

Ninth Meeting of the High-Level Task Force of the Global Food Security Crisis 25 June 2009

The High Level Task Force (HLTF) held its ninth meeting on 25 June in New York under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General.

Under the first agenda item, HLTF members provided updates on current issues, including **prospects for the food security and hunger situation in 2009**. Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO and Vice Chair of the Task Force, noted that new FAO projections estimate that 100 million more people are being pushed into hunger, bringing the estimated number of hungry people to over 1 billion in 2009. HLTF Members expressed concern about this development and the overall food security situation which remains characterized by a rising number of hungry, highly volatile prices, reduced investments in agriculture and a breakdown in world trading systems. Climate change and the impact of the economic crisis increase the hardship for many poor communities. Mostly, pledges made at the Rome Summit on Food Security in June 2008 and the Madrid Meeting on Food Security for All in January 2009 have not materialized.

In view of an urgently needed increase in investment, HLTF members discussed **Advocacy and resource mobilization, financial coordination and monitoring** under the second agenda item. The Secretary-General stressed that the world must move urgently to ensure food security for these one billion hungry people. It must double food production to feed a total world population projected to reach 9.2 billion in 2050 within the context of climate change and constraints on natural resources. This requires a massive and coordinated increase in investments, and sufficient support for social protection and safety nets. Sustained advocacy is vital. He noted that the African Union and G8 will be prioritizing food security in the July summits and invited HLTF members to consider how to ensure that sufficient national and international resources are available and used in a coordinated and effective way. Mr. David Nabarro, Coordinator of the HLTF, mentioned that, towards the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, countries seem ready to increase their commitments to food security. However the funds will only materialize through careful joint work between the UN system, donors and potential recipients. All members agreed on the urgent need for strong resource mobilization, and on the benefit of doing this together through the HLTF. Advocacy should be based on facts about actual (local) prices and assessments from the country level. Funding for agriculture and smallholder farmers should be additional and not be taken from other areas of concern such as food assistance.

Following the last HLTF meeting, which discussed ways for better coordinating financial resources, IFAD explored the establishment of an administered account. An account has been designed, and could be set up within two weeks. It has not been activated yet as no money has been allocated to it.

The Secretary-General noted that he will call on nations to respond better to hunger and to redouble their focus on MDG 1 during and after the upcoming G8 Meeting. He will continue to stress the importance of urgent, predictable and sustained funding, and will also indicate that the HLTF can help ensure coordinate funding for food security.

Under the third agenda item ‘**Country-level coordination for the implementation of the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA)**’ Mr. Nabarro reported that the HLTF Coordination Secretariat has intensified its work at country level, carried out visits in nine countries and engaged with actors at regional level. Both the production of the CFA and the continued commitment of the HLTF have contributed to increased synergy. However, the quality of coordination differs among countries. While many countries have food security theme groups, several Resident Coordinators are finding it challenging to ensure synergized action by all actors in countries. Further efforts are also needed to encourage joint working between the International Financial Institutions and the UN agencies. Good coordination at country level is an incentive for donor investments.

Before closing, the Secretary-General noted that the Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO) has expressed interest in becoming a member of the HLTF. Given that the ILO is a member of the UN Chief Executives Board, and that its mandate and unique tripartite constituency represents an asset for the work of the HLTF, the HLTF agreed that ILO become a member.

The Secretary-General proposed that the next meeting of the HLTF be held in late August or early September.