

Los Cabos G20 Leaders' Summit

Statement by the Director-General of FAO on behalf of FAO, IFAD and WFP

Los Cabos, Mexico, 19 June 2012

Mr. President

1. I would like to thank the invitation to participate in this Summit.
2. On this occasion, I am also addressing you on behalf of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD, and the World Food Program, WFP, the UN Rome-based agencies.
3. We want to start by welcoming the priority given to food security by the Mexican Presidency of the G20, complementing actions taken within the G8 since the L'Aquila Summit in 2009, and addressing the reduction of the gap that separates small farmers from large agricultural producers today.
4. We were pleased to support the Mexican Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, SAGARPA, on this agenda.

5. Hunger is a persistent problem, affecting over 900 million human beings worldwide. The efforts of all G20 members to improve food security need to be similarly persistent, even in times of financial crisis. We request that food and nutrition security remain prominent on the G20 agenda in the coming years.

6. Under the French Presidency, the focus of the G20 was on the excessive price volatility in international food markets. Initiatives such as the Agricultural Market Information System and the Tropical Agricultural Platform are being implemented. Similarly, export restrictions are being removed for WFP's humanitarian food purchases.

7. The Mexican Presidency has highlighted the role small-scale farming plays in promoting food security.

8. The Rome Based Agencies applaud and support this vision.

9. Some 500 million small-scale farmers form the backbone of food production in many developing countries, but often lack the means to sustain themselves.

10. Increasing support to smallholders can help transform a sector that is frequently seen as part of the

problem of hunger into part of the solution.

11. The report from the international organizations to the G20 recommends policies and strategies to enhance small farmer productivity in a sustainable way. It calls for more investment in research, infrastructure and, most importantly, it calls for more support to small-scale farmers so they can adopt and benefit from existing technology, and gain more access to productive resources.
12. Promoting food and nutrition security can serve as the common thread that links the global challenges we face in building a sustainable future. Recent conflicts in Africa prove that it is not possible to achieve peace without food security.

Your Excellencies,

13. Rio+20 is the opportunity to call for a renewed commitment to sustainability, putting people at the very center of the future we want.
14. This involves changes in our agricultural production and consumption models, as roughly one-third of the food produced in the world is lost or wasted before it reaches

our

tables.

15. We already have the knowledge and the technology to reduce waste and increase production sustainably. Yet who will pay the cost of this necessary and urgent transition remains an open question. Rio+20 may not provide all the answers, but it can be the foundation on which to build a food-secure and sustainable world.
16. In times of financial crisis and uncertainty such as the one we face, we must not forget the efforts that need to be implemented on the long term.
17. We cannot afford to jump from crisis to crisis and turn our back on a critical situation when the emergency ends.
18. Let us remember what happened in Somalia: good rains coupled with the comprehensive response of the international organizations with the support of the international community allowed us to overcome famine in the country in just six months.
19. We have beaten famine, but after letting it happen. We have beaten famine in Somalia, but there is still a significant part of the population suffering from hunger in the whole of the the Horn of Africa, as well as in the Sahel

and dozens of other countries throughout the world.

20. It is necessary to link targeted social safety nets such as cash transfers and cash for work programs, with support to small-scale farmers and local markets, as well as building resilience so that affected communities can better resist extreme climatic events. This are some examples on how to promote successful approaches that help rebuild the social fabric and virtuous circles of local development.

Excellencies,

21. We thank the support given by the G20 countries to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries in the Context of National Food Security, and request your full support for immediate application, beginning with the countries represented in this Forum.

22. Finally, we would like to recognize that under the Mexican presidency, the G20 has made significant efforts to reach out to new stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and private sector - including the B20.

23. FAO, IFAD and WFP welcome these efforts. We are committed to working with the G20 to achieve our common goal to promote sustainable food security.

Thank you.