

## **SAMOA**

World Food Security Summit  
Ministerial Statement – Hon. Taua Tavaga Kitiona Seuala

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

3-5 June 2008  
FAO Headquarters – Rome, Italy

Mr. Chairman  
Secretary General of the United Nations  
Director General of FAO  
Honorable Ministers  
Excellencies  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Samoa attaches a great deal of importance in the agriculture sector, as we are becoming more aware of the severity and scale of the current global food crisis. It is therefore extremely important to have this opportunity to participate and make a contribution to this very important summit.

The invitation from the Director General of FAO for the world leaders to find solutions to devastating tragic events in the food crisis is timely and is greatly acknowledged.

Samoa's economic transformation, like many other developing countries, is rooted in intensified agriculture. This sector has a significant role in food security, and in raising the living standards of the rural population. It provides for more diversified sources of food, income and increased livelihood opportunities for rural households.

Historically, a growing agriculture sector was able to generate large amounts of capital to finance the non-agricultural sector. Part of this was through rural savings. Agricultural growth also fostered the development of the agro-industrial sector, particularly companies that supplied key inputs and those that processed agricultural outputs.

However, even with these positive contributions, agriculture is yet to reach its full potential. Agricultural production and productivity have remained low, highlighting the need to identify a new approach to food security and stability globally.

As alluded to by the Secretary General and other earlier speakers, the threats are obvious to us all. Yet, such a crisis also presents us with a basket of opportunities.

Samoa has had some success in revitalising an export and staple food crop that was devastated by a natural disaster in the mid 90s. The valuable taro industry collapsed following the introduction of taro leaf blight in 1993 and serves to illustrate the vulnerability concept as in this situation, in relation to agricultural pest and disease threats.

Samoa is also critical of agricultural and food issues in relation to the national and international climate change policy agenda, to ensure an efficient and pro-poor response to emerging risks.

The government of today has reacted positively at all levels to ensure that all our people have the basic traditional food requirements. Programmes will be put in place to improve the adaptive and resilience nature of our people. Samoa welcomes the international full support as she embarks in this direction. The international community such as developed countries should eliminate trade barriers including subsidies and tariffs to promote programmes designed to mobilize resources for agricultural development.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, Samoa believes that this current food crisis requires urgent attention at this highest political level.

I thank you.

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