



15 Juin 2013

Presentation of the Jacques Diouf Award

I am honoured to present this award for the very first time.

This year a shared award is being granted to two very deserving winners:

For its implementation of the European Union Food Facility, the European Commission, represented today by its President, Mr José Manuel Barroso; and,

For improving the food security of hundreds of thousands of poor self-employed women and their families, the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India, represented here today by Ms Reema Nanavaty, Director of Rural Organizing and Economic Development, and Ms Kapilaben Vankar, Executive Committee Member.

The European Commission is honoured through this award, for its rapid and massive response to the food price crisis in 2009-2011, in the context of the European Union Food Facility initiative.

This initiative helped over 59 million people in around 50 developing countries cope with higher food prices by supporting sustainable increases in smallholder agricultural production.

As a result of these and other efforts, agriculture and food security are once more seen as entry points for growth and development strategies in many countries, and increasingly designated as priorities for international development assistance.

The Commission's contribution to building a more food secure world is in line with the same spirit that resulted in the European Union receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. I congratulate you, Mr Barroso.

The award to SEWA is given in recognition of the Association's innovative and dedicated efforts in lifting extremely poor women out of poverty and hunger, through the provision of integrated agricultural extension, financial, literacy, education, care, housing, and health services.



This Gujarat-based association has close to two million members spanning several Indian States.

It has demonstrated over several decades that its model offers a sustainable pathway out of poverty and hunger.

Their approach has proven to be successful in empowering hundreds of thousands of women.

The approach has great potential as a model for other countries and is an inspiration for cooperatives and other grassroots organizations everywhere.

Thank you.