



13 December 2012

**7th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government
“Environment, Climate Change, Food Security and Rural
Development in ACP countries”**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to be here in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

I wish to thank the **ACP** for bringing us together to discuss some of the most urgent challenges facing our world today.

In this session, we have been asked to consider the theme, **“Environment, climate change, food security and rural development in ACP countries.”**

We cannot talk about sustainable development as long as one person in eight is going hungry in the world. This was a clear message from the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development last June.

Recognizing this, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched his “Zero Hunger Challenge” in Rio. The Challenge he launched has five elements:

- First: 100 percent access to adequate food all year round;
- Second: no more or “zero” stunted children;
- Third: make all food systems sustainable;
- Fourth: increase smallholder productivity and incomes by 100 percent; and,
- Fifth: zero loss or waste of food.

FAO’s mission is to contribute to the eradication of hunger, so the Zero Hunger Challenge is also ours. We stand ready to assist countries that embrace this bold goal.

Let me also stress that investing in food security also means investing in a peaceful and more stable future. There is a clear link between hunger and conflict; food security and peace. Hunger can both trigger conflict and be a result of conflict. So we should not treat food security as something completely separate from peace.



Many people think that we can end hunger simply by producing more food – but, even in countries where there is plenty of food, there is still hunger. In fact, the world already produces enough food to feed every single person, but nearly 870 million still suffer from chronic undernourishment.

We cannot achieve broad, long-term improvements in food security unless we go beyond agriculture. We need to look at social protection, at employment, at poverty, and at the links between agriculture, energy and climate change.

And we need to work together. By “together” I mean international agencies, donor countries, civil society and the private sector, all working to support nationally and regionally led processes. Governments need to lead this process, but the decision to eradicate hunger has to be made by an entire society.

This is the spirit that at the heart of a partnership created recently between FAO and the African Union Commission, with the support of the Lula Institute, led by former Brazilian President Lula da Silva.

Under African leadership, the partnership strives to work with countries to identify and fill gaps in frameworks that target hunger and malnutrition. It aims to scale up successful programs; combine actions to increase their impact, and strengthen governance.

The Africa Solidarity Trust Fund for Food Security will support this effort. The Fund has been set up by FAO at the request of its member countries and will receive its first donation this week: a generous contribution of 30 million dollars from the Government of Equatorial Guinea.

I wish to express FAO’s gratitude for this important donation and call on all other countries represented here today to follow Guinea’s example.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Each country must find its own route towards hunger eradication. But each can also learn from the experience of others, experiences which can be applied by expanding South-South Cooperation.



In this regard, let me share with you some points that help to explain the success of Brazil's Zero Hunger Strategy, which is frequently mentioned as a success story in the fight against hunger.

First, high-level political commitment to the goal of ending hunger. This needs to be a central objective for all relevant branches of government, with an intra-governmental coordination mechanism at the highest level;

Second, budget allocations that are in line with the goals that have been set;

Third, the establishment of an inclusive governance system, in which all relevant actors discuss and agree on a common agenda;

Fourth, building on what exists, scaling up the actions that can make a difference. In Brazil, these programs included: monthly cash transfers, targeted nutrition programmes, such as school meals; direct support to small-scale producers, and food and nutrition education;

Fifth, linking different actions for even better results. For example: linking family farming with school meal programs, or using cash transfers to boost local small-scale production.

Sixth, put in place a legal framework that underpins universal food security.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the main cause of hunger is not insufficient food production. It is insufficient *access* to food. People face hunger because they do not have the means to either produce or purchase the food they need to live healthy and productive lives.

Over 70 percent of the world's food insecure live in rural areas of developing countries. Many of them are small-scale farmers, livestock keepers, people who depend on forest resources, fishers and others whose livelihoods are derived from natural resources.

In many ACP countries, the processes of climate change are exacerbating the risks already facing these producers. We see this in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and in other parts of Africa, for example.

The Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean and South Pacific are particularly vulnerable to the rise of sea levels due to global warming. This is leading to a loss of productive land and reducing the resilience of coastal ecosystems.

Countries need to invest in and move towards more intensive, but sustainable, production systems that are resilient to climate change.



Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Countries and regions can do much to reduce hunger and foster sustainable development but in a globalized world, the actions of one country can impact on the livelihoods of people beyond its borders. And the reverse is true. Global decisions and trends can have national and regional impact.

This is why we need to have governance structures in place that address the global dimensions of hunger, climate change and sustainable development.

The cornerstone of global food security governance is the reformed Committee on World Food Security, or CFS.

In May, the CFS approved the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

This landmark set of guidelines can help to ensure that peoples' rights and access to natural resources are safeguarded, especially in rural poor and indigenous communities. FAO is ready to support countries' efforts to implement these guidelines.

In 2013, the CFS takes on a complementary challenge: to develop a set of Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments. Given all the discussion on so-called "land grabbing", this is one of the most sensitive issues being debated today.

It is also one of the most important, because when we say that we need to increase investment in agriculture, we do not mean just any investment.

We need to ensure that the investments contribute to food security and local development while respecting the rights and needs of the most vulnerable.

But we still do not have a consensus on what responsible investment means. That is why we need to agree on the principles.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to appeal to the leaders of all ACP countries here today to make it your top priority to eradicate hunger and malnutrition within your own borders.

FAO is firmly committed to this goal and is ready to help you to make this dream a reality. If we work together, we can do this.

Thank you