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**gLAWcal**  
**Comment #203**

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT  
OF FOOD SECURITY IN EMERGING  
COUNTRIES**

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*Based on*

**James R. Simpson “Projections of Chi-  
na’s Food Security to 2030: Obligations  
as an Agricultural superpower”**



**gLAWcal**  
Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development

# A gLAWcal comment on James R. Simpson "Projections of China's Food Security to 2030: Obligations as an Agricultural superpower" in Paolo Davide Farah and Elena Cima (Eds.) China's Influence on Non-Trade Concerns in International Economic Law

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According to the definition provided by the World Food Summit in 1996: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". Likewise, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stated that food insecurity "exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above while undernourishment exists when caloric intake is below the Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement (MDER). The MDER is the amount of energy needed for light activity and a minimum acceptable weight for attained height, and it varies by country and from year to year depending on the gender and age structure of the population. Throughout this report, the words "hunger" and "undernourishment" are used interchangeably." These definitions are very important if one wants to assess whether the citizens of a particular country are food secure or suffer from food insecurity or undernourishment. Indeed, the international community has expressly made this classification so that it could provide the necessary adequate nutrition in case of emergency where the lives of the citizens of a given state are threatened due to the lack of food. That said, the degree to which a country might suffer from this problem differs in accordance with its development status. As such, developed countries are less likely to suffer huge problems of this kind in contrast to developing and Least Developing Countries (LDCs). Moreover, the percentage of cit-

izens in the developed countries that are likely to suffer from these problems is incomparable with the ones of the rest countries. In this context, the emerging nations have sort of become the exception as they are constantly seeking to improve the lives of their citizens which include among many other things ensuring that the population has the ability to feed itself on a daily basis. Not only that, but citizens of these countries do not want only to have the ability to eat the necessary amount of food to survive but rather they are also seeking to have the same patterns of consumption observed in the developed world. This is the case for instance in places like China, India or Russia. Hence, such a shift in the consumption pattern would most likely constitute a shift in what would be considered as a food secure citizen in these states. In the chapter "Projections of China's Food Security to 2030: Obligations as an Agricultural superpower" of the book "China's Influence on Non-Trade Concerns in International Economic Law", the author James R. Simpson examined the current and future state of food security in the People's Republic of China (PRC) where he tried to figure out whether the constant increase of the population would constitute a barrier before the Chinese government that is seeking to ensure that the citizens of the country are food secure. Hence, through the chapter, the author argued that China would be able to achieve food security by 2030.

# GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

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The gLAWcal comments are insight and short analytical pieces written by the gLAWcal team. The gLAWcal comments are based on, and inspired by, the books and chapters published within one of the [gLAWcal book series](#) published by Routledge Publishing (New York/London).

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