World Food Day virtual ceremony
Friday, October 16, 2020

Theme: “Grow, nourish, sustain. Together. Our Actions are our Future.”

Speaking time – 3 minutes – you and the IFAD President are the closing speakers.

- Your Majesty King Letsie III [of Lesotho];
- Your Majesty Queen Letizia of Spain;
- Excellencies…ladies and gentlemen…
- This year’s theme highlights the global commitment and…
- Concerted action that’s urgently needed if we’re serious about…
- Ensuring every child has access to a healthy and nutritious diet.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has made our task much, much harder.
- As you’ve heard me warn many times in recent months…
- Without urgent and sustained action by the international community…
- We are facing a hunger pandemic of frightening proportions.
- Today WFP is launching our Cost of a Plate of Food 2020.
- It graphically illustrates the devastating impact that…
- That conflict…droughts and floods… and now COVID…
- Is having on the food security of the world’s poorest people.
- South Sudan again has the world’s most expensive plate of food:
  - A basic meal costs 186% of average daily income;
  - Equivalent to $393 dollars for a New Yorker.
• So it’s no surprise that in South Sudan:
  o Up to 8 million people face crisis levels of food insecurity;
  o Famine is a dangerous possibility in parts of the country
• Tragically, this picture is being repeated in other nations...
• Such as Yemen…DRC…and Burkina Faso.
• We have to act fast and we have to act decisively…
• Because 270 million people are marching toward the brink of starvation.
• When you hear these statistics it’s easy to feel despair…
• But we shouldn’t… because there is:
  o $360 trillion of wealth in the world.
• So we have the resources to fix these problems…
• But we all have to be prepared to play our part.
• And that includes those who have the most…to them I say…
• It’s time to help your brothers and sisters who have the least...
• And who are hurting like never before because of the pandemic.
• But if we’re really serious about making hunger history…
• We also have to end the conflict and violence that fuels it.
• Instead of sticking a Band-Aid on the problem…
• We need to work together as partners to support…
• Long-term, sustainable economic development.
• Government, the private sector, wealthy individuals, UN agencies and NGOs...

• All sharing expertise, know-how and resources…

• To honor our pledge to create a Zero Hunger world.

• Because our actions are our children’s future…

• And there is no time to lose.