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HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY: THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY

Rome, 3 – 5 June 2008

REPORT OF THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED CONTACT GROUP

The draft text given in this document is the result, as of 30 May 2008, of the work of the Informal Open-Ended Contact Group established to prepare a Declaration for adoption by the High-Level Conference, which we had the honour to chair.

The group began its work on 9 May 2008 and had nine meetings (totalling some 50 hours of discussion) during the following three weeks. The process was an open one, with wide participation, and negotiations were carried out in a constructive spirit. Nevertheless, due to the tight deadline, and to parallel meetings also requiring Members' participation, it was not possible to reach full agreement on the text in the time available.

The group has therefore left some parts of the text in brackets. As Co-Chairs, we now submit the text for further discussion, confident that consensus necessary to assure an agreed outcome can be achieved by the High-Level Conference.

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.
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**DRAFT TEXT, AS REVIEWED BY THE INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED CONTACT
GROUP ON 30 MAY 2008**

**DECLARATION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD
SECURITY: THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY**

WE, the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and Representatives of ** countries and the European Community, have met in Rome at this High-Level Conference convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, together with the United Nations World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and Bioversity International on behalf of the CGIAR system,*** to address the challenges posed by higher food prices, climate change and bioenergy to the achievement of world food security.**

1. We reaffirm the conclusions of the World Food Summit in 1996, which adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, and the objective, confirmed by the World Food Summit: five years later, of achieving food security for all through an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing by half the number of undernourished people by no later than 2015, as well as our commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We also recall the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. We reiterate that it is unacceptable that 854 million people are still undernourished in the world today.
2. We are here to address the challenges of bioenergy and climate change, and the current situation of soaring food prices that is having adverse impacts on food security, particularly in developing countries and countries in transition, all the more because the indications are that food prices will remain high in the years to come.
3. We are convinced that the international community needs to take urgent and coordinated action to combat the negative impacts of soaring food prices on the world's most vulnerable countries and populations. We are further convinced that actions by national governments, with the support of the international community, are required in the short, medium- and long-term, to meet global and household food security needs. There is therefore an urgent need to help developing countries and countries in transition expand agriculture and food production, and to increase investment in agriculture, agribusiness and rural development, from both public and private sources.

[NOTE: The following texts have been proposed as additions to the Preamble, but not yet agreed:

Chapeau:

Replace all text after the second set of asterisks by the following:

[“to seek ways of achieving world food security and to address the challenges of climate change and bioenergy as well as the impact of higher food prices.]

New paragraphs after paragraph 1:

[1bis. We reiterate that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure. We reaffirm the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food security.]

[1ter. We recognise our commitment to the right to food for all and to a decent life for the millions of rural families around the world.]

Paragraph 3

Insert after second sentence:

[Considering the current situation of food prices, we are convinced, as a basic principle, that promoting domestic agricultural production by utilizing all available resources for agriculture in respective countries plays a crucial role in securing food security.]

New paragraph after paragraph 3

[3bis. We also understand that rising international food prices have led a number of food-exporting countries to limit or ban exports of some food commodities in order to manage prices on their internal markets and ensure access to food, which could aggravate scarcity on world markets and contribute to higher prices for food-importing countries.]]

In adopting this Declaration, we pledge to embrace food security as a matter of permanent national policy, renew our commitment to achieving the World Food Summit objectives and the Millennium Development Goals, and commit ourselves to the following measures.

Immediate and Short-Term Measures

4. The global food situation calls for a strong commitment from governments as well as from all other stakeholders. We call upon all donors and the UN System to increase their assistance for developing countries, in particular least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices. In the immediate future it is essential to proceed along two main lines.

5. The first line of action is to respond urgently to requests for assistance from affected countries.

a) The relevant United Nations agencies should be assured the resources to expand and enhance their food assistance and support safety net programmes to address hunger and malnutrition, when appropriate, through the use of local or regional purchase.

abis) The appropriate regional organizations which have emergency food security arrangements, such as the ASEAN food security reserve, should enhance their cooperation with a view to effectively coping with soaring food prices.

b) All efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations to strengthen immediate humanitarian and development assistance should be synergized with those of the multilateral organizations, and made coherent, to deal with the continuum from urgent to longer term assistance.

[bbis) [We call upon [national] governments to ensure that] / [The delivery of] international emergency food assistance is delivered as quickly and efficiently as possible to populations in distress.]

c) To facilitate adjustment to higher food prices, donors and international financial institutions, in accordance with their mandates and in consultation with recipient

countries, should provide in a timely manner balance of payments support and /or budget support to food-importing, low-income countries. [Other measures such as the reform of compensatory financial mechanisms and debt service suspension should also be considered.]

6. The second line of action is immediate support for agricultural production and trade.
- a) All relevant organizations and cooperating countries should be prepared to assist countries, on their request, to put in place the revised policies and measures to help farmers, particularly small-scale producers, increase production and integrate with local, regional, and international markets. South-south cooperation must be encouraged.
 - b) Development partners are invited to participate in and contribute to international and regional initiatives on soaring food prices and, in particular, under the FAO initiative launched on 17 December 2007, in support of country-led measures to give farmers in low-income food-deficit and the most affected countries access to appropriate locally adapted seeds, fertilizers, animal feed and other inputs, as well as technical assistance, in order to increase agricultural production.
 - c) DELETED

The following text was proposed as a replacement for paragraph 6c:

/Development partners are called upon to undertake initiatives to moderate unusual fluctuations in the food grain prices. In particular, we call on FAO, WFP and international financing institutions to look into the feasibility of establishing a global food reserve starting with rice as a test case./

- d) [Members of WTO are urged to ensure rapid conclusion in 2008 of the Doha Development Agenda to establish a more fair and market-oriented international agricultural regime, which will assist developing countries in increasing agricultural production capacity.] / [Members of WTO reaffirm their commitment to the timely and successful conclusion of the WTO Doha development round and reiterate their willingness to reach an ambitious comprehensive and balanced outcome.] [Implementing an aid for trade package should be a valuable complement to the Doha Development Agenda to build and improve the trading capacity of the developing countries.] / [We urge all member states to show the necessary political will and flexibility to bring about a new trade regime more conducive to food security by encouraging food production and agricultural investments in developing countries. There should be a renewed urgency in concluding the Doha round of negotiations which should address agricultural subsidies and tariffs of developed countries, with a view to helping agricultural development in poor countries.]

