market logic. In particular, I note:

– the establishment of public food reserves co-ordinated at regional level, and the creation of emergency financing mechanisms to protect vulnerable populations against sudden price surges.

– the strengthening of public information systems on stocks and prices of foodstuffs and agricultural inputs.

– the investment in international systems for collecting and analysing food-security data, in particular those developed by the WFP, which make it possible to identify vulnerable populations in real time and target humanitarian responses effectively.

4.2. Securing food flows while reducing the interdependence of food systems

32. Over time, despite major logistical disruptions and massive destruction, global markets gradually regained a certain stability through the reorganisation of trade flows. New trade routes were put in place to bypass the blockages imposed by the Russian army. European initiatives, in particular the Solidarity Lanes launched in May 2022 by the European Commission and the bordering member States, enabled the continuity of flows through the European Union's road, rail and river networks, complemented by temporary trade liberalisation facilitating access to the European market. In parallel, the Black Sea Grain Initiative, established in July 2022 under the auspices of the United Nations and Türkiye, contributed to maintaining flows until its suspension in 2023, before a Ukrainian Maritime Corridor partially took over.

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23. PAM, "Country Brief Ukraine", May 2026.
24. The Fertiliser Trap (GRAIN/Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, 2022).
25. Michael Fakhri, "A/HRC/52/40: Conflict and the right to food – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Michael Fakhri", *United Nations*, 29 December 2022. Mathilde Gérard, "Crise alimentaire: comment la spéculation a amplifié la flambée des prix", *Le Monde*, 13 June 2023 (French only): "according to Olivier De Schutter, 'At the same time, 26 billion US dollars [24.3 billion euros] were injected into funds speculating on agricultural markets, and from May to July, 23 billion US dollars were withdrawn from these funds, leading to the bursting of the bubble.'"

33. It is also worth noting that, despite the operation of the Ukrainian Maritime Corridor and alternative routes, ongoing Russian attacks on port and agricultural infrastructure continue to significantly disrupt Ukraine's export capacity and global food supply chains. It reaffirms the critical importance of secure maritime routes, and in particular the Food for Ukraine initiative as essential contributions to global food security. Besides, I also emphasise that Russian attacks on civilian vessels operating within the Ukrainian Maritime Corridor, which led to deaths and injury of international crew members, constitute clear violations of international maritime law and undermine the fundamental rule of the safety of navigation.

34. The reconfiguration of trade routes enabled a gradual recovery of Ukrainian export flows. Since their establishment in May 2022, the European Union's Solidarity Lanes have enabled the export of more than 200 million tonnes of Ukrainian goods, including almost 91 million tonnes of cereals, oilseeds and derived products. This alternative route also benefited agricultural markets in the European Union: although they remained under pressure, additional imports from Ukraine nevertheless provided relief in terms of supply. It is, for example, well documented that the availability of cereals, oilseeds and poultry from Ukraine under the EU's preferential measures reduced feed and input costs for EU producers and helped stabilise sectors during the period of avian influenza.[26]

35. I welcome the fact that international responses to the Ukrainian crisis prioritised securing and maintaining trade flows. These arrangements illustrated the ability of international actors to maintain essential food flows in a context of war. The combination of alternative logistics corridors, regulatory flexibilities and multilateral mechanisms for securing exports proved very effective in preventing an immediate disruption of global supplies. It constitutes a good practice in the management of a global food crisis. It is moreover reflected in co-ordinated risk-planning strategies not only in Europe, with the establishment at European Union level of the European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism, but also in other regions of the world, such as West Africa, under the Food Systems Resilience Program supported by the World Bank.

36. However, I also note that like previous crises, in particular the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted the negative effects of a high concentration of production and supply chains, as well as the strong interdependence of global food systems. FAO explains that before the war, 50 countries depended on Russia and Ukraine for more than 30% of their wheat imports and 26 for more than 50% (for example, around 75% of Egypt's wheat imports originated from the Russian Federation and Ukraine).[27] This concentration of supply sources greatly amplified the vulnerability of food-import-dependent countries to disruptions caused by the war. The disruption of Ukrainian supply chains enabled the Russian Federation to expand its presence and geopolitical influence over food-import-dependent markets in the MENA by increasingly replacing traditional Ukrainian supplies. This dependency, combined with the sharp rise in global food prices in 2022, caused situations of acute food insecurity affecting more than 40 million people in East Africa and the Horn of Africa in 2022-2023. Consequently, these countries had to call on the WFP to feed their populations and countries such as Somalia, Yemen and South Sudan rapidly emerged as hunger hotspots. As emphasised during the committee hearing, armed conflicts destroy livelihoods, disrupt markets and humanitarian access, and directly aggravate food insecurity among civilian populations.

