

STATEMENT BY
H.E. Minister of Rural Development and Food
Mr. A. Kontos
Head of the Greek Delegation

Mr Chairman,
Mr Director General,
Your Excellencies,

The crisis in food security and food sufficiency, which our less privileged fellowmen experience intensely today, takes place in line with the redetermination of the global food Status Quo, as well as with economic growth.

Under the present circumstances, the driving force and underlining factors that influence considerably the development of markets, the food consumption and the agricultural production directly connected to them, encompass both structural and temporary elements, such as:

- climate change and the greenhouse effect,
- the increase of energy prices (oil and natural gas),
- the extension of first and second generation bio-fuel production,
- urbanism,
- the worldwide monetary differentiations,
- the revaluations in the field of production inputs.

The shortage and the high prices of basic foodstuffs, have caused important intensities globally during the last two years, but also the last months.

The accelerated rise of food prices is provoking social unrest across the developing countries, with strong effects on the developed world.

World wide organizations, such as FAO, OECD and the WORLD BANK, have foreseen spectacular changes of the food models, until 2020: it is estimated that the traditional diet which was based on cereals, will be progressively replaced, in a particularly important degree, by products of high dietetic value (mainly animal products), while demand in foodstuff is estimated to double, up to 2030.

The worldwide community immediately expects a frame of actions with short-term as well as, medium- or long-term approaches that, among others, will consolidate a feeling of safety and stability in our societies and will develop even more the element of solidarity between all nations of the earth.

It is therefore imperative, now more than ever, that all of us undertake initiatives and policy responses, to the direction of the alleviation of this crisis, as well as, to the effective confrontation of the phenomenon of hunger, of instability and of fluidity of markets, globally.

It seems that nowadays, policies regarding climate changes, crises management and the safeguarding of sustainability are necessary for the support of agricultural and food production.

The central point of our aim must be:

- The increase of productivity growth in agriculture, through research and innovation, in both EU and Developing Countries,
- the provision of assistance to the poorest countries,
- the ambitious and balanced agreement in the Doha Round,

- the redetermination of the goal of biofuels' production at an international level, etc.

Greece has already contributed and will continue to contribute to these efforts by implementing specific programs, assisting at the same time the most vulnerable countries multilaterally as well as bilaterally.

Thank you for your attention.