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Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change Bulletin



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GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE HIGHLIGHTS: SUNDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2010

The Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change opened today at the World Forum in The Hague, the Netherlands. The Conference is organized by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation in close cooperation with Ethiopia, Viet Nam, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, the World Bank and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). At the opening session, five eminent speakers addressed the audience, highlighting key issues which will be discussed during the week.



Local musicians performed at the opening of the Conference

The Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change is intended as a follow-up to the Shared Vision Statement agreed at the Seventeenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17) in May 2009 and to further develop the agriculture, food security and climate change agenda.

In preparation for the Conference, the African Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change, organized by the Government of Ethiopia and the African Union Commission, was held from 6 to 8 September 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The African Conference brought together high-level policy makers, practitioners, international organizations and members of the scientific community from all African countries and produced a final communiqué containing a set of key recommendations. The final communiqué will be presented at the Conference.

The Conference, which is expected to produce a roadmap for action linking agriculture-related investments, food security and climate change, will include plenary and working group sessions and two ministerial roundtables. Several side events and an investment fair will also be held throughout the week. More than 800 hundred participants including representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations are expected to attend the Conference.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RELATED FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE EVENTS

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: This Summit took place from 13-17 November 1996 in Rome, Italy. It was held in response to the continued existence of widespread under-nutrition and the

growing concern about the capacity of agricultural production to meet future food needs. The 1996 Summit brought together close to 10,000 participants and resulted in the adoption of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Summit also formulated the objective of achieving food security for all through an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing by half the number of undernourished people by 2015.

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: FIVE YEARS LATER: This Summit took place in Rome, Italy, from 10-13 June 2002, and renewed the commitment made at the 1996 Summit. Delegates called on all States to reinforce their efforts and act as an international alliance against hunger.

FIRST FAO TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON BIOENERGY AND FOOD SECURITY: Specialists from around the world gathered from 16-18 April 2007 at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, to discuss bioenergy production and the related opportunities and risks for food security and the environment. Participants agreed that if environmental and food security concerns are taken into account, governments can use bioenergy as a positive force for rural development.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING BETWEEN UN AGENCY HEADS AND UN SECRETARY-GENERAL: During the semi-annual meeting between UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UN agency heads on 28-29 April 2008, Ban announced plans to develop a comprehensive strategy to address the global food crisis. A High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on the Global Food Security Crisis was created. The HLTF, which is chaired by Ban and includes the heads of the World Bank, the

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Local musicians entertained participants during the opening session

International Monetary Fund, the World Food Programme, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the World Trade Organization, developed an action plan for discussion at the 2008 High-Level Conference on World Food Security.

CSD-16: This meeting was held from 5-16 May 2008 in New York, US, to review the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Participants highlighted the connections between the session's thematic agenda and both the current food crisis and climate change. CSD-16 identified key drivers of increasing food prices, including: land degradation; high energy costs; climate change; poor harvests; speculation in agricultural commodities; inequitable terms of trade; decline of investments in agricultural development; and increased production of biofuels from food crops.

ECOSOC'S SPECIAL MEETING ON THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS: The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) held a Special Meeting on the Global Food Crisis from 20-22 May 2008 at UN Headquarters in New York, US. Participants agreed on short-term priorities, including immediate actions by donors and governments to allow farmers to meet production demands. They also identified medium- and long-term measures to tackle the food crisis, including a re-examination of the amount of official development assistance dedicated to agriculture.

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY: THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY: From 3-5 June 2008, over 4,700 delegates from 183 countries met in Rome, Italy, for the High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy. They reaffirmed the conclusions of the 1996 World Food Summit and the objective, confirmed by the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, of achieving food security for all, with an immediate aim of reducing by half the number of undernourished people by no later than 2015. They also reaffirmed their commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The

conference outcomes included a Declaration, which outlined priorities and proposed activities for immediate and short-term measures, medium- and long-term measures, and monitoring and review.

2008 G8 SUMMIT: Participants to the 2008 G8 Summit, held in Toyako, Japan from 25-27 June 2008, expressed concern regarding the food emergency and, in a Statement on Global Food Security, announced measures to address and act on the crisis' root causes. They agreed to work with the international community to form a global partnership on agriculture and food, involving all relevant actors, including developing country governments, the private sector, civil society, donors and international institutions.

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL: This meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, from 26-27 January 2009 to: accelerate progress in meeting the MDG on extreme poverty and hunger; address the effects of price fluctuations on vulnerable populations; and review progress achieved following the 2008 High-Level Conference on World Food Security. Participants from 126 countries noted their support of the HLTF on the Global Food Security Crisis and agreed on the importance of an inclusive and broad process of consultation on options leading to the establishment of a global partnership for agriculture, food security and nutrition.

