



Statement

By

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At the High-Level Conference

On World Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bio-Energy

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**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Royal Thai Government is grateful to FAO, WFP, IFAD and Biodiversity International for their initiative in organizing this important and timely conference. First of all, I would like to express our deep and sincere condolence to the Governments of Myanmar and the People's Republic of China for the loss of lives and shelters by the recent devastating cyclone and earthquake.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I just led my delegation to the Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development in New York, last month. The thematic discussion there was also featured on the threat of climate change, bio-energy and food security. It is intimidated to hear many distinguished delegates mentioned on the impacts of climate on agriculture, particularly on food production. The session also concluded that biofuel development shall not compromise food security concerns.

Climate Change seems to be the most serious global problem affected all of us. It is in escalating situation, threatening global population, irrespective of race, religion, age or status, and it is our close proximity. As you may know that the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicated that

increase in the frequency of drought and flood, caused by climate change, are projected to affect local crop production negatively, especially in subsistence sector at low latitude.

Moreover, rising trend of international food prices has accelerated in 2008. Projection of the FAO and OECD show an emerging consensus that prices for agricultural commodities are likely to persist for the medium term. As agricultural-based country, Thailand is of concern on the aforementioned issues. Thailand is one of the global leaders in production and export of a number of agricultural commodities. For most of the last decade, Thailand is the fifth food feeding country of the world; on the other hand we are the net food exporting country and currently the sixteenth rank among the global food and agricultural exporting countries. However, we are of concern that high price of oil and agricultural commodities together with threat from climate change may hamper the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs in many countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under the situation of the continued skyrocketing of oil price and the threat of climate change, renewable energy sources, including bio-energy seems to be our hopes, particularly for countries that economic development relies on imported oil. Bio-fuels also play a greater role in many developing countries, including Thailand. However, food security has never been less important than energy security. In order to balance between the cultivation of plants for food and energy, the

clear agricultural policy is vital. Last week, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej just graciously gave the kind recommendation on the balance between plants for food and energy. As always, the Royal Thai Government has developed policies in response to His Majesty's kind recommendation. The Response Strategies to the World Food Crisis and Bio-energy Development, focused on land and production zoning system, has recently been put on the ground.

In order to cope with the challenges of climate change and bio-energy on the world food security, we are of the opinion that review and adjustment of the global food policy is essential. The multilateral trading system as well as regional trading arrangement will need to be more supportive of agriculture, in particular through improved market access for agricultural exports of developing countries. In addition, the world community must be proactive in addressing the surge of oil price. Without the stability of oil price, high food price is expected to continue. We believe that food security cannot be dealt with in separate from energy security. I therefore would like to strongly encourage FAO, WFP and IFAD to play the significant role on this issue.

Finally, in the spirit of international cooperation, Thailand stands ready to share our responsibility to tackle the problems we are facing,

by ensuring our aim to supply food to the world community. We also commit to do our best to participate in this quest to overcome our challenges.

Thank you.