[d bis) We will strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all. For this purpose it will be necessary to refrain from unilateral measures [not consistent with] / [not in accordance with] WTO obligations and contrary to international law./

[d ter) We also call on governments not to institute trade actions, such as export limits or bans that could threaten [stability of food supply and demand] / [open trade and the effectiveness of markets], in particular for developing countries./

Medium and Long-Term Measures

7. The current crisis has highlighted the fragility of the world's food systems and their vulnerability to shocks. While there is an urgent need to address the consequences of soaring food prices, it is also vital to combine medium and long-term measures, such as the following.

[7 bis. It is also necessary to recognize new vulnerabilities caused by new challenges, namely high food prices and climate change, and to take specific appropriate measures to assist the suffering people, mainly in the poorest countries.]

8. We urge national governments, all financial institutions, donors and the entire international community to fully embrace a people-centred policy framework supportive of the poor in rural, peri-urban and urban areas and people's livelihoods in developing countries, and to increase investment in agriculture.

9. It is essential to address the fundamental question of how to increase the resilience of present food production systems to challenges posed by climate change. In this context, maintaining biodiversity is key to sustain future production performance. Opportunities should be created to enable the world's smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people, in particular in vulnerable areas, to adapt to climate change and to participate in and benefit from financial mechanisms for mitigation and adaptation. [We urge governments, represented in the negotiations on strengthening international action on climate change to be finalized by 2009, to ensure that financing mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, mitigation and technology development, transfer and dissemination assign appropriate priority to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors] / [, taking into account the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change].

10. We urge the international community, including the private sector, to decisively step up investment in science and technology for [food and] agriculture. Increased efforts in international cooperation should be directed to researching, developing, applying, transferring and disseminating improved technologies and policy approaches. [We urge member states, to establish in accordance with the Monterrey Consensus, governance and policy environments which will facilitate private investment in improved agricultural technologies.] [We also stress the potential for agriculture and forestry to contribute positively to the mitigation of climate change] [, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.] [We will continue our efforts aimed at modification of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.]

[11. We encourage the international community to continue its efforts in liberalizing international trade in agriculture by reducing the trade barriers, support programmes and other measures that have distorted world markets for so long. Addressing these measures will give farmers, particularly in developing countries, new opportunities to sell their products on world markets and support their efforts to increase productivity and production.]

[12.

CO-CHAIRS' PROPOSED COMPROMISE TEXT

[It is essential to address the challenges posed by biofuels, in view of the world's food security and environmental needs. We are convinced that in-depth studies are necessary to ensure that production and use of biofuels is sustainable and takes into account the need to achieve global food security. We are further convinced of the desirability of exchanging experiences on biofuels technologies, norms and regulations. We call upon relevant international organizations, including FAO, within their mandates and areas of expertise, with the involvement of national governments, partnerships, the private sector, and civil society, to together undertake a coherent, results-oriented international dialogue on biofuels, in the context of food security and the environment.]

CO-CHAIRS' TEXT WITH MODIFICATIONS:

[/It is essential to address [the opportunities and the challenges] / [the challenges and opportunities] posed by biofuels [bioenergy]/ [in view of the world's food security [, energy] [and environmental needs] / [and sustainable development]. We are convinced that in-depth studies [on the impacts on food security, climate change and biodiversity] / [including research and development] are necessary to ensure that [the dissemination of the sustainable] production and use of biofuels [is sustainable] [in view of the world's food security, energy and environmental needs] / [and takes into account the need to achieve global food security] / [in such a way that food security should not be harmed]. We are further convinced of the desirability of exchanging experiences on [all these issues] / [biofuels technologies, norms and regulations]. We call upon relevant international organizations, including FAO, within their mandates and areas of expertise, with the involvement of national governments, partnerships, the private sector, and civil society, to [undertake together a coherent, results-oriented] / [contribute to] [the ongoing] international dialogue on [sustainable] biofuels [, in the context of food security [and the environment] / [and sustainable development].]]]

Monitoring and Review

13. We request the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in close partnership with WFP and IFAD and other relevant international organizations, including those participating in the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and in collaboration with governments, civil society and the private sector, to monitor and analyse world food security in all its dimensions - including those addressed by this Conference - and to develop strategies to improve it.

14. In realizing the contents of the measures above, we stress the importance of the effective and efficient use of the resources of relevant international organizations[, and avoiding duplication in their work, bearing in mind the ongoing FAO reform process in the broader context of the UN reform process, which should enable FAO to play the most effective role in facing the challenges ahead.]

* * *

We firmly resolve to use all means to alleviate the suffering caused by the current crisis, to stimulate food production and to increase investment in agriculture, to address obstacles to food access and to use the planet's resources sustainably for present and future generations.

We commit to eliminating hunger and to securing food for all today and tomorrow.

Rome,.... June 2008