

Statement of
The Government of The Republic of Indonesia
Delivered by
H.E. Dr. Boediono
Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia
at the
World Summit on Food Security
Rome, 16 – 18 November 2009

Chairman, Excellencies, Heads of State and Heads of Government, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start with the fundamental fact that food, along with physical environment that supports life, is basic to human existence. Lately, and rather belatedly, we have been awakened to the fact that food supply of the world could not keep up with the global demand. We have not been perceptive enough to read the signals that are about: rapidly raising global food prices, frequent outbreaks of hunger in various parts of the world, and ever increasing numbers of incidence of malnutrition among the world population.

We all now agree that food security is a global issue. Agriculture and food security have been a central issue of discussion in various international forums.

The last food crisis has attracted political attention at the highest level of governments around the world. Yet, I must say that I have not seen a sense of urgency among us, the global community, to act on that common problem of ours. What we urgently need is our unequivocal commitment to take concrete actions now.

Mr. Chairman,

Basic problem of food security is how to increase the supply of food, quickly and in a sustainable way. The key, as we already know, is to accelerate investment in agricultural research and development and infrastructure.

This requires us to mobilize all available global resources, both financial and technical. Developed countries should be willing to take a leading role, while developing countries, for their part, should play an effective complementary one.

The financial resources for building necessary agricultural infrastructures are immense. The developed countries should mobilize the necessary global resources, while the developing countries should create a friendly environment for investment.

It is our view that global agreement on significantly increasing financial aids and technical assistance for agriculture in developing countries is necessary. The assistance should primarily be directed at upgrading the productive capacity of developing countries.

Equally, it is also imperative for governments in developing countries to make the strongest efforts to raise and set aside their own resources for agricultural development in their own respective countries.

Mr. Chairman,

We should not forget that global trade environment is a critical factor for sustaining global food production. We need international trade rules that are supportive to agricultural development in developing countries. It is, therefore, regrettable that the Doha Round now comes to standstill. We should work together for its reinstatement.

We know that food security is more than just increasing food supply. It involves better access of the population to the available food supply. On this front, we have to press forward for agreements on a number of important issues: to develop a better information system on food production, consumption, price movements and reserves, to establish a well-managed early warning system and quick responses to address natural disasters and conflicts.

We have also to pursue seriously the idea of developing a common stock of food accessible by any countries in need, particularly in emergency situations.

Let me report to you that such an initiative has been initiated within our region. We have adopted the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework (AIFS) and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region (SPA-FS).

Within this framework, Indonesia and other ASEAN plus three member countries currently are in the process of establishing a rescue rice reserve for such purposes.

ASEAN members have also implemented numerous joint projects in food, agriculture and forestry sectors. We are also working to strengthen ASEAN cooperation to ensure food security through sustainable food production, better post-harvest practices, supportive marketing and trading arrangements in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

As one of the world most populous countries with abundant agricultural resources, Indonesia can and should play a crucial role in solving the global food problem.

Our demand for food significantly affects world food prices. Fortunately, since last year we have been able to be self-sufficient in rice, thus help to relieve pressure on global demand for this product. Our challenge is to at least maintain it.

But, given our abundant agricultural endowments, Indonesia is well positioned to become one of the world's important food suppliers in the coming years.

Infrastructure development, including agricultural infrastructures, receives a top priority in our development plan. Government of Indonesia is ready to remove regulatory stumbling blocks that hinder investment in agribusiness.

One important focus in our strategy is to improve our logistic systems to optimize our vast geographic potential. Indonesia will then be able to contribute more to easing pressures on the world food markets.

Mr. Chairman,

We are also doing something on the social front. To protect the most vulnerable groups to the food crisis we are revamping the existing social safety net programs by improving the targeting system and delivery mechanism. The new scheme is expected to be fully operational by 2011.

In closing, let me underscore once again the urgent need for all of us to act now, before the problem becomes more intractable.

I should like to add one more thing. Our effort to address agricultural development and food security must be synchronized with our efforts to deal with other equally important global problems, namely those of energy and climate change.

It is for this reason that we must also act together to advance the implementation of the Bali Roadmap and Bali Plan of Actions and ensure tangible progress in the Climate Conference in Copenhagen in December this year.

Thank you

Vice President of The Republic of Indonesia

Boediono