

Slovak Republic

**Statement
of the Head of Delegation of the Slovak Republic
at the Summit on World Food Security**

Your Excellences, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour and a commitment, at the same time, to address you, respectable guests, on behalf of the Slovak Republic at this highest international meeting of Heads of States and Governments. Let me thank to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations for arrangement of this important event.

Slovak Republic is aware of the importance of topics discussed at this summit in situation when despite all the international efforts we must state that the world food security and existence of individuals are endangered with hunger and malnutrition. In the world, where more than 37 countries are dependant on external humanitarian food aid, the issues of providing enough food, elimination of hunger and malnutrition should be discussed to be able to adhere to commitments resulting from the World Food Summit, Millennium Summit and the Monterey Summit. We are facing the challenges of climate change that are causing soaring food prices and affecting the agriculture production. We deem the problem of ensuring sufficient materials for food production equally important as with regard to utilisation of agricultural products for biofuels. Moreover, we should consider utilisation of unused arable land in regions with favourable climate conditions.

With regard to the current critical situation of limited food availability in certain countries we are very much aware of the importance of Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. We recommend continuing to

implement these, together with FAO, in order to strengthen national food security, in particular in Low Income and Food Deficit Countries. At the same time, it is wise to consider following the discussions on enhancement of the binding character of the Voluntary Guidelines to the level of Protocols or Conventions within the UN system.

Government of the Slovak Republic is putting a lot of importance to agriculture. Unfavourable development of food commodities prices is analysed as well as the resulting growing problems to ensure food security at national, regional and global level. Sufficient amount of safe and high-quality food is a priority for our country, alongside their availability for all social spheres. Slovak Republic has recently faced certain unfavourable impacts on the food market, which were undoubtedly related to lower yields of the world leading producers and suppliers, higher prices of crude oil, energy, biofuels produced from agricultural products, and many other factors. Rising consumer prices in Slovak Republic recorded different increase in individual types of commodities; with bread and bakery products being the highest - by 20% compared to 2007, milk and milk products by 13%, meat by 11% and fruits and vegetables by 4%. Increase in food prices has negative impacts mainly to low-income groups of population.

Slovak Republic considers important to jointly address and bear responsibility for the world food security, following the demonstrations of political will, efforts and cooperation of all stakeholders at different levels.

We are interested in participation in the joint international partnership and actively support initiatives to improve the world food security. Within applying the FAO mandate, we consider important to:

- Create space for the overall acknowledgement and support to sustainable development in agriculture, accenting investments to this sector
- Support capacities building in agriculture and rural development
- Implement the Programme against hunger, FAO Initiative on soaring food prices, creating new segments in the Global Information and Early Warning System, monitoring and forecasts of hunger

- Support higher utilisation of natural resources in order to ensure food security, broader cooperation of international organisations and implementation of principal agreements
- Focus on the growing agricultural productivity within international cooperation, using research, advisory, building infrastructure, information systems, applying the latest technologies
- Address food supply, its warehousing, distribution systems
- Draw attention to removal of barriers in international trade with agro-food products
- Monitor and examine climate changes impacts on land use for food production and harmonise world energy partnerships in order to ensure nutrition for population

I believe that monitoring of commodity prices, medium-term outlooks within FAO and OECD programmes will create a framework for gradual solution of the food security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that this summit, its fruitful atmosphere and the manifestation of mutual international solidarity will be a good base to address the most serious problem mankind is facing with regard to the latest demographic development – how to ensure nutrition of growing world population. I would like to express the support of the Slovak Republic to the future discussion on this issue, believing that we will be able to contribute to reduce the suffering of those in hunger and malnutrition and to ensure a dignified lives of future generations.

Thank you for giving me the floor and for your kind attention.