



## **Outcome of the 1<sup>st</sup> Berlin Summit of Agriculture Ministers on 17 January 2009**

### **“Achieving world food security is a global challenge for governments and industry”**

The agriculture ministers from throughout the world assembled at the 1<sup>st</sup> Berlin Summit of Agriculture Ministers have concluded:

In the Millennium Declaration of 2000, the world’s leaders set a target of reducing the proportion of the poor and undernourished by half through 2015. In spite of the actions already initiated, there is a danger that this target will not be reached. Policymakers are thus faced with great challenges.

Although the world market prices, particularly for crude oil and food, have currently returned to a more moderate level, their dramatic rise in 2006 and 2007 had severe consequences for the food security of the poor and poorest households. As a result, decisive action is urgently required in the rural and urban regions of the developing nations. At the same time, the international donor community and the governmental and non-governmental aid organisations are called upon to activate their potential for rapidly improving the situation.

Energy supplies need to be assured and significantly more food must be produced under the conditions of global climate change and the decline of land under cultivation, occurring concurrently with a rapidly increasing global population.

By 2050, the population of the earth will grow to 9.2 billion, from 6.5 billion today. At the same time, urbanisation will increase dramatically.

There is already enough land world-wide to nourish the expected 9 billion people. But intelligent concepts are needed to utilise this land both sustainably and efficiently, to appropriately distribute the harvests and to guarantee that every human being has access to sufficient food.

The realisation of the right to food is a challenge of global proportions, one that can only be mastered through a world-wide partnership of governments and in close cooperation with the civil societies, which comprise all social groups, non-governmental organisations, agricultural

associations, the food industry, the commercial sector and private donors. The Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food promulgated by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are a suitable instrument in this process.

The ministers support the initiative of the United Nations to create a Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security and underline the importance of the FAO in this process.

**The ministers of agriculture see the need for action in the following main areas:**

### **1. Increasing agricultural production – preserving natural resources**

In most developing nations, the agricultural sector does not have the flexibility needed to rapidly increase production and productivity in response to greater demand, even when agricultural prices skyrocket. Small-scale farmers do not have assured access to land, water or the means of production. Large portions of harvests are lost. Capital and infrastructure are lacking. When food prices rise, people who already spend the greater part of their household income on food can then no longer buy enough food to adequately feed their families. The majority of undernourished humans live in rural regions; there, as in the cities, hunger and malnutrition can lead to unrest, which undermines the stability of those nations.

In addition to rapid assistance in emergency and crisis situations, it is urgently necessary to **increase agricultural production** in those countries and raise the purchasing power of the entire population of the poorer countries in the medium term. This is a prerequisite for these countries to develop in general and for there to be economic growth that reduces poverty. Developmental cooperation must align its short-term and long-term instruments toward these aims. Promoting agricultural production must once more become a primary objective, particularly in nations with food security problems. Measures are needed that reflect the concrete requirements of individual nations. Here, and in the proper implementation, is where **the responsibility of the affected nations** lies.

Sustainable development can only succeed when all the natural resources such as water, soil and biodiversity are preserved.

### **2. Investments according to need!**

Investments in agriculture are key to promoting agriculture. In many countries, such investments, including agricultural research, consulting and education, are the best way to fight poverty and stimulate economic development. At the same time, investments in agriculture promote the diversification of the economic structure. In many cases, what is most

needed is an improvement in the conditions under which agriculture is practiced. This can relate to changes in governance, economic policy, the educational system or the health care system.

**In this process, a custom-tailored approach that builds on the strengths, needs and priorities of each individual country is the key here: the aim is greater than merely an increase in production.**

### **3. Strengthening rural areas!**

This requires fundamental structural changes extending far beyond the agricultural sector. **The development of economically viable rural areas** must become a primary policy objective. **As the source of food, agriculture fulfils a key function** that must be consolidated and enhanced. The fundamental prerequisite for this is providing farmers with access to knowledge and technology, the productive resources land and water as well as the means of production.

A further step is to enable the farmers to participate in value creation to a greater extent. Associations for improved joint production, storage, transport and marketing are one possible solution approach. The ultimate aim must be to develop joint project approaches between the public and private sectors. A further path is supporting entrepreneurship through microcredits. Finally, the promotion of resource-sustaining land use is important. A sustainable production and utilisation of biomass can contribute to the energy security of rural areas.

### **4. Agricultural research!**

Agricultural research has a contribution to make toward increasing productivity with respect to agricultural primary products in compliance with all criteria for sustainability and efficient processing methods.

### **5. Challenges for the donor nations!**

The political leadership of the donor nations must also face the challenges of securing the global food supply.

All nations must give priority to conserving sustainable production potential in order to meet a growing demand for food, fuel and fibres.

The nations must conserve sustainable production potential in the temperate regions and utilise these to achieve food preparedness, crisis preparedness and crisis management.

Competitive situations in the production of plants for different uses are to be taken into account. **Feeding people is the primary goal of agricultural production!**

WTO members should take prompt and concrete actions for a rapid conclusion of the Doha round negotiations in consensus. Market access must be improved, all forms of competition-distorting export promotion measures must be eliminated and competition-distorting subsidies reduced in order to conduct agricultural trade in a fair way. Generally accepted standards for sustainable production must be developed in international cooperation and their implementation must be supported in the developing nations.

For their part, the leading distribution companies and the food industry must contribute to ensuring that local and regional agricultural production can develop both quantitatively and qualitatively, and can reach the consumers, so that increased sales promote sustainable production while improving the earning situation.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Berlin summit of Agriculture Ministers was attended by ministers from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, China, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Norway, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and Germany as well as by representatives of the FAO.