37. Comparable dynamics is now occurring for fertilisers passing through the Strait of Hormuz, where maritime traffic has fallen drastically. As approximately one third of the global fertiliser trade transits through the Strait, particularly urea (more than 40% of whose exports depend on Gulf countries) this situation has caused fertiliser prices to rise by around 30%, with direct effects on agricultural production costs, with fertilisers accounting for up to 20 to 30% of cereal production costs in some regions of the world. The WFP therefore estimates that an additional 45 million people could fall into food insecurity if the crisis were to continue, in a context in which 2.3 billion people are already affected. Mr Santini from the European Commission noted that disruptions linked to geopolitical tensions, including attacks in the Red Sea region, had not produced an immediate impact on European food supply. However, he warned that difficulties related to fertilisers could become more significant by 2027 than in the short term, underlining the need for sustained preparedness and monitoring rather than purely short-term responses. In this context, he referred to the EU fertiliser action plan, which aims to reduce dependence on fossil-based fertilisers, improve input efficiency, promote recycled nutrients and support low-carbon alternatives as part of a broader resilience and preparedness strategy.

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26. Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, "Frein d'urgence actionné pour les importations de gruaux en provenance d'Ukraine", 19 July 2024 (French only).
27. "FAO Chief Economist briefing from New York – FAO Food Price Index for April 2023", FAO; "Implications of the war in Ukraine for agrifood trade and food security in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia", FAO, 2022.

38. From the perspective of the human right to food,[28] I note that the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food and that of the FAO and the WFP converge on several measures intended to mitigate the effects of crises on the food security of vulnerable countries. These same measures have become priorities since 2022 for the World Bank under the aforementioned Food Systems Resilience Program. I therefore propose that it be recommended to member States to draw inspiration from them in the framework of their international co-operation policies and their commitments on food security and sustainable development, and at least:

– reduce the concentration of food and fertiliser supply sources and diversify them in order to reduce excessive dependence on a limited number of exporting countries;

– invest in local and regional food and fertiliser production capacities in order, where possible, to reduce structural dependence on imports and increase the productive autonomy of States and regions;

– encourage the development of regional solidarity and co-ordination agreements aimed at securing intra-regional trade in the event of disruption in global markets or international logistics corridors.

– develop sustainable alternatives to imported chemical fertilisers.

4.3. Supporting exports and smallholders

39. The third lesson from the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine is that a country may rank among the world's major agricultural exporters and yet be vulnerable when it comes to domestic food security in wartime. When ports were blocked, major logistics chains were disrupted and food availability in Ukraine decreased, small farms, rural households and local markets continued to work. Attacks against logistics and energy infrastructure, mining of agricultural land and the occupation of territories severely disrupted food production, storage and distribution capacities across Ukraine. In regions located close to the line of combat, access to food, logistics and distribution capacities for basic products became extremely difficult and dangerous. The population of Ukrainian regions located at a distance of 0 to 50-60 kilometres from the line of combat is about 8 million people. These people are also in a zone of constant risk of loss of production, logistics and distribution of food products, primarily basic ones.

40. Thus, the war revealed not the failure of one particular agricultural model, but the structural vulnerability of food systems operating under conditions of armed conflict. Indeed, producing operation areas of 500 hectares and more, which cultivate the majority of Ukraine's arable land according to the Deputy Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, showed that these structures were more resilient than smaller farms. At the same time, small and medium-sized farms, rural households and local markets contributed to maintaining local food availability particularly in a number of regions affected by the war. During the committee hearing, Mr Vysotskyi, emphasised that food security during the war depended on effective co-ordination between public authorities, agricultural producers, humanitarian actors and logistics operators. Public-private co-operation mechanisms were rapidly established in order to prevent disruptions in food supply chains and maintain the physical and economic accessibility of food products. The Government also organised the distribution of millions of food parcels in combat zones, threatened areas and liberated territories.

41. The war highlighted the fact that different categories of farmers contributed to food resilience in different ways. Large agricultural enterprises, mainly specialised in cereals for export, which cultivate 53.9% of Ukraine's arable land and generate 54.5% of the country's agricultural gross domestic product, often proved more resilient in maintaining large-scale production and export capacities under wartime conditions, despite severe disruptions to logistics, infrastructure and export routes. At the same time, small and medium-sized family farms and rural households – which cultivate 45.5% of the land and contribute 46.1% of agricultural production – played a crucial role in preserving domestic food security and local access to food. More diversified, flexible and less dependent on export channels, these actors continued to supply vegetables, potatoes, milk, eggs, poultry and meat for local needs and helped maintain access to basic foodstuffs in many regions. The war therefore revealed the limits of an agricultural system highly specialised in export-oriented production when confronted with a prolonged territorial shock affecting food distribution and local access to essential products.[29][30]

28. A/HCR/52/40 cited above.

29. Elsa Régnier and Aurélie Catallo, "The Ukrainian agricultural sector: an overview and challenges in light of possible European Union enlargement", Institut du développement durable et des relations internationals (IDDRI), June 2024.

