



World Summit on Food Security  
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Rome

**Statement from the International Grains Council**

**Etsuo Kitahara, Executive Director**

Excellencies, distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to attend the World Summit on Food Security. The issue of achieving food security for all has been a long-standing challenge on the international agenda. Reversing the current worsening trend is set to greatly test the collective will of each country and the international community. On behalf of the International Grains Council and the Food Aid Committee, I therefore hope that tangible results can be achieved this week.

The Food Aid Convention is administered by the Food Aid Committee using the services of the International Grains Council Secretariat. Its objectives are to contribute to world food security and to improve the ability of the international community to respond to emergency food situations and other food needs of developing countries. Crucially, donor members of this binding treaty commit themselves to providing predictable annual quantities of food aid, even in times of tightening global supplies and higher prices. The FAC's critical role was again demonstrated during the surge in prices in 2007-08, when several donors had to draw on additional budgetary allocations to meet their FAC commitments, including the escalating logistical costs. In fact, FAC operations in that year still exceeded 7m. tons, only slightly below the previous one.

Members of the Food Aid Committee are now engaged in intensified informal discussions about the strengths and weaknesses of the current Convention and on how to make this type of treaty an even more effective instrument to ease the plight of the world's hungry. While any formal start to the renegotiation of the Convention currently awaits the outcome of the long-running Doha Round negotiations, members remain committed to meeting their ongoing pledges to deal with today's increasingly complex and costly food emergencies. In this regard, the Food Aid Convention continues to play an essential role in the international food security "architecture".

The recent surge in prices is a reminder of the fragility of the global food system but also the need for better and timely information. The IGC, through its administration of the Grains Trade Convention, is committed to further widening its information-sharing system and promoting greater market transparency. In fulfilling this objective, the IGC Secretariat has greatly expanded its information system and commodity coverage in recent years with the strong support of its members. With effect from 1 July 2009, the Council formally added rice to its definition of grains. In addition, the Council also includes oilseeds and their products in its information services. It provides regular grains and oilseeds market updates, including comprehensive daily, weekly and monthly reports.

Excellencies, distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen, I strongly believe that the FAO and IGC have complementary roles to play in the field of trade and market information.

Thank you for your attention.