

To the World Summit on Food Security

November 2009, at FAO, Rome

Written Statement by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

We welcome the initiative of the FAO to focus global attention at highest possible level on the urgent food security problems forcing 15% of the world population to currently face food insecurity.

Taking into account the ambitious targets set by Millennium Development Goals (MDG), we must admit that the level of progress in eradicating the hunger has been unsatisfactory and change is needed.

Acknowledging the right to food as one of the basic human rights, we share the views of those who consider this right to be guaranteed by national governments. We very much appreciate the respective commitments of several developing countries to devote substantial amount of their means for the development of agriculture. The national governments should be supported by the international community and first of all via respective international organizations.

Outstanding issues for the food security situation are the achievement of optimal yields taking into account the need to produce more food without adding to the burden of environment, the role of bio energy vis-à-vis the food security, reduction of losses in the food chain, but also waste of food and promotion of healthy diet. Closely related are the topics of growth of World's population, decrease of purchasing power, climate change, scarcity of water, desertification, excessive migration and lack of education to name some of the factors that, when combined, account for the main reasons behind the hunger situation.

Achievement of food security should not occur on cost of the environment. Next to food security, sustainability of food security should remain in the focus of the scientific and political attention. One of the strategic goals should be mitigation of the impact of the climate change and preservation of biodiversity and rural liveliness by following worldwide

environmental standards and investing more into new environmentally friendly ways of production and technologies that would, among other things, help optimize the excessive use of water in agriculture.

A long-term approach to food security problem must include a steady growth in knowledge and education of the farmers of developing countries that would enable them to fully utilize new technologies and methods in order to maximize the crop while not harming the environment. Simultaneously, investments into agriculture must increase, specifically in the field of research, as well as its share of overall Official Development Assistance (ODA).

We also note that hunger is more a question of poverty, rather than a problem of food availability. So it is also vital to advance the overall economic development of affected countries to increase the purchasing power of people, not just to address the problem as a food production issue.

The Committee Food Security (CFS) ought to play an important role in coordination of the strategic framework for global food security. We welcome the creation of the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) with global participation where we are eager to participate to provide the necessary scientific input as the bases for political decisions.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are also willing to mobilize its resources for providing assistance to the governments of the countries in need, preferably via international organizations. Mainly, we offer the expertise of our experiences of quick transition to market economy, development of small scale farming and meeting the highest food safety standards and developing effective institutions.

We hope that the reform of global food security governance will contribute to a more science-based, better co-coordinated and responsible global activities where national governments of the countries in need take the initiatives that can help guarantee increased food security in the future.