



Rome Declaration on World Food Security

We, the Heads of State and Government,¹ or our representatives, gathered at the World Food Summit at the invitation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger.

We pledge our political will and our common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015.

We consider it intolerable that more than 800 million people throughout the world, and particularly in developing countries, do not have enough food to meet their basic nutritional needs. This situation is unacceptable. Food supplies have increased substantially, but constraints on access to food and continuing inadequacy of household and national incomes to purchase food, instability of supply and demand, as well as natural and man-made disasters, prevent basic food needs from being fulfilled. The problems of hunger and food insecurity have global dimensions and are likely to persist, and even increase dramatically in some regions, unless urgent, determined and concerted action is taken, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the stress on natural resources.

We reaffirm that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment is the essential foundation which will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication. Democracy, promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and the full and equal participation of men and women are essential for achieving sustainable food security for all.

Poverty is a major cause of food insecurity and sustainable progress in poverty eradication is critical to improve access to food. Conflict, terrorism, corruption and environmental degradation also contribute significantly to food insecurity. Increased food production, including staple food, must be undertaken. This should happen within the framework of sustainable management of natural resources, elimination of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries, and early stabilization of the world population. We acknowledge the fundamental contribution to food security by women, particularly in rural areas of developing countries, and the need to ensure equality between men and women. Revitalization of rural areas must also be a priority to enhance social stability and help redress the excessive rate of rural-urban migration confronting many countries.

We emphasize the urgency of taking action now to fulfil our responsibility to achieve food security for present and future generations. Attaining food security is a complex task for which the primary responsibility rests with individual governments. They have to develop an enabling environment and have policies that ensure peace, as well as social, political and economic stability and equity and gender equality. We express our deep concern over the persistence of hunger which, on such a scale, constitutes a threat both to national societies and, through a variety of ways, to the stability of the international community itself. Within the global framework, governments should also cooperate actively with one another and with United Nations organizations, financial institutions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and public and private sectors, on programmes directed toward the achievement of food security for all.

Food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure. We reaffirm the importance of international cooperation and solidarity as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with the international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food security.

We recognize the need to adopt policies conducive to investment in human resource development, research and infrastructure for achieving food security. We must encourage generation of employment and incomes, and promote equitable access to productive and financial resources. We agree that trade is a key element in achieving food security. We agree to pursue food trade and overall trade policies that will encourage our producers and consumers to utilize available resources in an economically sound and sustainable manner. We recognize the importance for food security of sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development in low as well as high potential areas. We acknowledge the fundamental role of farmers, fishers, foresters, indigenous people and their communities, and all other people involved in the food sector, and of their organizations, supported by effective research and extension, in attaining food security. Our sustainable development policies will promote full participation and empowerment of people, especially women, an equitable distribution of income, access to health care and education, and opportunities for youth. Particular attention should be given to those who cannot produce or procure enough food for an adequate diet, including those

affected by war, civil strife, natural disaster or climate related ecological changes. We are conscious of the need for urgent action to combat pests, drought, and natural resource degradation including desertification, overfishing and erosion of biological diversity.

We are determined to make efforts to mobilize, and optimize the allocation and utilization of, technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies.

Convinced that the multifaceted character of food security necessitates concerted national action, and effective international efforts to supplement and reinforce national action, we make the following commitments:

- we will ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all;
- we will implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization;
- we will pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture;
- we will strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system;
- we will endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs;
- we will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas;
- we will implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community.

We pledge our actions and support to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Rome, 13 November 1996

Notes

⁴When "Government" is used, it means as well the European Community within its areas of competence.

World Food Summit Plan of Action

1. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action lay the foundations for diverse paths to a common objective - food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. In this regard, concerted action at all levels is required. Each nation must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security. In a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies, coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential.

2. Poverty eradication is essential to improve access to food. The vast majority of those who are undernourished, either cannot produce or cannot afford to buy enough food. They have inadequate access to means of production such as land, water, inputs, improved seeds and plants, appropriate technologies and farm credit. In addition, wars, civil strife, natural disasters, climate related ecological changes and environmental degradation have adversely affected millions of people. Although food assistance may be provided to ease their plight, it is not a long term solution to the underlying causes of food insecurity. It is important to maintain an adequate capacity in the international community to provide food aid, whenever it is required, in response to emergencies. Equitable access to stable food supplies should be ensured.

3. A peaceful and stable environment in every country is a fundamental condition for the attainment of sustainable food security. Governments are responsible for creating an enabling environment for private and group initiatives to devote their skills, efforts and resources, and in particular investment, towards the common goal of food for all. This should be undertaken with the cooperation and participation of all members of society. Farmers, fishers and foresters and other food producers and providers, have critical roles in achieving food security, and their full involvement and enablement are crucial for success.

4. Poverty, hunger and malnutrition are some of the principal causes of accelerated migration from rural to urban areas in developing countries. The largest population shift of all times is now under way. Unless these problems are addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion, the political, economic and social stability of many countries and regions may well be seriously affected, perhaps even compromising world peace. It is necessary to target those people and areas suffering most from

hunger and malnutrition and identify causes and take remedial action to improve the situation. A more complete, user-friendly source of information at all levels would enable this.

