

**Visit of US Secretary of State, Madam Hillary Rodham Clinton, to FAO
Friday, 6 May 2011**

Welcome Remarks by FAO Director-General, Jacques Diouf, on behalf of the
UN Rome-based organizations

*The Honourable Secretary of State, Madam Hillary Rodham Clinton
Honourable Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,
Distinguished Delegates and Guests,
Dear Friends and Colleagues,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of all the United Nations organizations based in Rome, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome today at FAO headquarters the Honourable Secretary of State of the United States of America, Madam Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Madam Secretary, your presence among us today is a manifestation of the high priority accorded by the United States and President Obama's administration to the issue of world food security.

We all recall your remarks to the high-level Food Security Conference in Madrid in January 2009, in which you declared, and I quote: "*The President and I intend to focus new attention on food security so that developing nations can invest in food production, affordability, accessibility, education and technology*". That showed very clearly that the world's hunger and related threats were firmly on the new US administration's agenda.

We also recall the tireless effort of President Obama in L'Aquila in July 2009 to make sure that world food security is on top of the international agenda and that concrete action is taken to tackle the problem. An effort that culminated in the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative in which a commitment was made to mobilize over three years 20 billion US dollars for vulnerable and needy countries to increase food production, improve access to food and empower smallholders to gain access to modern inputs, technologies, credit and markets. An additional 2 billion dollars were pledged in Pittsburgh, bringing the total to 22 billion dollars.

The United States also played a leadership role, both at the G20 Summit in September 2009 and through wide consultations involving all relevant actors, to ensure proper follow-up action and concrete delivery of the commitments. This has led to the launch in April 2010 of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, known as GAFSP.

Once again, we wish to thank you for having taken the time to meet with us, for we know that you have an extremely busy schedule, and for speaking to us on the United States' vision for global food security and the particularly alarming situation of high and volatile food prices.

Madam Secretary, you have the floor.