

## **SALONE INTERNAZIONALE DEL GUSTO TERRA MADRE 2012**

### **STATEMENT BY THE FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

**24 OCTOBER 2012**

Buona sera a tutti!

Comincio parlando in italiano, ci provo, come avevo promesso a Petrini.

Desidero in primo luogo esprimere la mia soddisfazione per essere qui oggi e partecipare alla cerimonia inaugurale di Terra Madre 2012.

Vorrei cominciare dicendo come mi sento a mio agio, come se stessimo seduti attorno ad un grande tavolo nella casa di famiglia.

Allo stesso modo, vorrei che il movimento Slow Food, e le comunità rappresentate qui oggi, si sentissero confortevoli nella casa della FAO.

In questo modo, possiamo unire le nostre forze nella lotta per il riscatto di una dieta sana, sufficiente e dignitosa.

Questo non può essere un privilegio di pochi, ma deve essere il diritto di ogni persona.

Questa lotta comune unifica le nostre strade: l'agenda della FAO e di Slow Food.

Mis amigas y mis amigos,

Si me permiten, yo continuo en español, reconociendo a la presencia de todos los hispanohablantes que participan de este encuentro.

Tierra Madre es una celebración de la diversidad. Diversidad de lenguas y de acentos; diversidad de colores y de sabores.

Una diversidad que es clave para la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional.

La importancia de la alimentación en nuestras vidas, en nuestra formación como personas, es evidente, por ejemplo en Centroamérica y México donde los mayas se autodenominaban los hombres del maíz.

Ustedes ayudan a guardar nuestra riqueza gastronómica, y combatiendo una alimentación cada vez más monótona que caracteriza la dieta tradicional de hoy, concentrada en unos algunos pocos productos.

En un momento el ser humano se alimentó de 23 mil tipos distintos de hierbas, granos y tubérculos.

Hoy, la gran mayoría de la humanidad basa su dieta en una media docena de granos.

Pero no se trata de mirar al pasado, de lamentarse y clamar por el regreso de un mundo que ya no existe.

Por el contrario, nuestro esfuerzo mira hacia el futuro: hay que avanzar hacia un desarrollo sostenible, rumbo a la consecución de los compromisos asumidos en la Conferencia Río+20.

En esta vereda, la manera cómo producimos y cómo consumimos tienen una gran importancia.

La Revolución Verde mostró que los agricultores pueden alimentar el mundo; sin embargo también demuestra sus límites: disminuye la variedad en nuestra alimentación y afecta al medio ambiente por el uso intensivo de insumos químicos y recursos naturales.

Si miramos hacia el futuro, hacia las más de 9 mil millones de personas que vivirán en el planeta en 2050, vemos que será necesario incrementar la producción agrícola en 60 por ciento.

Queda evidente que debemos cambiar el modelo de producción y consumo, pues de otra manera la presión sobre los recursos naturales será insostenible.

Es un cambio que debe empezar hoy. Afortunadamente, tenemos tecnologías que nos permiten producir más y, al mismo tiempo, ahorrar recursos naturales.

Cambiar los patrones de producción y de consumo también significa revalorizar lo local en un mundo globalizado

Eso, al mismo tiempo, es una estrategia para enfrentar al alza y a la volatilidad de los precios internacionales de los alimentos.

Los frijoles, la quínoa, la yuca y otras tantas variedades son apenas algunos ejemplos de alimentos que no se negocian en los mercados internacionales y que pueden sustituir otros que se tornan inaccesibles por los precios altos.

Revalorizar lo local es una manera innovadora de mirar hacia el futuro.

Circuitos locales suelen ser más sostenibles por tener costos menores de transporte y de almacenaje.

Al mismo tiempo, privilegian la diversidad en los alimentos y el consumo de productos frescos.

Eso es algo positivo para todos nosotros, y se transforma en algo aún más poderoso cuando lo vinculamos a programas sociales como, por ejemplo, la alimentación escolar y la compra de alimentos de la agricultura familiar.

Permítanme dar el ejemplo de Brasil y hablarles en portugués.

Dessa forma homenageio também a comunidade lusófona que participa desse evento.

No âmbito do programa Fome Zero, instituímos por lei a obrigatoriedade de compra de 1/3 dos ingredientes da merenda escolar junto a pequenos agricultores locais.

Essa simples decisão política criou uma demanda adicional da ordem de US\$ 500 milhões de dólares anuais à agricultura familiar brasileira, e permitiu acesso a produtos de melhor qualidade para as crianças.

Com ela garantimos a preservação de cardápios regionais; diversificamos a dieta e promovemos diretamente a educação alimentar.

My dear friends,

As I switch to English, let me add that sustainability cannot exist only in the production side.

It would make no sense to change the way we produce food if we continue consuming as we do today.

Around one-third of all the food produced in the world is lost or wasted every year.

Food losses occur between the production and processing phases. They are most important in developing countries, due to poor infrastructure, low levels of technology and low investment in the food production systems.

Food waste is most often caused by retailers and consumers throwing perfectly edible foodstuffs into the trash.

Let me give you one example that shows the magnitude of waste: every year, consumers in rich countries waste 222 million tons of food.

That is almost as much food as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa. If we managed to cut total food loss and waste by 25 percent we would have enough food to feed 500 million more people without having to increase production and without placing additional pressure on our natural resources.

Interestingly, this is the number of people that would remain undernourished even if we do reach the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of hungry people in the world. By the way, a target that is still within our reach.

The food waste that I have just spoken about relates to a tendency to excessive consumption in middle and high-income countries.

More than 1.4 billion adults in the world are overweight.

This figure illustrates one of the great contrasts of our world: the unequal distribution of food, of income and of opportunities.

There are more overweight people in the world today than there are undernourished people: 868 million people suffer from hunger.

This represents 132 million people less than in 1990, but a number that is still far too high. One in eight people today are still hungry. And we are losing the battle in Africa and the Near East. We now have 83 million more undernourished people in these regions than we had in 1990. That means a total of 275 million undernourished people today.

The double burden of malnutrition will be discussed at the second International Conference on Nutrition, organized by FAO and the World Health Organization, in collaboration with several other organizations.

This important meeting will take place at FAO Headquarters in Rome, 21 years after the previous conference, and I would be very glad to see all of you there.

This will be the first global intergovernmental conference devoted solely to addressing the world's nutrition problems in the 21st century.

All of you, all of us here are already part of the effort to fight malnutrition.

And by us I mean individuals, the local, national and international food communities here represented; producer organizations; social movements; civil society organizations; the private sector; research and academic institutions; governments; and international and regional organizations.

We need to be together to give the next big step: eradicate hunger in our lifetimes.

This is what the “Zero Hunger Challenge” launched by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the Rio+20 Conference calls for. With hunger, the only acceptable number is zero.

This challenge means making sure that all food systems are sustainable.

It means enabling smallholders - especially women - to double their productivity and income.

It means cutting down on high levels of food waste.

And it means that all people enjoy year-round access to nutritious food.

Success will mean an end to malnutrition in pregnancy and childhood stunting.

FAO has embraced this challenge and I count on all of you to do the same.

Let's make this our Zero Hunger Challenge.

Thank you.