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# The Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis

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## Madrid meeting 26-27 January to chart action on continuing global food crisis

### UN Secretary-General Ban, Prime Minister Zapatero, agency heads, national ministers and experts plan for “Food Security for All”

(UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, 16 January) Major players in the global campaign to meet emergency food needs, reinvigorate agricultural systems and increase investment in agriculture will convene for two days later this month, concluding with a ministerial-level meeting chaired by UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon** and Spanish Prime Minister **Rodriguez Zapatero**.

“The worldwide economic crash did not put an end to the food crisis; instead, it complicates and exacerbates the situation,” said **David Nabarro**, coordinator of the Secretary-General’s task force on the global food security crisis, in advance of the Madrid meeting. “Price volatility and a global credit crunch are discouraging new plantings and new investment, while food prices in many poor countries remain at historically high levels.”

The number of undernourished in the world rose in 2008 to 963 million, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), undercutting progress on the first Millennium Development Goal of eradicating hunger and poverty.

UN officials and representatives of international agencies belonging to the High-level Task Force on Global Food Security Crisis will be at the 26-27 January meeting, which opens with technical discussions and concludes with a ministerial session. Expected to attend are FAO Director-General and Task Force vice-chairman **Jacques Diouf**; International Fund for Agricultural Development President **Lennart Båge**; World Food Programme Executive Director **Josette Sheeran**; and **Nguzi Okanjo-Iweala**, Managing Director of the World Bank Group.

The High-level Meeting of Food Security for All is hosted and organized by the Spanish Government. It follows through on the June 2008 “food summit” in Rome. In the 5 June Rome Declaration, 181 States and the European Community pledged to alleviate the suffering caused by the soaring food prices, stimulate agricultural development and food production and address obstacles to food access.

The task force on global food security is chaired by Secretary-General Ban, who established the inter-agency effort on 28 April 2008.

The January 2009 agenda includes assessing progress since the Rome food summit and agreeing to priorities and commitments for moving ahead. A technical meeting of experts takes place on 26 January, followed by the ministerial meeting on the 27th.

Progress is also expected in Madrid in setting a framework for a global partnership for food security, bringing together governments, regional bodies, civil society, businesses, international agencies, development banks and donors. The intent to establish this partnership was formally announced at the 2008 G8 summit in Toyako, and the effort has been supported by the Japanese government.

**For information on the Food Security for All meeting, see: <http://www.ransa2009.org>**

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