5. Availability of enough food for all can be attained. The 5.8 billion people in the world today have, on average, 15 percent more food per person than the global population of 4 billion people had 20 years ago. Yet, further large increases in world food production, through the sustainable management of natural resources, are required to feed a growing population, and achieve improved diets. Increased production, including traditional crops and their products, in efficient combination with food imports, reserves, and international trade can strengthen food security and address regional disparities. Food aid is one of the many instruments which can help to promote food security. Long term investment in research and in cataloguing and conserving genetic resources, particularly at the national level, is essential. The link between sufficient food supplies and household food security must be ensured.

6. Harmful seasonal and inter-annual instability of food supplies can be reduced. Progress should include targeting on minimizing the vulnerability to, and impact of, climate fluctuations and pests and diseases. To effect timely transfers of supplies to deficit areas and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, use should be made, in efficient combination, of climate early warning systems, transfer and utilization of appropriate agricultural,² fishery and forestry technologies, production, and reliable trade, storage and financial mechanisms. Natural and man-made disasters can often be anticipated or even prevented, and response must be timely and effective and assist recovery.

7. Unless national governments and the international community address the multifaceted causes underlying food insecurity, the number of hungry and malnourished people will remain very high in developing countries, particularly in Africa south of the Sahara; and sustainable food security will not be achieved. This situation is unacceptable. This Plan of Action envisages an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015, and a mid-term review to ascertain whether it is possible to achieve this target by 2010.

8. The resources required for investment will be generated mostly from domestic private and public sources. The international community has a key role to play in supporting the adoption of appropriate national policies and, where necessary and appropriate, in providing technical and financial assistance to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in fostering food security.

9. The multi-dimensional nature of the follow-up to the World Food Summit includes actions at the national, intergovernmental and inter-agency levels. The international community, and the UN system, including FAO, as well as other agencies and bodies according to their mandates, have important contributions to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) will have responsibility to monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action.

10. Reaching sustainable world food security is part and parcel of achieving the social, economic, environmental and human development objectives agreed upon in recent international conferences. The World Food Summit Plan of Action builds on consensus reached in these fora and is based on the conviction that although the world is faced with major food insecurity, solutions to these problems exist. If all parties at local, national, regional and international levels make determined and sustained efforts, then the overall goal of food for all, at all times, will be achieved.

11. The Plan of Action of the World Food Summit is in conformity with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law and strives to consolidate the results of other UN conferences since 1990 on subjects having a bearing on food security.

12. The implementation of the recommendations contained in this Plan of Action is the sovereign right and responsibility of each State through national laws and the formulation of strategies, policies, programmes, and development priorities, in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and the significance of and the full respect for various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities should contribute to the full enjoyment by all of their human rights in order to achieve the objective of food security for all.

COMMITMENT ONE

We will ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.

The Basis for Action

13. A growing world population and the urgency of eradicating hunger and malnutrition call for determined policies and effective actions. A peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment is the essential foundation which will enable States to give adequate priority to food security, poverty eradication and sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development. Promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food for all and the full and equal participation of men and women are also indispensable to our goal of achieving sustainable food security for all.

Objectives and Actions

14. Objective 1.1

To prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully and create a stable political environment, through respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, a transparent and effective legal framework, transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public and private national and international institutions, and effective and equal participation of all people, at all levels, in decisions and actions that affect their food security.

To this end, governments, in partnership, as appropriate, with all actors of civil society, will where not already accomplished:

(a) In cooperation, as appropriate, with the international community, assure and reinforce peace, by developing conflict prevention mechanisms, settling disputes by peaceful means, as well as by promoting tolerance, non-violence and respect for diversity;

(b) Develop policy making, legislative and implementation processes that are democratic, transparent, participatory, empowering, responsive to changing circumstances and most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all;

(c) Promote and strengthen well-functioning legal and judicial systems to protect the rights of all people;

(d) Recognize and support indigenous people and their communities in their pursuit of economic and social development, with full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural values.

Furthermore, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society and with support of international institutions, will, as appropriate:

(e) Strengthen rules and mechanisms existing in international and regional organizations to seek, in accordance with the UN Charter, the prevention and solution of conflicts which cause or exacerbate food insecurity as well as to settle disputes by peaceful means, promote tolerance, non-violence, respect for diversity and observance of international law.

15. Objective 1.2:

To ensure stable economic conditions and implement development strategies which encourage the full potential of private and public, individual and collective initiatives for sustainable, equitable, economic and social development which also integrate population and environmental concerns.

To this end, governments, and as appropriate, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will:

(a) Promote policies in order to foster a national and international environment that is more conducive to sustainable, equitable economic and social development;

(b) Establish legal and other mechanisms, as appropriate, that advance land reform, recognize and protect property, water, and user rights, to enhance access for the poor and women to resources. Such mechanisms should also promote conservation and sustainable use of natural resources (such as land, water and forests), lower risks, and encourage investment;

(c) Fully integrate population concerns into development strategies, plans, and decision-making, including factors affecting migration, and devise appropriate population policies, programmes and family planning services, consistent with the Report and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo 1994.

16. Objective 1.3:

To ensure gender equality and empowerment of women.

