



PERMANENT MISSION
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UNSC High-Level Open Debate - Food Under Fire: The Security Council's Role in Mitigating Global and Local Food Crises

Statement by Ms Deborah Maria Borg, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the UN delivered on 25 August 2026

Madame President,

Malta thanks the Danish Presidency, and the briefers for their insightful presentations. We align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The 2026 Global Report on Food Crises and the Secretary General's report on the protection of civilians lay bare the alarming reality that hunger remains both a driver and a consequence of armed conflict. The crisis of conflict-induced food insecurity is further aggravated by economic volatility and climate shocks.

Madame President,

Through the UN Charter, the international community pledged to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Preventing conflict-induced starvation is central to that pledge. Today, in our interconnected globalised economy, the impacts of conflict reach far beyond the immediate theatre of hostilities. Disruptions to critical waterways, attacks on civilian vessels, and food price inflation are catastrophic for import-dependent economies.

This vulnerability is compounded by the climate crisis, which will no doubt place many more lives at risk. The developing El Niño will imperil global farming yields. Meanwhile, accelerating extreme weather events disrupt critical port infrastructure functionality, which are lifelines for small island states.

Madame President,



Through General Assembly Resolution 43/53, Malta introduced the notion of Common Concern of Humankind. Acute food insecurity is rapidly becoming a concern for all humanity. In the spirit of our historical legacy as Nurse of the Mediterranean, we call on all parties to conflict to respect International Humanitarian Law. We emphasise that Resolution 2417 (2018) must be complied with. Its application extends even when the consequences of conflict are felt far beyond immediate hostilities.

Furthermore, we condemn attacks on civilian vessels and crew, particularly the recent attack on the Maltese flagged vessel the *M/T Kavomaleas* whilst exercising the right of transit passage. Under the Geneva Convention, and in line with Resolutions 2417 (2018) and 2573 (2021), targeting civilian shipping and objects indispensable to the survival of civilian populations constitutes a grave breach of international law.

Malta welcomes UN efforts to maintain the flow of essential food and agricultural inputs through strategic waterways in conflict areas, and recognises the important work of FAO, WFP, IFAD, the World Bank, and the wider UN system in addressing food insecurity.

Madame President,

To address the conflict-hunger nexus, we must prioritise two structural actions:

First, we must link early warning mechanisms to timely, anticipatory action.

Second, we must invest in building resilient, inclusive, and equitable agri-food systems through community-centred approaches that withstand the triple shocks of conflict, economic volatility and climate change.

Peace remains the only sustainable option, so that present and future generations are saved not only from the scourge of war, but also from the scourge of hunger.

I thank you.