42. As the war continued, a broad wave of solidarity and collective actions were organised in rural areas of Ukraine. This solidarity goes further, as many farmers host internally displaced persons who often become involved in subsistence agricultural activities and help local farmers. The war highlighted the resilience of local communities and farmers. In many regions, smallholders collaborate and support one another, farmers, local authorities and civil society organisations co-operated to maintain food production, support internally displaced persons and preserve local supply chains despite constant security risks and logistical disruptions.

43. The research I consulted[31] draws several lessons for the post-war period that are aligned with the approach based on the human right to food.[32] The first is the need to rebalance the Ukrainian agricultural model by giving greater place to production intended for the domestic market, local processing and territorial food circuits. This does not, of course, mean abandoning exports, which are essential for the Ukrainian economy,[33] but rather finding a better balance and reducing excessive dependence on the sale of agricultural raw materials shipped through a few strategic routes.

44. The second lesson is the need to better value small farmers, who have demonstrated their crucial role in food security and social cohesion. This objective can be achieved by providing them with diversified access to markets and by stimulating demand for their products through the implementation of programmes such as targeted food subsidies to promote healthy diets among vulnerable populations, as well as the introduction of criteria linked to proximity and local anchorage in public procurement, particularly for school catering, hospitals and nursing homes.

45. I attach particular importance to school-meal programmes based on local procurement. Analyses by the WFP and the FAO[34] show that these schemes both support producers and strengthen children's food security. They make markets more predictable for local producers and foster, from the earliest age, the adoption of eating practices based on fresh and local products. In contexts of conflict or institutional fragility, these programmes constitute a tool for development and social protection which, in my view, should be encouraged by the Government.

4.4. Using the prospect of accession to the European Union to move towards ecological sustainability

46. Before the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine in 2022, the Ukrainian agricultural system was already characterised by a high structural dependence on imported inputs, including European and international commercial hybrid seeds, fertilisers, plant protection products and agricultural machinery. This structure is particularly visible in the maize sector, a strategic crop for the country, which represents one of Ukraine's key export-oriented crops. In 2021, Ukraine imported around 16.9 million kilograms of hybrid maize seeds and 4 to 5 tonnes of fertiliser.[35] Before the full-scale war, Ukraine accounted for more than 15% of global corn exports and regularly exported over 80% of its annual corn production.

47. Despite the disruptions to logistics routes caused by the war, I am proud to note that large Ukrainian farmers and agricultural producers managed to maintain significant export capacity under extremely difficult conditions. I was very moved by the testimonies given to our committee on regarding farmers continuing to work for the country's economy despite shelling, mined fields, destroyed infrastructure and constant security risks. The war has also highlighted the structural vulnerabilities of the sector, including dependence on imported agricultural inputs and global supply chains. During the war, several international companies,

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30. Natalia Mamonova, Olena Borodina, Brian Kuns, "Ukrainian agriculture in wartime, Resilience, reforms and markets", with the support of the Transnational Institute of Amsterdam and the Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development FORMAS, 9 November 2023; Olena Borodina, Ihor Prokopa, Oksana Rykovska, "Strengthening the role of local agri-food systems in overcoming the consequences of using food as a weapon in Ukraine", Ekonomika APK, 2024, Vol. 31, No. 1.

31. In addition to the references cited above, I consulted the publications of the La Via Campesina movement, "War in Ukraine: Recurring Food Crises expose systemic", of Oleg Nivievskyi, Pavlo Iavorskyi, Oleksandr Donchenko, "Assessing the role of small farmers and households in agriculture and the rural economy and measures to support their sustainable development", *Kyiv School of Economics*, 2023 and of FIAN International, "State of the Right to food and Nutrition 2022 – War, systemic violence, and structural inequality impacting the Right to Food and Nutrition in times of multiple crises".

32. A/HCR/52/40 cited above.

33. "The OECD's contribution to promoting open markets and rules based international trading system in good working order", Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level, Paris, 7-8 June 2023.

34. References cited by Olena Borodina, Ihor Prokopa, Oksana Rykovska, "Strengthening the role of local agri-food systems in overcoming the consequences of using food as a weapon in Ukraine", *Ekonomika APK*, 2024, Vol. 31, No. 1.