To this end, governments will:

(a) Support and implement commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in all policies;

(b) Promote women's full and equal participation in the economy, and for this purpose introduce and enforce gender-sensitive legislation providing women with secure and equal access to and control over productive resources including credit, land and water;

(c) Ensure that institutions provide equal access for women;

(d) Provide equal gender opportunities for education and training in food production, processing and marketing;

(e) Tailor extension and technical services to women producers and increase the number of women advisors and agents;

(f) Improve the collection, dissemination and use of gender-disaggregated data in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development;

(g) Focus research efforts on the division of labour and on income access and control within the household;

(h) Gather information on women's traditional knowledge and skills in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resources management.

17. Objective 1.4:

To encourage national solidarity and provide equal opportunities for all, at all levels, in social, economic and political life, particularly in respect of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and persons.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

(a) Support investment in human resource development such as health, education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential to sustainable development, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development;

(b) Enact or strengthen policies to combat discrimination against members of socially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and persons belonging to minorities, with particular attention to their rights to land and other property, and to their access to credit, education and training, commercial markets and food security programmes;

(c) Enact legislation and establish institutional structures that provide opportunities for youth and enhance the special contribution that women can make to ensuring family and child nutrition with due emphasis on the importance of breast-feeding for infants;

(d) Give special attention to promoting and protecting the interests and needs of the child, particularly the girl child, in food security programmes, consistent with the World Summit for Children - Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York 1990.

COMMITMENT TWO

We will implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization.

The Basis for Action

18. Assured access to nutritionally adequate and safe food is essential for individual welfare and for national, social and economic development, in accordance with the World Declaration on Nutrition, International Conference on Nutrition (ICN), Rome 1992. Every country in the world has vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, households and groups who cannot meet their own needs. Seventy percent of all poor are women, which should be taken into consideration when preparing poverty eradication action. Even where and when overall food supplies are adequate, poverty impedes access by all to the quantity and variety of foods needed to meet the population's needs. Rapid population growth and rural poverty have resulted in excessive migration to urban areas with serious negative social, economic,

environmental and nutritional impact. Unless extraordinary efforts are undertaken, an unacceptably large portion of the world's population, particularly in developing countries, could still be chronically undernourished by the year 2010 with additional suffering due to acute periodic shortages of food. Contributing to malnutrition is the lack of adequate food utilization which, in this context, is the proper digestion and absorption of nutrients in food by the human body and requires adequate diet, water sanitation, health services, and health education.

Objectives and Actions

19. Objective 2.1:

To pursue poverty eradication, among both urban and rural poor, and sustainable food security for all as a policy priority and to promote, through sound national policies, secure and gainful employment and equitable and equal access to productive resources such as land, water and credit, so as to maximize the incomes of the poor.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, as appropriate, will:

- (a) Review and adopt policies to pursue the eradication of hunger and attain sustainable food security at the household and national levels as a top policy priority, and make every effort to eliminate obstacles such as unemployment and lack of access to factors of production that adversely affect the attainment of food security, and implement the relevant commitments they entered into at the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen 1995;
- (b) Develop human skills and capacities through basic education and pre- and on-the-job training;
- (c) Adopt policies that create conditions which encourage stable employment, especially in rural areas, including off-farm jobs, so as to provide sufficient earnings to facilitate the purchase of basic necessities, as well as encourage labour intensive technologies where appropriate;
- (d) Pursue sound economic, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and land reform policies that will permit farmers, fishers, foresters and other food producers, particularly women, to earn a fair return from their labour, capital and management, and encourage conservation and sustainable management of natural resources including in marginal areas;
- (e) Improve equal access, by men and women, to land and other natural and productive resources, in particular, where necessary, through the effective implementation of land reform and the promotion of efficient utilization of natural and agricultural resources and resettlement on new lands, where feasible;

(f) Promote access, by farmers and farming communities, to genetic resources for food and agriculture.

20. Objective 2.2:

To enable food insecure households, families and individuals to meet their food and nutritional requirements and to seek to assist those who are unable to do so.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, as appropriate, will:

(a) Develop and periodically update, where necessary, a national food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system, indicating areas and populations, including at local level, affected by or at-risk of hunger and malnutrition, and elements contributing to food insecurity, making maximum use of existing data and other information systems in order to avoid duplication of efforts;

(b) Implement, where appropriate, cost-effective public works programmes for the unemployed and underemployed in regions of food insecurity;

(c) Develop within available resources well targeted social welfare and nutrition safety nets to meet the needs of the food insecure, particularly needy people, children, and the infirm.

21. Objective 2.3:

To ensure that food supplies are safe, physically and economically accessible, appropriate and adequate to meet the energy and nutrient needs of the population.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, as appropriate, will:

(a) Monitor the availability and nutritional adequacy of food supplies and reserve stocks, giving particular attention to areas at high risk of food insecurity, to nutritionally vulnerable groups, and to areas where seasonal variations have important nutritional implications;

(b) Apply measures, in conformity with the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and other relevant international agreements, that ensure the quality and safety of food supply, particularly by strengthening normative and control activities in the areas of human, animal and plant health and safety;

(c) Encourage, where appropriate, the production and use of culturally appropriate, traditional and underutilized food crops, including grains, oilseeds, pulses, root crops, fruits and vegetables, promoting home and, where appropriate, school

gardens and urban agriculture, using sustainable technologies, and encourage the sustainable utilization of unused or underutilized fish resources;

(d) Develop and promote improved food processing, preservation and storage technologies to reduce post-harvest food losses, especially at the local level;

(e) Encourage rural households and communities to adopt low-cost technologies and innovative practices;

(f) Promote and support community-based food security and nutrition programmes that encourage self-reliance, utilizing participatory planning and implementation processes;

(g) Implement the goals of preventing and controlling specific micro-nutrient deficiencies as agreed at the ICN.

