



MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE
ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI



FINAL DECLARATION

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY AT THE CORE OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

The G8 Leaders Statement on Global Food Security, adopted at Hokkaido Toyako (Japan) Summit from 7 to 9 July 2008, acknowledged the negative implications of the food crisis on the living conditions of millions people in several areas across the world, recognized the need for short, mid and long-term measures to tackle the issue of food insecurity and poverty and asked Ministers of Agriculture to develop sound and shared proposals on food security, to prevent future crises linked to prices of agricultural primary commodities and input factors.

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the G8 Countries, met in Cison di Valmarino (Italy), from 18 to 20 April 2009 and concluded the following:

- The 2000 Millennium Declaration aimed to halve the proportion of the world population facing poverty and undernourishment by the year 2015; the world is very far from reaching this goal according to the alarming data provided by the relevant international bodies.
- The FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security, held in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008, reaffirmed commitments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through increased agricultural production and response to the immediate needs of vulnerable populations, with particular attention to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Conference recalled the importance of the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the Right to adequate food in the context of national food security.
- The relevant international institutions called on successive occasions for an urgent need to help developing countries and countries in transition to expand agriculture

and food production and to increase investments in agriculture, agribusiness and rural development, from both public and private sources. We believe that more should be done to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of agricultural production and enable all citizens to have economic and physical access to safe and nutritious food.

- Although the global economic downturn has caused the international market prices of nearly all agricultural commodities to fall dramatically since summer 2008, and prices have fallen for some consumers, they are still well above previous lows in many countries and the depth of the current economic recession means that the number of people who are poor and, consequently, hungry has increased since last year. Structural factors may affect prices over the medium term, and increased volatility and demand raise important questions about food security for the future.

In view of the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the G8 Countries to be held on La Maddalena, from 8 to 10 July 2009, but also in view of other international fora where food security will be debated, we wish to forward the following messages to the world leaders:

1. Agriculture and food security are at the core of the international agenda.
2. Ensuring access to adequate food and water is essential for sustainable development and for our future. It is necessary to focus the attention on all the strategies to be implemented and shared in order to reduce poverty and increase world production and to achieve food security, in particular in the developing countries. We should create an enabling environment to improve policy coherence recognizing the linkages between agriculture and other policies such as development, health, economic, financial, trade, monetary, environmental, forestry, fisheries, education, labour and social.
3. We underline the importance of increasing public and private investment in sustainable agriculture, rural development and environmental protection in cooperation with international organisations. It is essential to tackle climate change impacts and ensure sustainable management of water, forests and other natural resources, while considering demographic growth.
4. We stress the importance of sound agricultural policies and strategies to underpin the investments, at national, regional and global level. Policies and strategies need to be developed in an inclusive manner, involving all main stakeholders, including farmer organisations, and be based on reliable statistics. In Africa, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) encompasses these principles and deserves our support.
5. We call for enhanced support including investments in agricultural science, research, technology, education, extension services, and innovation. We also commit ourselves to increasingly share technology, processes and ideas with

other countries in the interest of increasing the capacity of national and regional institutions and governments, as well as promoting food security. These efforts are vital to increasing sustainable agricultural productivity and rural development in each country, in accordance with various agricultural conditions, respecting biodiversity and improving peoples' access to food, social and economic development and prosperity. We will continue our support to capacity building in developing countries in sanitary and phytosanitary standards in order to facilitate access to markets and fulfill requirements of consumers.

6. Farmers must be the main protagonists of the agricultural sector. Agriculture must serve citizens' needs for food security and food safety, producing safe, nutritious food in response to consumer demand and must not be allowed to be negatively affected by trade distortions. There should be monitoring and further analysis of factors potentially affecting price volatility in commodity markets, including speculation.

An international coordinated strategy needs to be encouraged in order to improve the efficiency of agri-food chains.