35. Natalia Mamonova, "Queen of the fields in wartime: What can Ukrainian corn tell us about the resilience of the global food system?", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Volume 50, 2023 – Issue 7, 16 October 2026.

including Bayer Crop Science, provided Ukrainian producers with free or subsidised seeds and technical support in order to sustain agricultural production. While these initiatives provided important emergency assistance, some researchers and experts have also raised broader concerns regarding the long-term resilience of agricultural systems characterised by high dependence on concentrated global input markets.[36]

48. In the long term, these challenges highlight the importance of strengthening the sustainability and resilience of the agricultural sector, particularly in the context of environmental pressures and post-war reconstruction. The war has caused severe environmental damage, including large-scale pollution from fires and explosives, destruction of forests, degradation and contamination of soils, damage to agricultural land and disruptions to aquatic systems. The environmental consequences of the war will continue to affect agricultural production, public health and food security for many years. In this context, the human right to food has a strong ecological dimension and requires sustainable food systems capable of ensuring stable and long-term access to adequate food. I recall that the human right to food has a strong ecological dimension and entails a requirement of sustainability of food systems, as well as a reduction of the structural dependencies that weaken access to adequate food.[37]

49. Ukraine has also embarked on a path of integration into the European Union, expressing its ambition to bring its agricultural model closer to European standards, in particular through its agricultural and rural development strategy up to 2030. The requirements set by the European Commission entail gradual alignment with the standards of the Green Deal and the "Farm to Fork Strategy", particularly in the areas of environmental sustainability, biodiversity protection, soil health, animal welfare and the reduction of excessive chemical inputs. At the same time, compliance with European standards requires substantial investment, technological modernisation and long-term institutional support, especially for small and medium-sized producers. European institutional analyses have nevertheless identified several structural features of the current agricultural model in Ukraine as factors of divergence from these objectives, notably the high intensity of chemical inputs, dependence on large export-oriented farms, monoculture production patterns and the strong influence of multinational agri-food companies. These issues have been widely discussed in the context of the long-term sustainability and resil ience of agri-food systems and of the future alignment of Ukrainian agriculture with European standards.[38][39]

50. I propose that member States be invited to support Ukraine in its integration into the European Union by providing the necessary financial, technical and institutional assistance for a profound transformation according to the EU standards of the agri-food system, affecting its production structures and models of regulation. In this context, the comparative research[40] and the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food[41] suggest that agro-ecological systems, based on crop diversification, the reduction of external inputs and the strengthening of local food circuits, offer greater resilience to shocks while contributing to ecosystem restoration and improved food security. In my view, these approaches should be further explored and supported alongside Ukraine's broader agricultural development objectives and its strategic role in ensuring regional and global food security.

5. Conclusion

51. The preparation of this report opened my eyes to an obvious fact: violence is omnipresent in food systems, in times of peace as in times of war. While armed conflicts and violence are the main cause of food insecurity, this violence is also generated by food systems themselves. From this perspective, the human right to food requires us to rethink food systems not only as mechanisms of production and exchange, but also as structures that must guarantee, in all circumstances, human dignity, effective access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and sustainable food, and the ability of populations to feed themselves by their own means.

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36. Natalia Mamonova, quoted above, and the references cited in the publication.
37. A/HRC/52/40 cited above.
38. Commission Staff Working Document, Communication on EU enlargement policy, Ukraine 2025 Report, SWD(2025) 759 final.
39. "Ukrainian Agriculture – From Russian Invasion to EU integration", *European Parliament Research Service*, 15 April 2024, and the references cited in that publication.
40. Thematic reports of the reference think tank IPES-Food, in particular: "Guiding action for sustainable food systems". See also: OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2025-2034, 15 July 2025; European Commission, "Operational guide on agroecology", 2025.
41. A/HCR/52/40 cited above.

52. Seeking to bring those responsible for violations of the right to food that constitute war crimes to justice before an international criminal court, something I wholeheartedly support, must not prevent us from addressing the urgent structural problems that are at the root of serious violations of the right to food in times of crisis. The human right to food implies strengthening food resilience, understood as the capacity of societies to guarantee access to food despite shocks, through the diversification of sources of supply, support for local agriculture, protection of small producers, the establishment of strategic reserves and better regulation of globalised agricultural markets.

53. Food insecurity is political in origin. The issue is not only the quantity of food produced worldwide, but rather access to food, which is shaped by political, cultural, economic and military choices. Consequently, solutions to food insecurity are also necessarily political. Within the framework of the human right to food, they consist in guaranteeing food resilience based on social justice, the reduction of structural dependencies and the primacy of the public interest over market logics. Only on this condition can food security become a genuine pillar of lasting peace.