22. Objective 2.4:

To promote access for all, especially the poor and members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, to basic education and primary health care provision in order to strengthen their capacity for self-reliance.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will:

(a) Promote access for all people, especially the poor and members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to primary health care, including reproductive health services consistent with the Report and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo 1994;

(b) Promote access to clean water and sanitation for all people, especially in poor communities and rural areas;

(c) Promote access to, and support for, complete primary education, including, where appropriate, school feeding programmes, with particular attention to children in rural areas and to girls;

(d) Provide nutrition, sanitation, and health education for the public and promote technologies and training programmes on nutrition, home economics, environmental protection, food supply and health.

COMMITMENT THREE

We will pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies

at the household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture.

The Basis for Action

23. It is imperative that food production be increased, particularly in low-income, food-deficit countries, to meet the needs of the undernourished and food insecure, the additional food requirements resulting from population growth, demand for new food products due to rising standards of living and changes in consumption patterns. Production increases need to be achieved without further overburdening women farmers, while ensuring both productive capacity, sustainable management of natural resources and protection of the environment.

24. In many parts of the world, unsustainable and otherwise inadequate policies and programmes, inappropriate technologies, insufficient rural infrastructures and institutions, as well as pests and diseases, lead to inefficiency and wastage of natural and human resources, inputs and products. The resource base for food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry is under stress and is threatened by problems such as desertification, deforestation, overfishing, overcapacity and discards in fisheries, losses of biodiversity, as well as inefficient use of water, climate change and depletion of the ozone layer. This has a negative impact on both food security and the environment. The framework for sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development in relation to food security was elaborated in the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development (Agenda 21) of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro 1992, and recently expanded in both the Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security (Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action), 1995, and the Leipzig Declaration on and the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Leipzig Declaration and Global Plan of Action), 1996.

25. Expanding production in low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) is frequently one of the primary means to increase the availability of food and income for those living in poverty. Most of the increases in food output of these countries, and of more developed regions, are expected to come from areas which have the agro-climatic potential to generate sufficient surpluses in economically and environmentally sound conditions, in particular to feed growing numbers of urban consumers. The generation of employment and income will raise effective demand in these areas, thereby stimulating production, economic diversification and rural development. In marginal areas and coastal communities with lower potential and fragile environments, there is also a need to increase food production through the provision of inputs and appropriate technology to reduce rural migration, but this should be based on sustainable management of resources and environment. Efficient land use for sustainable agricultural activity in many areas will also contribute significantly towards reducing the pressure to convert forests to agricultural land.

26. Food security depends, *inter alia*, on sustainable management of fish, forests, and wildlife. In many indigenous communities, these resources are the principal sources of protein in the diet. The traditional knowledge within indigenous communities also plays an important role in the achievement of food security for these communities and others.

27. Establishing sustainable and diverse patterns of production should take into account the present and future needs of the people as well as the natural resources potential and limitations. Policies that provide an effective incentive structure for sustainable management of natural resources will help ensure that national agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resource plans and practices are developed and implemented in a holistic approach.

28. Small Island Developing States face the threat of land loss and erosion due to climate changes and sea level rises and have particular needs for their overall sustainable development. Improvements in trade, transportation, communication, human resources, stabilization of income and higher export earnings will increase food security in these countries.

29. Food production and rural development, particularly in those countries with significant food security inadequacies, require appropriate and up-to-date technologies which, according to sustainable development criteria and local food traditions, promote modernization of local production methods and facilitate transfer of technology. Full benefit from these technologies will require training, education and skill development programmes for local human resources. National efforts to increase local capacity, coupled with consolidated international cooperation, facilitate application of know-how and technology in areas with similar conditions and new techniques. This may be promoted by active international cooperation, particularly towards developing countries, both at the North-South and South-South levels.

30. Research in agriculture, fisheries and forestry will be essential to achieving the sustainable food productivity increases upon which the short and long term food security of a growing world population will depend. The combination of such research, and an enabling environment, can improve food security both at national and household levels. Equity issues and equality between women and men should be given appropriate consideration when setting research agendas for the future. Research efforts should clearly focus on poverty eradication and on the creation of more environmentally sustainable agricultural, fisheries, forestry and food production systems. This research should be directed to low, as well as high, potential areas according to their specific research needs. Renewed efforts should be made to involve farmers, fishers, foresters and their organizations in setting research priorities and directions, and to make experimental findings accessible to them.

