

'L'Aquila' Joint Statement on Global Food Security - L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI)

10 July 2009

L'Aquila, Italy — 1. We, Heads of State, Government and International and Regional Organizations convened in L'Aquila, remain deeply concerned about global food security, the impact of the global financial and economic crisis and last year's spike in food prices on the countries least able to respond to increased hunger and poverty. While the prices of food commodities have decreased since their peak of 2008, they remain high in historical terms and volatile. The combined effect of longstanding underinvestment in agriculture and food security, price trends and the economic crisis have led to increased hunger and poverty in developing countries, plunging more than a further 100 million people into extreme poverty and jeopardising the progress achieved so far in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. The number of people suffering from hunger and poverty now exceeds 1 billion.

2. There is an urgent need for decisive action to free humankind from hunger and poverty. Food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture must remain a priority issue on the political agenda, to be addressed through a cross-cutting and inclusive approach, involving all relevant stakeholders, at global, regional and national level. Effective food security actions must be coupled with adaptation and mitigation measures in relation to climate change, sustainable management of water, land, soil and other natural resources, including the protection of biodiversity.

3. We therefore agree to act with the scale and urgency needed to achieve sustainable global food security. To this end, we will partner with vulnerable countries and regions to help them develop and implement their own food security strategies, and together substantially increase sustained commitments of financial and technical assistance to invest in those strategies. Our action will be characterized by a comprehensive approach to food security, effective coordination, support for country-owned processes and plans as well as by the use of multilateral institutions whenever appropriate. Delivering on our commitments in a timely and reliable manner, mutual accountability and a sound policy environment are key to this effort. We see a comprehensive approach as including: increased agriculture productivity, stimulus to pre and post-harvest interventions, emphasis on private sector growth, smallholders, women and families, preservation of the natural resource base, expansion of employment and decent work opportunities, knowledge and training, increased trade flows, and support for good governance and policy reform.

4. Food security is closely connected with economic growth and social progress as well as with political stability and peace. The food security agenda should focus on agriculture and rural development by promoting sustainable production, productivity and rural economic growth. At the same time, coherent policies to foster economy-wide growth, which is inclusive and environmentally sustainable, are to be pursued in conjunction with social protection mechanisms such as safety nets and social policies for the most vulnerable. Our attention to promoting access to health care and education in rural areas will substantially contribute to productivity and economic growth and, as importantly, improve nutrition and food security. It is necessary to improve access to food through more equitable income generation and distribution, employment creation and income prospects in developing countries.

5. Sustained and predictable funding and increased targeted investments are urgently required to enhance world food production capacity. Commitments to increase ODA must be fulfilled. The tendency of decreasing ODA and national financing to agriculture must be reversed. We are committed to increase investments in short, medium and long term agriculture development that directly benefits the poorest and makes best use of international institutions. We support public-private partnerships with adequate emphasis on the development of infrastructure aimed at increasing resources for agriculture and improving investment effectiveness.

6. Access to adequate and affordable nutritious food is a critical aspect of food security. Emergency assistance will remain an important means through which national authorities, supported by WFP and other specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes, together with non-governmental organizations, can provide help to people facing acute hunger. Delivering food, cash and vouchers through effective emergency assistance as well as through national safety-nets and nutrition schemes, such as food and cash for work, unconditional cash transfer programs, school feeding and mother-and-child nutrition programs, is an imperative goal. In the long-term, government led, cash based social protection systems and targeted nutrition interventions are needed to support the poorest and excluded populations. We call upon all nations to support these aims by providing sufficient, more predictable and flexible resources. We also call upon all countries to remove food export restrictions or extraordinary taxes, especially for food purchased for humanitarian purposes, and to consult and notify in advance before imposing any new restriction. The feasibility, effectiveness and administrative modalities of a system of stockholding in dealing with humanitarian food emergencies or as a means to limit price volatility need to be further explored. We call upon the relevant International Institutions to provide us with evidence allowing us to make responsible strategic choices on this specific issue.

7. Open trade flows and efficient markets have a positive role in strengthening food security. National and regional strategies should promote the participation of farmers, especially smallholders and women, into community, domestic, regional and international markets. Markets must remain open, protectionism rejected and factors potentially affecting commodity price volatility, including speculation, monitored and analysed further. We are therefore committed to reduce trade distortions and refrain from raising new barriers to trade and investment and from implementing WTO-inconsistent measures to stimulate exports. To this end, we aim at an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round and call for renewed, determined efforts to bring it to a timely and successful conclusion. We are committed to improve access to information, promote conducive business environments and investment in rural infrastructure, such as transportation, processing, storage facilities and irrigation schemes.

