

Ministerial Mini-Summit: Humanitarian Response to the Horn of Africa

New York, Saturday, 24 September 2011

**Statement by Mr Jacques Diouf, Director General,
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Madam / Mr. Chairperson,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), like all of you, is very concerned about the livelihoods of the 13.3 million people in the Horn of Africa affected by drought and famine. This number now represents 1.7 million more than when we first met to discuss the crisis at the Ministerial Meeting on the Horn of Africa held at FAO headquarters in Rome on 25 July – just two months ago. Famine has now been declared in six regions of Somalia and 750 000 people are at high risk.

The world's response to date is delayed and inadequate. Only 63% of the funding requirement for the UN 2011 Horn of Africa Appeal has been pledged.

At the Follow-up and Response Actions Meeting convened at FAO on 18 August, which was in preparation for the African Union Pledging Conference held on 25 August, a series of measures were agreed to mitigate the immediate disaster and build resilient livelihoods to lessen the risks of future calamities.

Government- and stakeholder-endorsed plans for strengthening agricultural systems and boosting food production in the region, particularly those prepared through a participatory, evidence-based and Africa- and country-led Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process, already exist in some countries. The Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action, through its menu of policies and actions, provides a catalyst for the

implementation of these forward-looking plans and strategies. The CAADP process provides a solid strategic framework for sustainable agriculture and rural development in Africa. Where CAADP Compacts and related national Agriculture Investment Plans are not already in place, all efforts should be made to initiate or accelerate their formulation. And where these Investment Plans already exist, adequate funding should be urgently mobilized. We must assure sufficient, predictable resource flows from both national governments and their development partners without which, I am afraid, we will find ourselves returning to today's agenda with depressing regularity.

I am encouraged by the outcome of the IGAD and African Development Bank (AfDB) led meeting in Djibouti on 14 and 15 September. There, government representatives of the Horn of Africa agreed on country specific measures; and the AfDB and World Bank concurred, in principle, to mobilize up to 500 million USD of loan and grant financing for long-term development. FAO has confirmed its readiness to support this programme through its technical, disaster risk management, policy and investment planning expertise and, in collaboration with donors and partners, will support IGAD in preparing its Regional CAADP Compact.

Madam / Mr. Chairperson,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have no doubt that the fight against hunger in the Horn of Africa can be won, and that food security can be ensured for all the people of the region. But to achieve our goal, we need adequate, predictable financial resources to ensure that the technical knowledge we have and the strategies and programmes developed can help achieve that vision. So let us sustain the political momentum that will create a famine-free Horn of Africa.

I thank you for your kind attention.