31. The economic and social development of the rural sector is a key requisite for the achievement of food security for all. Rural poverty is a complex phenomenon that varies considerably between and within countries. The rural areas in

developing countries are generally poorly equipped in terms of technical and financial resources and educational infrastructure. In these areas, lack of income opportunities, failure to crop and to maintain production systems, inadequate commodity and input and consumer goods distribution networks, limited access to public services and the poor quality of these services are all fundamental aspects that need to be considered with regard to rural food security. The main consequences of this are reflected in high population growth and out-migration, both internally and to other countries.

Objectives and Actions

32. Objective 3.1:

To pursue, through participatory means, sustainable, intensified and diversified food production, increasing productivity, efficiency, safety gains, pest control and reduced wastes and losses, taking fully into account the need to sustain natural resources.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, and with the support of international institutions, will, as appropriate:

(a) Establish policies and implement programmes to optimize, in an economically, socially and environmentally sound manner, sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry production, particularly of the main staple foods, aimed at achieving food security;

(b) Promote policies and programmes which encourage appropriate input technologies, farming techniques, and other sustainable methods, such as organic farming, to assist farming operations to become profitable, with the goal of reducing environmental degradation, while creating financial resources within the farming operation; such programmes should, when relevant, build upon farmers' own experiences and indigenous knowledge;

(c) Promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components in terrestrial and marine ecosystems, with a view to enhancing food security, notably through supporting the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992;

(d) Promote sustainable development in mixed-farming systems and the processing and marketing of diverse food products and by-products, in response to the needs of the consumers for properly balanced diets;

(e) Promote crop and livestock productivity through widespread use of improved seeds and breeds and integrated plant nutrition system methods, where necessary and ecologically and economically feasible; in addition, seek to achieve lasting fertility improvements in tropical soils;

(f) Promote more efficient and sustainable livestock production systems through the improvement of grazing lands, fodder crops and the use of multiple sources of animal feed;

(g) Promote development of environmentally sound and sustainable aquaculture well integrated into rural, agricultural and coastal development;

(h) Promote the sustainable production and use of food, fodder, fuel and other products derived from forests to enhance food security; such action will also result in increased rural income and employment, thus contributing to sustainable forest management by increasing the value of forests;

(i) Seek to ensure effective prevention and progressive control of plant and animal pests and diseases, including especially those which are of transboundary nature, such as rinderpest, cattle tick, foot and mouth disease and desert locust, where outbreaks can cause major food shortages, destabilize markets and trigger trade measures; and promote concurrently, regional collaboration in plant pests and animal disease control and the widespread development and use of integrated pest management practices.

33. Objective 3.2:

To combat environmental threats to food security, in particular, drought and desertification, pests, erosion of biological diversity, and degradation of land and aquatic-based natural resources, restore and rehabilitate the natural resource base, including water and watersheds, in depleted and overexploited areas to achieve greater production.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, and with the support of international institutions, will, as appropriate:

(a) Monitor and promote rehabilitation and conservation of natural resources in food producing areas as well as in adjacent forest lands, non-arable lands, and watersheds, and where necessary upgrade sustainably the productive capacity of these resources; and establish policies that create economic and social incentives to reduce degradation;

(b) Identify the potential and improve the productive use of national land and water resources for sustainable increases in food production, taking into account the anticipated impacts of natural climate variability and climatic change on rainfall and temperature patterns;

(c) Develop appropriate national and regional policies and plans for water and watersheds, and water management techniques; promote economically, socially and environmentally sound irrigation improvement, in particular small-scale irrigation, and sustainable intensification of rainfed agriculture, with a view to increasing cropping intensities and reducing the impact of droughts and floods on

food output and restoring natural resources, while at the same time preserving the quality and availability of water for other purposes, especially human consumption;

(d) Promote early ratification and implementation of the Agreement for the Implementation of the Instruments of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (the UN Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks) and of the FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas. Implement sustainable fisheries management and practices, in particular the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to address a responsible and sustainable utilization and conservation of fisheries resources in order to optimize the long-term sustainable contribution of fisheries resources to food security - and fully recognizing Agenda 21, and the Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action within the context of the relevant rules of International Law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)³ - by, *inter alia*, strengthening and establishing, as needed, appropriate regional and sub-regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements, minimizing wastes in fisheries, reducing excess fishing capacity and applying the precautionary approach in accordance with the UN Agreement⁴ on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; by establishing and strengthening integrated marine and coastal area management; by conserving and sustainably utilizing marine and freshwater biodiversity; and by studying the effectiveness of multi-species management in the context of relevant provisions of UNCLOS and Agenda 21. In working to achieve the above, full recognition should be given to the special circumstances and requirements of developing countries, particularly the least developed among them and the Small Island Developing States;

(e) Promote an integrated approach to conservation and sustainable utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, through *inter alia* appropriate *in situ* and *ex situ* approaches, systematic surveying and inventorying, approaches to plant breeding which broaden the genetic base of crops, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of such resources;

(f) Promote the conservation and sustainable utilization of animal genetic resources;

(g) Reduce the deforestation rate and increase forest coverage, maintain and develop the multiple contributions of forests, trees and forestry to food security for the conservation and sustainable use of land and water resources, including the protection of watersheds, and as reservoirs of biological diversity; to this end, implement the UNCED outcomes related to forests;

(h) Seek to understand better the impacts of global environmental threats, in particular climate change and variability, the depletion of the ozone layer, loss of biodiversity and various forms of environmental pollution, on food security;

(i) Implement the Leipzig Global Plan of Action;

(j) Promote early ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, 1994, and implement the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992;

(k) Seek to prevent and control degradation and overexploitation of natural resources in poorly endowed, ecologically stressed areas. In those areas critical to the achievement of food security for developing countries, promote and provide location-specific institutional, infrastructural and technical support.

