

**MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON
WORLD FOOD DAY**

16 OCTOBER 2003

The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) tells us that the world produces enough food to feed all its inhabitants. As we commemorate World Food Day, we should ask ourselves why is it that some 20,000 people die each day of hunger-related causes, and six million children under the age of five die each year of hunger. The right to be free from hunger is a basic human right recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and reaffirmed in the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Leaders of the world in their Millennium Declaration declared freedom from hunger as a priority, confirming the World Food Summit's undertaking to halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger by the year 2015. To meet this Millennium Development Goal, we would have to decrease by thirty-five million, each year, the 840 million people - 799 million of them in the developing world – for whom hunger is a daily experience.

We will have a moral obligation to heed the call to form an *International Alliance against Hunger*, the theme of this year's World Food Day. Such an alliance must position people and nations to feed themselves. It should ensure requisite international commitment to close the gap between rich and poor countries and to eliminate barriers to trade, increase market access and enhance the productive capacity of countries, particularly developing countries, to provide food for the hungry and to achieve growth and sustainable development. Above all, we should work to ensure the human dignity that comes with providing a life free from hunger.