



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CONFERENCE ON
SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY
FOR ALL BY 2020
TUESDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2001**

The International Conference on Sustainable Food Security for All by 2020 opened on Tuesday, 4 September 2001 in Bonn, Germany. On the first day, participants heard a number of opening speeches, and convened for sessions addressing why the problem of food insecurity has not been solved, and on how emerging demographic, health, nutrition and economic forces are affecting food security.

WELCOME AND OPENING SPEECHES

Master of Ceremonies Eleni Gabre-Madhin, Fellow of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), welcomed delegates. Observing that this conference presents a valuable opportunity to address "mankind's greatest challenge," she reminded participants that "the hunger of one is the shame of all."

Geoff Miller, Chair of IFPRI's Board of Trustees, said participants must address the fact that 800 million people lack the food they need to lead healthy and productive lives. He said this conference would provide an opportunity for the exchange of ideas between IFPRI and its customers. He thanked the German Government and city of Bonn for their hospitality, and also thanked other conference sponsors.

Johannes Rau, President of Germany, noted a reduction in the percentage of undernourished people in developing countries from 30% to 18% during the past 20 years, and the tripling of food productivity since 1950. However, he cautioned that the problem of chronic hunger has yet to be solved, with 24,000 people dying each day from the consequences of hunger - three-quarters of these being preschool children. He said achieving the 1996 World Food Summit's goal of reducing by half the number of malnourished people by 2015 would require an enormous effort, including increasing food production and ODA, changing international trade rules, and supporting debt relief and the new African Initiative. He said this conference could help raise public awareness on the issue and place it at the top of the international agenda.

Apolo R. Nsibambi, Prime Minister of Uganda, highlighted internal and external factors preventing developing countries from achieving sustainable food development. He called for investment in market development and promotion, post-harvest handling, and effective market-oriented distribution systems. He identified subsidies and a global marketplace biased against illiterate farmers as external factors contributing to food insecurity, noting that surplus food donated by developed countries reduces pressure for sound food policies and destroys incentives for local farmers. He called for a concrete timetable to phase-out subsidies and create a level playing field among farmers.

Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Germany's Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, recognized concerns associated with globalization and supported an equitable world trade order involving participatory and inclusive decision-making. She drew attention to several key issues, including development finance, land tenure, elimination of trade barriers and subsidies on exports, risk management and regulatory structures, the TRIPS agreement and sovereignty over plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Bärbel Dieckmann, Mayor of Bonn, welcomed participants to Bonn, noting the city's role in hosting a number of key international conferences, and its plans to develop a UN campus.

Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Director General of IFPRI, noted that under business-as-usual scenarios there would be only limited progress on food security by 2020. He identified a number of prerequisites for achieving food security, including promotion of pro-poor growth, empowerment, effective provision of public goods, and prioritizing the issue.

FOOD SECURITY IN A NEW CONTEXT: THE NEED FOR THIS CONFERENCE

Rajul Panya-Lorch, Head of IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative, said the purpose of this conference is to consider the implications of several new forces on global food security and reassess the plan of action towards Sustainable Food Security for all by 2020. She expressed the hope that participants could inform and educate each other, and that this would lead to concrete action.

FOOD INSECURITY: WHY HAVEN'T WE SOLVED THE PROBLEM?

HOW COMMITTED ARE WE TO ENDING HUNGER?

This session was chaired by Piet Bukman, President of EuronAid and former Minister of Development of the Netherlands, who urged delegates to discuss practical solutions and stressed civil society's role.

In his keynote presentation, Sartaj Aziz, Senator and former Agriculture Minister, Finance Minister, and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, said the current international macroeconomic framework was ineffective in tackling food insecurity. He highlighted the "uneven playing field" as a problem for developing countries, noting that developed countries provide US\$350 billion for agricultural subsidies. Under-scoring the consensus on international hunger reduction targets, he called for action to promote actual change. He hoped the EU would take a leading role on global hunger, as it had recently on climate change.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: Session Chair Michael Rewald, Director, Partnership and Household Livelihood Security Unit, CARE, noted that the lives of the poor are extremely difficult and complex, and discussed CARE's rights-based approach to empowering people to take responsibility and create change.

In his keynote presentation, William Meyers, Director, Agriculture and Economic Analysis Division, FAO, recalled the goals and commitments of the 1996 World Food Summit and presented statistics suggesting that success in reducing undernourishment is related to increasing per capita growth rates of real GDP and agricultural production, as well as to peace and social stability.

EIGHT HUNDRED MILLION STILL HUNGRY: WHY HAVE WE MADE SO LITTLE PROGRESS? Session Chair Angela Thoko Didiza, South African Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, said ongoing re-evaluation of policies is necessary to tackle this problem, and drew participants' attention to the new African Initiative.

Volker Hausmann, Secretary General of Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, focused on the role of non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs), noting that they are more responsive to the affected communities, and emphasized the importance of lobbying. He called

for partnerships between NGOs and private companies and urged companies to make longer-term investments in technologies to promote food security.

Heinz Imhof, Chair of the Board of Syngenta, identified non-logical factors affecting food production, in particular cooperative approaches in introducing new technologies. He said agribusiness can help by increasing the quantity and quality of yields per hectare, while reducing the burden on the environment, through advances in insecticides, herbicides, and seeds. He said businesses are open to cooperating with other stakeholders.

David Beckmann, President of Bread for the World, said progress has been slow due to a lack of serious effort, as demonstrated by declining ODA budgets. He said IFPRI's 2020 Vision documents demonstrate what needs to be done to accelerate progress at a relatively low cost. Beckmann noted growing public support for reducing poverty and hunger, and urged others present to join in the international coalition against hunger, targeting in particular the next G-8 Summit.