34. Objective 3.3:

To promote sound policies and programmes on transfer and use of technologies, skills development and training appropriate to the food security needs of developing countries and compatible with sustainable development, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, and with the support of international institutions, will, as appropriate:

(a) Strengthen agricultural, fisheries and forestry education, training, skills development and extension systems, ensuring equal gender opportunities and close interaction with research systems and farmers, fishers and foresters, in particular small-scale farmers, fishers and foresters, and other food producers, and their representative organizations in food production technology and transfer, and initiate programmes to increase the proportion of women in these systems. National capacity-building efforts, principally in LIFDCs should be supported with North-South and South-South cooperation among education and extension and research institutions;

(b) Promote viable technology transfer and extension services that meet real local needs; stimulate programmes that will help identify possibilities of bilateral and regional cooperation so that experience and technology information can be exchanged on a South-South and North-South level;

(c) Promote means to reduce women farmers' workload by supporting and facilitating access to appropriate productive and domestic labour- saving technologies;

(d) Establish policies and programmes for the development and use of technologies that offer economic and ecological benefits and protect the consumer and the environment.

35. Objective 3.4:

To take decisive action in cooperation between the public and the private sectors to strengthen and broaden research and scientific cooperation in agriculture, fisheries and forestry in supporting policy and international, regional, national and local action to increase productive potential and maintain the natural resource base in agriculture, fisheries and forestry and in support of efforts to eradicate poverty and promote food security.

To this end, governments in collaboration with the international and scientific communities, in both the public and the private sectors, as appropriate, will:

- (a) Strengthen national research systems in order to develop coordinated programmes in support of research to promote food security. Such programmes should focus on interdisciplinary research to provide a scientific basis for policies and action to maintain the natural resource base while increasing the productivity potential of agriculture, fisheries, including aquaculture, and forestry. Appropriate attention will be given to areas that are less endowed with natural resources. Increased cooperation with the private sector will be promoted;
- (b) Strengthen international research systems, in particular the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and promote coordination and collaboration among international, developed country, and developing country institutions;
- (c) Participate actively in and support international cooperation in research to promote food security, in particular in developing countries, with special emphasis on underutilized food crops in these countries;
- (d) Enhance the institutional framework allowing for the full participation of all interested parties, including indigenous people and their communities, local people, consumers, farmers, fishers and foresters and their organizations and the private sector in the identification of research needs;
- (e) Promote suitable systems, *inter alia* participatory systems, for the dissemination and extension of research results;
- (f) Ensure that gender perspectives are integrated in research planning and implementation;
- (g) Promote development of methods and criteria for the strengthening of integrated and policy relevant scientific knowledge;
- (h) Promote research and development leading to the use, at regional, national and local levels, of appropriate technologies, relevant post-harvest and transformation techniques, and adapted plant and animal breeding that meet local needs;

(i) Promote the research needed to continue international efforts to develop, disseminate and apply climate forecast information that will increase sustainable agricultural, fisheries and forestry productivity and be of particular benefit to developing countries.

36. Objective 3.5:

To formulate and implement integrated rural development strategies, in low and high potential areas, that promote rural employment, skill formation, infrastructure, institutions and services, in support of rural development and household food security and that reinforce the local productive capacity of farmers, fishers and foresters and others actively involved in the food sector, including members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, women and indigenous people, and their representative organizations, and that ensure their effective participation.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, and with the support of international institutions, will, as appropriate:

(a) Include in their national social and economic development policies, plans and programmes, actions that will foster the social and economic revitalization of the rural sector, with particular regard to the promotion of investment and employment that will make good use of the rural workforce and to the promotion of political, economic and administrative decentralization;

(b) Strengthen local government institutions in rural areas and provide them with adequate resources, decision-making authority and mechanisms for grassroots participation;

(c) Encourage and enable farmers, fishers and foresters and other food producers and providers as well as their organizations, particularly small farmers and artisanal fisherfolk, by strengthening institutional structures to define their responsibilities and protect their rights and those of the consumer;

(d) Promote the development and diversification of rural markets, reduce post-harvest losses and ensure safe storage, food processing and distribution facilities and transportation systems;

(e) Reinforce the follow-up to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), 1979;

(f) Develop and encourage training programmes in sustainable natural resources management.

