

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE ON WORLD FOOD DAY

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Delivered by Mr. José Antonio Ocampo

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Despite the extraordinary technological and agricultural advances of the modern era, the ancient and most basic affliction of hunger is still with us. Every day, 840 million people do not have enough to eat. In South Asia, one person in four goes hungry. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion is as high as one in three.

One of the Millennium Development Goals is to eradicate poverty and hunger. The Millennium Declaration calls for halving, by 2015, the proportion of people who live in less than a dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The 1996 World Food Summit also called for cutting by half the number of hungry people by 2015 – a goal reaffirmed at the 2002 *World Food Summit: five years later*.

These targets are challenging, and we only have twelve more years to reach them. But they are achievable.

They demand action on many fronts to increase food production and improve food distribution. They also require action to achieve the other Millennium Development Goals, since food security is linked to education, sanitation, gender equality, environmental sustainability and the control of infectious diseases.

And, as the theme of this year's World Food Day reminds us, the goals will be met only if we forge a true "International Alliance against Hunger" – an alliance encompassing governments, international organisations, civil society, the private sector, religious groups and individuals. Indeed, such a global partnership for development is itself one of the Millennium Development Goals.

Large-scale hunger is an affront to human dignity and should shock the conscience of humankind. The United Nations remains committed to the goal of banishing hunger and poverty from our world. I urge all our partners at the national, regional and international level to band together and bring to bear the political will, resources and expertise that is needed to win the fight against hunger – a fight as worthy and as vital as any in which the world is engaged.