We support efforts against wastage along the food chain in developing countries, particularly for post-harvest losses, in order to avoid food loss reducing the quantities of commodities required by food chains and to improve hygiene, health and nutrition. We also support efforts to reduce wastage, in developed countries.

We need to sustain the benefits of globalization and open markets, highlighting the crucial importance of rejecting protectionism and encouraging the development of local, regional and international integrated agricultural markets. We underline the importance of a rules-based international trading system for agricultural trade and we are committed to reaching a balanced, comprehensive and ambitious conclusion of the Doha Round.

7. We wish to support the role of well functioning markets as a means for improving food security. We will continue to explore various options on a coordinated approach to stock management. We call upon the relevant international institutions to examine whether a system of stockholding could be effective in dealing with humanitarian emergencies or as a means to limit price volatility. They should specifically examine the feasibility and the administrative modalities of such a system. In light of this outcome it will be examined whether further steps should be envisaged and whether a consultation process should be established.
8. We need to place agriculture and rural development – together with other policies – at the centre of sustainable economic growth by strengthening the role of the agricultural households and smallholder farms and their access to land in many parts of the world, encouraging women participation, gender equality and young and beginning farmers. Food security also requires targeted policies to guarantee effective management and sustainable

utilization of natural resources involving local communities in accordance with their identities. This pattern of growth also meets the requirements of less developed rural areas where local sustainable production should be improved. Attention should be given to the leasing and purchase of agricultural land in developing countries, to ensure that local and traditional land use is respected.

9. Renewable energy production from biomasses and related investments must be increased in a sustainable manner through balanced combination of the energy policies needs and agricultural production in a way that provides a response to our energy, economic, environmental and agriculture needs and does not compromise food security. Policies should encourage that biofuels are produced and used in an environmentally sustainable manner, promoting benefits and minimizing any potential risks, with a strong emphasis on the development and commercialization of second generation biofuels, according to the approach outlined by the Declaration of the High Level Conference on World Food Security of June 2008.
10. Farmers need adequate mechanisms to manage risks and market crises. National Governments and international forecast and management systems of agricultural statistics and early warning systems must be improved and better coordinated, in order to anticipate and prevent future crises. We have to ensure that the relevant international organizations and institutions will be able to meet the new challenges we are facing.
11. We are committed to the ongoing and complete implementation of the reform of the international food security system including the FAO and other relevant international bodies, such as CGIAR. We call on all member states and parties in the UN system to support these efforts. Increasing the FAO's effectiveness and focus is vitally important in light of the challenges we face in strengthening food security. We reaffirm our support for the fundamental reform and revitalisation of the Committee on World Food Security within the UN System in 2009.
12. We underline our active support for the consultative design process and early establishing of the Global Partnership further to the guidelines provided by the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders Statement. This Partnership will bring a coherent approach by engaging all stakeholders and by strengthening existing structures and institutions. It should have a global political dimension aiming at an improved coordination and greater coherence for international strategies and policies that have an impact on the world food security. As part of this Partnership, a global network of high level experts on food and agriculture would provide science-based analysis and highlight needs and future risks.

We look forward to the Leaders Summit at La Maddalena as a step forward in addressing the issues of agriculture and food security and in advancing the Global Partnership.

13. We reaffirm our support for the coordination role of the High Level Task Force on Global Food Crisis chaired by the UN Secretary General and the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA), including both emergency measures and initiatives to ensure resilience and sustainability.

- We commit ourselves to use all the tools available to alleviate the negative consequences of the current financial crisis on poverty and hunger, strengthen and encourage sustainable agriculture and food production, increase the investments in agriculture and research, avoid unfair competition, agricultural trade distortions, including export restrictive measures as agreed by G20.

The renewed central role played by agriculture can have significant impacts on other policies, particularly health policies through the fight against hunger and malnutrition and environmental policies, including the sustainable management of natural resources.

- We reiterate our determination to defeat hunger and to ensure access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food for present and future generations.

Cison di Valmarino, 20th April 2009