Governments, in cooperation with the private sector and non-governmental organizations, will:

(g) Develop the technical and educational infrastructure in rural areas;

(h) Promote the development of rural banking, credit and savings schemes, where appropriate, including equal access to credit for men and women, micro-credit for the poor, as well as adequate insurance mechanisms;

(i) Promote food production, processing and marketing systems which increase opportunities for stable, gainful and equal and equitable employment conditions in the food and rural sectors; where appropriate, promote off-farm activities in rural areas combining agriculture, fisheries and forestry production with processing and marketing activities, cottage industries and tourism, particularly in marginal areas and peri-urban areas;

(j) Foster the social and economic organization of the rural population with particular emphasis on the development of small-scale farmers', fishers', and foresters' cooperatives, community organizations and development associations, so that rural inhabitants may be actively involved in decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of rural development programmes;

(k) Recognize farmers', fishers', foresters', rural workers' and consumers' organizations at local, national, regional and international levels and promote a regular dialogue and partnership with their respective governments and their linkage with all appropriate institutions and sectors on sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry and sustainable management of natural resources;

(l) Promote the empowerment of small-scale family farmers, fishers and foresters, both women and men, to set up their own cooperatives and business undertakings, as well as farmers' and fishers' financial and mutual institutions;

(m) Enhance cooperation and exchange among farmers, fishers, foresters and their representative organizations, both within and between developing countries, industrialized countries and economies in transition.

Governments, in collaboration with the international community, will:

(n) Develop international South-South technical cooperation programmes that will facilitate the implementation of nutritional programmes that have proved successful in other developing countries;

(o) Implement the outcomes of UNCED, particularly as regards Chapter 14 of Agenda 21.

COMMITMENT FOUR

We will strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system.

The Basis for Action

37. Trade is a key element in achieving world food security. Trade generates effective utilization of resources and stimulates economic growth which is critical to improving food security. Trade allows food consumption to exceed food production, helps to reduce production and consumption fluctuations and relieves part of the burden of stock holding. It has a major bearing on access to food through its positive effect on economic growth, income and employment. Appropriate domestic economic and social policies will better ensure that all, including the poor, will benefit from economic growth. Appropriate trade policies promote the objectives of sustainable growth and food security. It is essential that all members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) respect and fulfil the totality of the undertakings of the Uruguay Round. For this purpose it will be necessary to refrain from unilateral measures not in accordance with WTO obligations.

38. The Uruguay Round Agreement established a new international trade framework that offers opportunity to developed and developing countries to benefit from appropriate trade policies and self-reliance strategies. The progressive implementation of the Uruguay Round as a whole will generate increasing opportunities for trade expansion and economic growth to the benefits of all participants. Therefore, adaptation to the provisions of the various agreements during the implementation period must be ensured. Some least-developed and net food-importing developing countries may experience short term negative effects in terms of the availability of adequate supplies of basic foodstuffs from external sources on reasonable terms and conditions, including short term difficulties in financing normal levels of commercial imports of basic foodstuffs. The Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries, Marrakesh 1994, shall be fully implemented.

Objectives and Actions

39. Objective 4.1:

To meet the challenges of and utilize the opportunities arising from the international trade framework established in recent global and regional trade negotiations.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

(a) Endeavour to establish, especially in developing countries, well functioning internal marketing and transportation systems to facilitate better links within and between domestic, regional and world markets, and diversify trade;

(b) Seek to ensure that national policies related to international and regional trade agreements do not have an adverse impact on women's new and traditional economic activities towards food security.

Members of the WTO will:

(c) Pursue the implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreement which will improve market opportunities for efficient food, agricultural, fisheries and forestry producers and processors, particularly those of developing countries.

The international community, in cooperation with governments and civil society, will, as appropriate:

(d) Continue to assist countries to adjust their institutions and standards both for internal and external trade to food safety and sanitary requirements;

(e) Give full consideration to promote financial and technical assistance to improve the agricultural productivity and infrastructure of developing countries, especially the LIFDCs, in order to optimize the opportunities arising from the international trade framework;

(f) Promote technical assistance and encourage technology transfer consistent with international trade rules, in particular to those developing countries needing it, to meet international standards, so that they are in a position to take advantage of the new market opportunities;

(g) Endeavour to ensure mutual supportiveness of trade and environment policies in support of sustainable food security, looking to the WTO to address the relationship between WTO provisions and trade measures for environment purposes, in conformity with the provisions of the Ministerial Decision on Trade and Environment in the Uruguay Round Agreement, and make every effort to ensure that environmental measures do not unfairly affect market access for developing countries' food and agricultural exports;

(h) Conduct international trade in fish and fishery products in a sustainable manner in accordance, as appropriate, with the principles, rights and obligations established in the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement, the UN Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other relevant international agreements.

40. Objective 4.2:

To meet essential food import needs in all countries, considering world price and supply fluctuations and taking especially into account food consumption levels of vulnerable groups in developing countries.

To this end, governments and the international community will, as appropriate:

(a) Recognizing the effects of world price fluctuations, examine WTO-compatible options and take any appropriate steps to safeguard the ability of importing developing countries, especially LIFDCs, to purchase adequate supplies of basic foodstuffs from external sources on reasonable terms and conditions.

Food exporting countries should:

(b) Act as reliable sources of supplies to their trading partners and give due consideration to the food security of importing countries, especially the LIFDCs;

(c) Reduce subsidies on food exports in conformity with the Uruguay Round Agreement in the context of the ongoing process of reform in agriculture conducted in the WTO;

(d) Administer all export-related trade policies and programmes responsibly, with a view to avoiding disruptions in world food and agriculture import and export markets, in order to improve the environment to enhance supplies, production and food security, especially in developing countries.