In the subsequent audience discussion, David Beckmann agreed with one participant's comment that development assistance rarely reaches the "poorest of the poor." Volker Hausmann did not agree that assistance was not reaching this group. One participant stressed the expansion of farmland, as well as increased yields, as an option for increasing food production.

Another participant drew attention to controversial questions raised so far, including: whether poverty was more important than food; whether food targets are needed if we have poverty targets; whether the focus should be food security or livelihood security; what is the role of subsidies; and what part "safety nets" can play.

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE NEXT GENERATION:

David Dalrymple, Student, USA, compared the lives of children in developing countries with those of developed countries, focusing on the widespread hunger and illiteracy of developing countries. He said developed countries should not ignore developing countries' problems, and advocated the transfer of agricultural and computer technologies.

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES FOR FOOD SECURITY:

Manfred Kern, Head of Global Technology Communication, Aventis CropScience, chaired this session. He stated that the provision of food security is a multi-disciplinary challenge, and noted the need to double food production within the next 25 years.

Mark Rosegrant, Senior Research Fellow at IFPRI, called for urgent investment in agriculture, water and education to reduce malnutrition among children, noting that agricultural productivity growth has slowed due to declining investments in research and infrastructure, and to environmental problems. He noted that rapid economic growth in China or India will not impoverish other parts of the world by raising food prices. He stressed the benefits for developing countries of trade liberalization in the agricultural sector.

In the ensuing discussion, participants explored the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, and the assumptions underlying the IFPRI models. Mark Rosegrant responded to a proposal to shift food consumption from meat to grains by noting that many farmers in developing countries would lose livelihoods and export opportunities. Regarding pessimistic projections for malnutrition in Africa in 2020, Rosegrant noted that the IFPRI model predicts problems not with increasing supply, but with population-induced demand growth. In estimating the funds needed to eliminate malnutrition completely, Rosegrant stressed that there are decreasing marginal returns to investment.

EMERGING FORCES: FROM HERE TO 2020

DEMOGRAPHIC, HEALTH AND NUTRITION FORCES:

Jochen de Haas, Head of World Food Security and Rural Development with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, chaired this session on changing population profiles and needs, and introduced the keynote speakers on demography, nutrition, dietary changes and HIV/AIDS.

Demography: John Bongaarts, Vice President of the Population Council, highlighted unprecedented demographic change in recent decades. He noted that rapid population growth is ongoing, with an

additional three billion people projected by 2050, almost entirely in cities in developing countries. He identified various policy options, including: strengthening family planning and reproductive health programmes; investing in human capital and improving the status of women; delaying childbearing; and addressing the needs of adolescents.

Nutrition: Lawrence Haddad, Director of IFPRI's Food Consumption and Nutrition Division, challenged what he described as nutrition-related myths, presenting evidence to disprove commonly-held views that: good progress is being made in reducing child malnutrition; nutrition has little to do with economic growth and poverty reduction; increases in income will quickly lead to reductions in malnutrition; malnutrition represents a parental failure; we do not know what actions to take; and it is too expensive to deal with these problems effectively. He proposed that developed countries target ODA more towards LDCs, and that developing countries divert health resources from rich to poor.

Dietary Changes: Susan Horton, Professor of Economics and Chair of Division of Social Sciences, University of Toronto, discussed the effects and costs of over-nutrition, including increases in diet-related non-communicable diseases. She advocated policies supporting integrated food and nutrition plans and promotion of healthful and traditional diets.

HIV/AIDS: Gabriel Rugalema, Senior Policy Advisor, UNDP HIV Project for Sub-Saharan Africa, defined the relationship between food security and HIV/AIDS as "bi-directional," positing that food insecurity and risk behavior exacerbate one another. In outlining the threats of each to social stability, economic security and labor, he stressed that food security can play a significant role in addressing populations at risk and reducing infection.

In the ensuing discussion, participants further explored the implications for food security of AIDS, globalization, conflict, migration, and income and gender inequality. Participants noted that: AIDS increases vulnerability to other epidemics, such as malaria and dengue fever; conflict can disrupt production and spread disease; and true food security requires not only adequate supply, but physical, economic, social, and physiological access. Participants also discussed the relationships between childhood malnutrition and productivity.

ECONOMIC FORCES: Christian Friis Bach, former Chair of the Board of Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke and Associate Professor at Denmark's Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, chaired this session on economic forces and what productive resources the poor really need to escape poverty. He noted that achieving international targets requires political will and economic redistribution.

Michael Lipton, Research Professor of Economics at Sussex University's Poverty Research Unit, highlighted the paradox between the recognized need to address rural and agriculture problems, while relevant aid is declining and donors and domestic governments are not focusing on rural development. He underscored governments' role in promoting land redistribution, and also highlighted rural water supply problems. He noted that without additional action the 2015 target will not be achieved.

In the ensuing discussion, one participant drew attention to demand side as well as supply side issues. Another noted that the focus on the dollar a day income level might distract attention from those earning well below this level.

Following these discussions, the winners of the IFPRI youth poster and essay contest were announced, and the grand prize essayist, 17-year-old Thrishni Subramoney of Durban, South Africa, addressed the group. Participants were also informed that for his creation of the 2020 Vision Initiative, Per Pinstrup-Andersen would be the next recipient of the World Food Prize, an award recognizing a substantial contribution by an individual to improving world food security and serving humanity.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

Participants will convene at 9:00 am and meet in Plenary throughout the day. Topics to be addressed include: the role of the WTO, the EU's perspective, and technological, environmental and sociopolitical forces. For more information, see the conference programme (<http://www.ifpri.org/2020conference>).