



REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY



Bajnai Gordon

***Contribution
of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary***

at the

***FAO World Summit on Food Security
(Rome, November 16-18, 2009)***

Rome, November 16, 2009

Permanent Representation of the Republic of Hungary to FAO
Via L. Lilio 59 C/10, 00143 Rome Tel.: 06-5190116 Fax.: 06-97256859

Honourable Chairman, Honourable Director General, Honourable Secretary General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It was a great pleasure for me that we could adopt the Declaration by consensus. The fact that the number of people in the world suffering from hunger has exceeded one billion makes this document even more topical. I hope that during its implementation everybody will continue to support this cause with the same demonstration of unity.

I say this because we find it essential that the international community address the challenges that we face in overcoming poverty and starvation, in dealing with the climate change, in ensuring the sustainability of agricultural production in a coherent way, as part of an integrated approach. With special attention to the particular situation of the least developed countries.

The future of humankind and also of agriculture shall be significantly influenced by those solutions that we may find in limiting the direct and indirect impact of the climate change.

The way of life of man, as we know it today and where it leads to, – should we continue along this way, – has reached its final limits – we may say its physical limits. Arable land surfaces are shrinking, water reserves are being depleted, the atmosphere is subject to a continuous warming up, thousands of plant and animal species are threatened by extinction. We have reached a critical point, where it is no longer sufficient to try to solve the problems generated by us all, by way of isolated, unilateral initiatives.

Our physical limits cannot be expanded any longer. We cannot produce more air, more raw materials, more water.

But it is our duty to make every effort to ensure, within the existing opportunities and constraints, a sustainable use of raw materials, a sustainable energy management and a sustainable food supply. These are global challenges that require global answers and solutions. If you wish, we need such a model of cooperation as defined in classical games models, that may help to harmonize our actions worldwide, so that fewer and fewer people shall become victims of the arbitrary constraints of nature.

What we need is immediate action, resolute programmes by governments, measures to be taken at European Union and at national levels, an international cooperation. By elaborating and implementing the new climate policy tools, the agrarian sector, too, should be in the forefront of combating climate change. As this sector is also directly concerned by the global emission of greenhouse gases – up to about 10 to 12 per cent – it also must assume a major role to facilitate that earlier set objectives shall be met. Agriculture can contribute to a great extent to ensure that common goals can be achieved, and at the same time, it can become one of the major beneficiaries of these positive changes.


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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The support to be given to the use of renewable energies is part of the agro-environmental measures that may reduce the ecological footprint of agriculture. Transforming the use of energy, in addition to its impact in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, also allows major economies to be made. The replacement of fossil fuel by other sources of energy is not merely a necessary priority; it is also an incredible opportunity for the rural world. We should at the same time strive to ensure that the production of these new energy sources shall remain compatible with the food supply of the world population, and shall not result in an irreversible prejudice to bio-diversity.

Mr. Chairman,

I can declare that Hungary is committed to the Millennium Development Goals.

For this reason, we are extremely preoccupied by the drastic deterioration of the world food supply situation, and by the fact that after the soaring food prices, it is exactly in the poorest countries that prices continued to stay at those high levels.

Not so long ago, we were speaking about over-production, and now, quite the contrary, one of the main problems is access to food, and in many cases, local food shortages.

Among the conclusions of the High Level Expert Forum held recently there was one suggesting that in order to be able to supply food to a world population that may reach the number of 9 billion by 2050, food production must be increased by 70 per cent. To achieve this, it shall be indispensable to increase investment in the agriculture of developing countries. A significant overall improvement can be achieved by giving incentives to professionally sound investments. But the most important task is to coordinate the various activities, and this is why we welcome the reform of the Committee on World Food Security - CFS. It is the CFS that ensures, that all concerned parties can voice their position, and on the basis of the recommendations of the High Level Panel of Experts - HLPE just being set up, professionally well founded decisions can be taken. This is the central piece of the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition to start off, and we can only welcome its creation.

As a new donor country, and by considering the above, during our international development activities we shall first of all focus on the implementation of such projects, where Hungary enjoys a comparative advantage. For example, to share our experiences gained during the transition period may become very useful for many of our partners.

In this spirit, and with the cooperation of FAO playing a leading role in the area of agriculture and rural development there are currently 40 students coming from developing or less developed countries making their studies in Hungarian agricultural universities with a Hungarian scholarship. As we plan, 60 more of them shall follow their example in the coming 2 to 3 years. It is my conviction that these students, after finishing

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their studies, and returning to their countries, shall be able to play an active role in mitigating the effects of the global food crisis.

On the basis of the commitment of Hungary and of the international community I am confident that in unison we shall be able to respond to this major challenge that we face, and that the agriculture sector and the rural communities shall become one of the most significant actors capable to ensure sustainable development.

Thank you for your kind attention!



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