8. Strengthening global and local governance for food security is key to defeating hunger and malnutrition, as well as to promote rural development. Improved global governance should build on existing International Organizations and International Financial Institutions, making use of their comparative advantage, enhancing their coordination and effectiveness and avoiding duplications. To this end, we support the UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. At the same time, we support the fundamental reform processes underway in the FAO, the Committee on World Food Security, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and the global agricultural research system through the Global Forum on Agricultural Research.

9. By joining efforts with partners and relevant stakeholders around the world, we can together design and implement an effective food security strategy, with priority on the world's poorest regions. We agree to support a global effort whose core principles are country ownership and effectiveness. We pledge to advance by the end of 2009 – consistent with our other actions aimed

at an improved global governance for food security – the implementation of the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security. Its mission includes enhancing cooperation in achieving global food security, promoting better coordination at the country level and ensuring that local and regional interests are duly voiced and considered. We intend that the Global Partnership will count on a reformed and effective Committee on World Food Security involving all relevant stakeholders, including Governments, International and Regional Organisations, IFIs, civil society and farmers organizations, the private sector and scientific community.

10. We support the implementation of country and regional agricultural strategies and plans through country-led coordination processes, consistent with the Accra Agenda for Action and leveraging on the Comprehensive Framework for Action of the UN High Level Task Force and on existing donor coordination mechanisms. Building on the experience of FAO, IFAD and other Agencies, special focus must be devoted to smallholder and women farmers and their access to land, financial services, including microfinance and markets. Sustained efforts and investments are necessary for enhancing agricultural productivity and for livestock and fisheries development. Priority actions should include improving access to better seeds and fertilizers, promoting sustainable management of water, forests and natural resources, strengthening capacities to provide extension services and risk management instruments, and enhancing the efficiency of food value chains. In this regard, the increased involvement of civil society and private sector is a key factor of success. Investment in and access to education, research, science and technologies should be substantially strengthened at national, regional and international level. Their dissemination, as well as the sharing of information and best practices including through North-South, South-South and Triangular cooperation, is essential to promote knowledge-based policy and national capacity. We recognize the opportunities and challenges associated with renewable energy production from biomasses. Related investment should be promoted in a sustainable way compatible with our food security goals.

11. In Africa, NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) is an effective vehicle for ensuring that resources are targeted to a country's plans and priorities. Local ownership must begin with the national political will to develop and implement comprehensive food security strategies, based on sound scientific evidence, inclusive consultation, domestic investment and clear directions. We also acknowledge the positive contribution of African-led public-private partnership such as the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa. We commit to provide resources – whether financial, in-kind or technical assistance – in support of CAADP and other similar regional and national plans in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia.

12. We are determined to translate these principles into action and take all the necessary measures to achieve global food security. We will aim at substantially increasing aid to agriculture and food security including through multiyear resource commitments. In this respect, we welcome the commitments made by countries represented at L'Aquila towards a goal of mobilizing \$20 billion over three years through this coordinated, comprehensive strategy focused on sustainable agriculture development, while keeping a strong commitment to ensure adequate emergency food aid assistance. We encourage other countries and private actors to join in the common effort towards global food security through a coherent approach. We are determined to improve coordination of financing mechanisms and stand ready to ensure that new resources complement existing facilities and programmes and catalyse additional funds around country-owned strategies, in particular to increase food production, improve access to food and empower smallholder farmers to gain access to enhanced inputs, technologies, credit and markets.

L'Aquila 10 July 2009

The Joint Statement on Global Food Security ("L'Aquila Food Security Initiative") is endorsed by the G8 and by Algeria, Angola, Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Libya (Presidency of the African Union), Mexico, The Netherlands, Nigeria, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Spain, South Africa, Turkey, Commission of the African Union, FAO, IEA, IFAD, ILO, IMF, OECD, The Secretary General's UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, WFP, The World Bank, WTO who attended the food security session at the G8 Summit in L'Aquila on 10 July 2009 and by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), Bioversity/Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Global Donor Platform for Rural Development , Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR).