

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Danilo Türk, President of the Republic of Slovenia at
High Level Conference
Rome, 16 November 2009**

*[Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Secretary General,
Directors General of FAO, WFP and IFAD
Your Excellencies Heads of States, Ministers,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen],*

Let me first express my gratitude and appreciation to the director general of the FAO, Doctor Jacques Diouf and to all involved in the organization of this event. Your actions and the strenuous work of all three Rome based agencies [FAO, WFP and IFAD] have substantially contributed to keeping the issue of food security as one of the highest global development priorities. Moreover, me must not forget that the international community has assumed serious responsibilities for the realization of the first Millennium Development Goals, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. While this Conference may not be able to agree on the targets necessary for eradication of hunger, it must still make progress.

The fact that we meet here at the highest level for the second time within a little more than a year can be reassuring. However, we remain extremely concerned over the continuously growing number of hungry people. Sadly, the world has witnessed a tragic paradox - while enormous attention was being paid to the banking sector and the financial elites, the world food situation has remained totally inadequate and the attention it attracts much below the level needed to reverse the situation.

It is true that numerous meetings on all levels followed the High Level Conference of June 2008 and addressed the issues of food security. This showed that the international community understands that the rising trend in the number of hungry and poor people in the world is simply unacceptable. Yet notwithstanding the international efforts so far, the state of world food security has not shown the signs of improvement.

So today, it will be adequacy, effectiveness and the speed of measures that the current Summit is laying the foundations for that will really matter. For the same reason, the reform of the whole system of governance of world food security as well as the strengthening of FAO and the entire UN system deserves full attention and all the available political energy.

Mr. President,

The much needed improvement of world food security and eradication of extreme poverty and hunger demand from all stakeholders to approach the issue in multidisciplinary manner and with a good understanding of priorities.

In this respect I wish to address the importance of policy coherence and the compatibility of measures that affect the realization of food security. First, we need to improve measures for vulnerability assessments, early warnings system to the emerging food crises and the subsequent quick response to such crises. Second, we need to create socio economic environment for the prevention of reoccurrences of food insecurities and effective introduction of target - specific social safety nets.

But above all, we need to reverse the trend of growing number of hungry people and the continuous vulnerability of specific populations. We need to enhance global governance of world food security within the existing institutions. A new governance system of world food security should provide for the policy coherence of all measures and actions dealing with the complex issue of food security.

To be specific, such system should ensure the horizontal policy coherence between sectors such as agriculture, economy, environment and relevant social issues. On the other hand, the assessment system based on the direct feedback from the field should prove invaluable for any necessary improvements and adaptation of policies and measures to address the specific needs of the vulnerable populations.

Only when policy coherence is established we can expect overall positive effects of in:

- Enhancement of agricultural production and increasing the farmers incomes;
- Efficient land management and facilitating land access to the vulnerable populations;
- Effective improvements in infrastructure of agricultural sector;
- Addressing the environmental concerns in light with increasing agricultural outputs;
- Improving market access for the producers; and
- Transfer of knowledge, good practices and technologies.

Such a framework would then allow for the setting of priorities of the global and national development strategies and attract investments from private and public actors to the field of research and development, enhancing institutional

capacities, infrastructure, energy supply and marketing of agricultural products with the aim to enhance productivity of agricultural production.

In doing this, we must put a special emphasis on the investments to the protection of the natural resources and on the creation of the minimal conditions for the active participation and the capacity building of the vulnerable populations in the development processes. To be exact, investments in education, health, access to water and long term social protection among others.

Slovenia does not see a successful struggle against hunger and extreme poverty without the involvement of directly affected populations and their inclusion in the design and implementation of the measures and policies concerned.

Mr. President,

The agricultural policy - making will require balance between producing enough food for the growing population and adaptation of the agricultural production with the reduction of the green house emissions in the conditions of the effects of the climate change. The Rome based agencies can play an important role in retaining and enhancing the agricultural output, protecting the natural environment and implementation of the sustainable rural development and the development of agriculture.

While understanding this fragile balance of the different aspects of agricultural production we have to stress the importance of increasing the food production. This should be achieved with the assistance to the national strategies to enhance research, knowledge and technology transfer to seek specific solutions for both the eradication of hunger and extreme poverty and the answers to the variety of climate change issues.

Sustainable development is the basic principle in agriculture and rural development. It is our common understanding that the basic strategic purpose of agriculture – to produce food – is today understood far more broadly, as retaining the productive potential of the land, land management, protection of the environment and natural resources, and providing potential for to development of rural populations. The international community must make its contribution by providing guidance through the necessary normative framework and through its institutions.

Slovenia sees the three Rome based organizations as the key agencies within the UN system for the struggle against hunger and poverty; FAO, WFP and IFAD with their mandate strategically cover the key areas for the realization of food security. But they must be fully supported, both within the UN system as well as by the donor and recipient countries.

Mr. President,

This summit and this declaration are signs of the existing levels of political will and determination. We expect that the expressed consensus of the international community will contribute to the strengthening of the realization of the right to food as a basic human right and to the protection of global environment as a condition for our survival. But this is not the end of the road. It is a phase calling for further effort.

I wish to, once again, to express my gratitude and appreciation to all those that are investing all the efforts to make this goal become a reality.

Thank you Mr. President.