

## ROBERTO BAGGIO'S ADDRESS - WORLD FOOD DAY 2007

*On the 16th of October of every year, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations celebrates the World Food Day to commemorate the anniversary of its foundation, which came about on October 16th, 1945. The theme for World Food Day 2007 is "The Right to Food".*

*Roberto Baggio, FAO Ambassador, presided at the international assembly which took place today in Rome, with an opening address from the Director-General of the FAO, Jacques Diouf, who reminded that "in the world today, there are 854 million women, men and children who suffer from hunger, even if the planet produces food in quantity and quality sufficient for everyone".*

*The following is Roberto's address.*

Your Excellencies,  
Mr. President Köhler,  
Mr. President Kikwete,  
Mr. Director-General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very glad and honoured to have been invited here, today, at the FAO, where in October 2002 I was nominated Ambassador of Goodwill of this organization. I thank you once again, Mr. Director-General, for that prestigious nomination.

I continue to remain proud of the recognition the FAO wished to honour me with, as every one voice can contribute to heighten the sensitivity regarding a problem that affects not just others but all of us and every one of us: the fight against hunger throughout the world.

It is a moral, personal and professional obligation to be alongside you, in the name of all those who find themselves, to this day, in a state of disadvantage, poverty and suffering.

It is in this spirit that I headed to Laos, in September of this year, only a few weeks ago, to visit the FAO projects in development in that splendid, small country. I was able to personally meet rural communities, disadvantaged groups, persons in distress. Touching an undeniable reality with my own hands, I realized and was proud of the fact that my visit may have represented, if nothing else, a further impulse, an added opportunity to allow us to revitalize and strengthen our commitments to free the world of the plights of hunger and poverty.

An eminent statesman, Willy Brandt, had expressed, in the now distant 1971, a dream: that before the end of the century, the day would come where humanity would no longer see a child going to bed hungry, no family having to worry what to feed on the following day and no human being having to see his future and possibilities altered due to malnutrition.

Although the century has now come and gone, it is not too late to share this dream and contribute all of my best efforts to turn it into reality. I am here for this.

I thank you.

Roberto Baggio