

**Statement by Ambassador Marcondes, Permanent Representative of Brazil 6
February 2008
STATEMENT TO THE FIRST ORDINARY SESSION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF WFP (Feb/2007)**

Mr. President, Madam Executive Director, Distinguished colleagues, It is a great honour for me to address this distinguished Board. Brazil, as an observer, closely follows the work of WFP and will participate with interest in the discussions that will take place in the next days. Allow me then to share some thoughts with you. [acknowledge statement of Colombia, for GRULAC] Eradicating hunger and poverty – MDG 1 – is a concern for all. It provides a lasting basis for peace, and for economic and social development. A world of growing income disparities is simply not viable. To make progress in this struggle, national efforts are essential, but just as essential is creating a conducive international order. The magnitude of the challenge makes it essential for us to act on more than one front. It is clear that the current levels of official development aid, including for humanitarian assistance, are not sufficient and need to be raised. Moreover, the promotion of fair and equitable trade, particularly in the agricultural sector, is also fundamental. We all know the facts, the figures and what needs to be done. It is possible to realize the “dream” – as some colleagues have referred to it today – of freeing the world from the scourge of hunger and malnutrition. The Executive Director has been telling us in every opportunity of the new challenges WFP must face: tightening food stocks, increasing commodity prices, less resources for food assistance, natural and man-made crises, more frequent and more intense. They affect all countries. But it is poor countries, and the poorest within those countries, that suffer the most. They call on all our renewed efforts and commitment. The debate on a new Strategic Plan is an opportunity for WFP to rise to the challenges ahead. In respecting WFP’s mandate, we need to draw up a broad and flexible Strategic Plan, which allows the Programme to have a variety of tools to deal with changing realities. In the absence of such flexibility, there is a risk of tying our own hands and leaving WFP in a state of inaction. I commend WFP’s Administration for having put forward such a broad and balanced Draft Strategic Plan. I congratulate you, Madam Executive-Director, for your leadership and transparency in conducting this ongoing process. The five proposed strategic objectives translate truthfully WFP’s mandate. As well as responding to emergencies around the world, WFP must be able to address longer term challenges. To achieve the MDGs and other development goals, WFP should explore other ways to improve its assistance – including food aid – such as cooperation for agricultural and rural development. Mr. President, In Brazil, we have honoured our commitment to Zero Hunger. We have achieved the first MDG ten years ahead of schedule. In the past two years alone, over 5 million Brazilians have been freed from extreme poverty. The “Bolsa Familia” (Family Stipend) programme assures a basic income to over 11 million families or 45 million people. The national school feeding programme serves meals to over 37 million children a day. We have done a lot in Brazil based on a firm political determination. Imagine what could be accomplished on a global scale, if the fight against hunger and poverty were to be indeed a priority for the international community. Brazil is also committed to international efforts to fight hunger and poverty. We are working to coordinate efforts and improve our

capacity to respond to humanitarian crises, especially in our own region. In 2007, Brazil provided humanitarian assistance and relief to 15 developing countries. Ours is a broad vision of humanitarian assistance, in which safety nets for the poor and food insecure are strengthened. We very much support the Executive Director's proposal that WFP scales up school feeding, , in partnership with governments, with the aim of boosting sustainable national programs as part of a safety net. As a sign of our trust on the importance of such undertaking, Brazil has recently made a contribution of 1 million dollars to WFP in support of the development of National School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and Portuguese-Speaking Countries. Mr President, The WFP Strategic Objectives as they were put forward are comprehensive and flexible enough. There should be no priority among them. Here are some principles my country would like to see reflected in the Strategic Plan: First: developing effective adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies is as important as reinforcing WFP's already existing capacity to promptly and efficiently respond to emergencies. Second: WFP should continue to integrate emergency and development oriented activities in its future work. Third: we question the wisdom of re-opening the discussion on the funding categories of WFP's programmes and its component activities. The issue has been already clearly addressed in the Mission Statement of WFP – and here I quote -: “Emergency assistance will be used to the extent possible to serve both relief and development purposes”. Fourth: WFP should use in an increasing manner local procurement as a strategy to build permanent capacity in communities and countries to deal with Hunger. Thank you.