

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION (ICN2)

STATEMENT BY
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REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

ROME

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Mr. Chairman, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies,
Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Participants, I am
extremely delighted to represent the Government and People
of The Gambia at this Second International Conference on
Nutrition.

Let me also take this opportunity to commend and
congratulate the Directors General of the FAO and WHO for
organizing and co-hosting such an important and timely
gathering, in light of the current, unsatisfactory Food Security
situation of a significant number of our farming families.

A hungry and or malnourished farmer cannot effectively work
his or her land. A hungry farm-hand or family farm member
cannot effectively contribute to increased food production for
the family. Therefore a successful food and nutrition
programme is a pre-requisite for ensuring effective

agricultural production and productivity and the realization of sustainable household food security.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Participants,

The Gambia shares, and is highly committed to the visions of FAO and WHO towards the realization of a world free of hunger and malnutrition. In a similar vein, I want to refer to the World Food Summit held in this same venue exactly eighteen years ago. At that meeting, we as a concerned global community pledged “to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level, no later than 2015.”

Mr. Chairman,

Despite significant progress in that direction since the adoption of the MDGs 5 years ago, a lot still remains to be done considering the rising world population and the inability of food production to cope with, or match the growing demand for food. In The Gambia and in most of the West African Sahel, crops contribute to more than ninety percent of the per capita caloric supply. But, according to the prevailing Food Security situation and Response Strategies to Food Crisis situations, household Food Security is severely eroded due to low, erratic and unevenly distributed rainfall resulting in low food availability and utilization. I hope that this conference will recreate a renewed impetus in all nations to strengthen our resolve towards enhanced food and nutrition security. The constraints are numerous and complex but they are not insurmountable. Commitment and solidarity will definitely get us there.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Participants,

Continuously, the Government of The Gambia, with the full political support and leadership of His Excellency, The President Sheikh Professor Alhaji Dr. Yahya Abdul-Aziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh Babili Mansa, develops and promotes initiatives, innovations and strategies that are already registering successes on the ground. One such success is The Gambia's recent achievement of the MDG-1c target of cutting by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015. Indeed, The Gambia showed truly amazing progress by reducing the number of undernourished people to half the value of 1992.

Mr. Chairman,

Notwithstanding, our initiatives and strategies will continue to need additional support and attention from all, both internally

and externally for their successful intensification, replication and scaling up. Towards these ends we will solicit the continued support of both the FAO and WHO. Together, we are sure to find lasting solutions that will sustainability feed and nourish our people while protecting the environment and strengthening the resilience of our food producers.

I thank you all for kind attention and pray for a successful follow-up of the resolutions and outcomes of this conference.