CSD-17: At CSD-17, held in New York, US, from 4-15 May 2009, a High-Level Segment and Ministerial Roundtables focused on the food crisis, a sustainable green revolution in Africa, and integrated management of land and water for sustainable agriculture and rural development. The resulting Shared Vision Statement emphasized: the urgency of appropriate national and international action and greater cooperation to bring about a paradigm shift and to realize a truly sustainable green revolution; the need to put sustainable development of agriculture on the international agenda and to put developing countries at the center of the agricultural and rural revival; and the need for political will, including for investments in agriculture, a supportive enabling environment, fair prices for produce, fuller integration of markets and greater international market access.



Dancers performing in the opening session

2009 G8 SUMMIT: At the G8 Summit held in L'Aquila, Italy, from 8-10 July 2009, leaders of the G8 and 34 States and international organizations and agencies approved a Joint Statement on Global Food Security ("L'Aquila Food Security Initiative"). The Statement welcomed commitments made by countries represented at L'Aquila towards mobilizing US\$20 billion over three years through a coordinated, comprehensive strategy focused on sustainable agricultural development, while keeping a strong commitment to ensure adequate emergency food aid assistance.

WORLD SUMMIT ON FOOD SECURITY: This Summit took place from 16-18 November 2009 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. The Summit brought together over 4,700 delegates from 180 countries, including 60 Heads of State and Government, as well as representatives of governments,

UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, the private sector, and the media. Delegates met throughout the Summit both for a High-Level Segment and for a series of four roundtables, and addressed: minimizing the negative impact of the food, economic and financial crises on world food security; implementation of the reform of global governance of food security; climate change adaptation and mitigation: challenges for agriculture and food security; and measures to enhance global food security, including rural development, smallholder farmers and trade considerations.

OPENING SESSION

Chair Henk Bleker, Minister for Agriculture and Foreign Trade, the Netherlands, opened the Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change, saying that



Chair Henk Bleker, Minister for Agriculture and Foreign Trade, the Netherlands



Jozias van Aartsen, Mayor, The Hague

one of the central challenges for global society is to achieve food and energy security, while maintaining biodiversity. Noting that agriculture is crucial for sustainable development and food security, in particular in Africa, he called for a shift to more resource-efficient and climate-smart agriculture that creates opportunities and incomes for farmers, and highlighted the need to, *inter alia*: stimulate investment in innovative agriculture; create conducive environments for entrepreneurship; enhance market access for developing countries; and improve access to finance, in particular for micro businesses. He noted the potential of the agriculture sector for mitigating climate change in developing and developed countries and called for a prominent role for the sector at the Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 16) in Cancun, Mexico at the end of this year.

Jozias van Aartsen, Mayor, The Hague, suggested that mitigating climate change is a way of achieving the goal of eradicating hunger and is a necessary prerequisite for preventing conflicts and achieving peaceful development, as food crises are often related to armed conflict.

HRH Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange, welcomed all participants in his capacity as the Chairman of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation. The Prince underlined the linkages between water issues and food security, agriculture and the MDGs. He noted that the pressure on water resources caused by climate change demands that infrastructures built today be sound, as they will create patterns that bind societies in the years to come. He suggested that wastewater treatment be a priority, and called for intelligent water recovery reuse, as well as global use of accepted safety guidelines.



HRH Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange



Participants watched a video message from HRH Prince Charles, Prince of Wales

In a video message, HRH Prince of Wales emphasized the importance of resilient agricultural systems and the need for a holistic approach to food production, encompassing the economic, social and environmental dimensions. He gave examples of successes in rebuilding the natural capital, such as through environmental restoration in China and payment for environmental services to promote low-carbon development and tackle tropical deforestation. He stressed the importance of economic incentives for sustainable agriculture and the possibility of building synergies between agriculture production, food security, poverty reduction and climate change mitigation objectives.

Andrew Steer, Special Envoy for Climate Change, World Bank, called for increased investment and financing for agriculture, and underlined the possibility of increasing financing flows to developing countries through carbon finance. He highlighted that forest investment projects are now almost ready for inclusion in the carbon market, through reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, plus conservation (REDD+). He noted that there is little progress on the inclusion of agriculture and soils in carbon markets, and emphasized the need to ensure that the entire agriculture sector is ready for funding. He further noted that the agriculture sector must be ready for the opportunities that a global deal on climate could provide and stressed that at UNFCCC COP 16 in Cancun, parties need to agree on a work programme on agriculture, food security and climate change.



Andrew Steer, Special Envoy for Climate Change, World Bank