Members of the WTO will:

(e) Fully implement the Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries through the WTO Committee on Agriculture and encourage international financial institutions, where appropriate, to help least-developed and net food-importing developing countries to meet short-term difficulties in financing essential food imports;

(f) Refrain from using export restrictions in accordance with Article 12 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture.

International organizations, and particularly FAO, will:

(g) Continue to monitor closely and inform member nations of developments in world food prices and stocks.

41. Objective 4.3:

To support the continuation of the reform process in conformity with the Uruguay Round Agreement, particularly Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture.

To this end, governments will, as appropriate:

(a) Promote the national and regional food security policies and programmes of developing countries particularly in regard to their staple food supplies;

(b) Support the continuation of the reform process in conformity with the Uruguay Round Agreement and ensure that developing countries are well informed and equal partners in the process, working for effective solutions that improve their access to markets and are conducive to the achievement of sustainable food security.

International organizations, including FAO, will, according to their respective mandates:

(c) Continue to assist developing countries in preparing for multilateral trade negotiations including in agriculture, fisheries and forestry *inter alia* through studies, analysis and training.

COMMITMENT FIVE

We will endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs.

The Basis for Action

42. While the number of people affected by natural disasters fluctuates annually, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of victims of civil conflicts. These situations require emergency assistance and they point to the importance of early action to defuse tensions and of preparedness in minimizing the risk of future crises and in preventing food emergencies.

43. National and international relief operations are often the only solution for hungry people facing immediate starvation, and should continue to be a priority and be provided in an impartial and apolitical manner, with due respect to national sovereignty and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the guiding principles of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 46/182. However, emergency food assistance cannot be a basis for sustainable food security. Conflict prevention and resolution, and stepped up rehabilitation and development promotion activities, which prevent recurrence of and reduce vulnerability to food emergencies, are essential elements of food security. Emergency preparedness is a central element for minimizing the negative effects of food emergencies and famines.

Objectives and Actions

44. Objective 5.1:

To reduce demands for emergency food assistance through enhancing efforts to prevent and resolve man-made emergencies, particularly international, national and local conflicts.

To this end, governments, individually and collectively, and in partnership with all actors of civil society, will:

(a) Use appropriate international, regional and national mechanisms to prevent or reduce those situations, in particular war and civil conflict, which give rise to man-made emergencies and increase demands for emergency assistance, including food aid;

(b) Coordinate policies, actions and legal instruments and/or measures to combat terrorism and other activities contrary to human rights and human dignity;

(c) Promote the continuation of international discussions and cooperation on all aspects of anti-personnel land mines.

45. Objective 5.2:

To establish as quickly as possible prevention and preparedness strategies for LIFDCs and other countries and regions vulnerable to emergencies.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society and with international organizations where necessary, will, as appropriate:

(a) Prepare and/or maintain for each LIFDC, and other countries and regions vulnerable to emergencies, vulnerability information and mapping, drawing on, amongst others, a food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system, once established, with an analysis of the major causes of vulnerability and their consequences, making maximum use of existing data and information systems to avoid duplication of effort;

(b) Maintain, promote and establish, as quickly as possible, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other organizations, as appropriate, the preparedness strategies and mechanisms agreed upon at the ICN, including development and application of climate forecast information for surveillance and early-warning, drought, flood, other natural disasters, pest and disease alertness;

(c) Support international efforts to develop and apply climate forecast information to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency preparedness and response activities, with special efforts to create synergy and avoid duplication;

(d) Promote the development of appropriate community-based and regional surveillance systems to gather and assess information and to implement prevention and preparedness programmes.

46. Objective 5.3:

To improve and, if necessary, develop efficient and effective emergency response mechanisms at international, regional, national and local levels.

To this end, international organizations, in close cooperation with governments and civil society, as appropriate, will:

(a) Strengthen the coordination and efficiency of international emergency assistance to ensure rapid, coordinated and appropriate response, particularly by improving communications amongst the international community.

Governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

(b) Seek to ensure adequate supervision of emergency operations and involve communities, local authorities and institutions and grass-roots relief initiatives and structures in implementing emergency operations to better identify and reach populations and areas at greatest risk. Women should be fully involved in the assessment of needs and in the management and evaluation of relief operations;

(c) Pursue at local and national levels, as appropriate, adequate and cost-effective strategic emergency food security reserve policies and programmes;

(d) Promote triangular food aid operations;

(e) Protect the lives of civil populations, including humanitarian aid workers, in times of conflict;

(f) Seek to ensure that access to food, with particular attention to women-headed households, is protected during emergency situations;

(g) Consider the creation of national volunteers corps, building upon "White Helmets", as defined by UNGA Resolutions 49/139B and 50/19, and already launched by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), in order to support emergency relief and rehabilitation operations, when deemed pertinent and in accordance with the guiding principles on humanitarian assistance embodied in UNGA Resolution 46/182.

47. Objective 5.4:

To strengthen linkages between relief operations and development programmes, along with demining activities where necessary, so that they are mutually supportive and facilitate the transition from relief to development.

To this end, international organizations, governments and civil society will, as appropriate:

(a) Keep under review the standards for the nutritional adequacy of food assistance to disaster-affected populations;

(b) Ensure that emergency operations will foster the transition from relief, through recovery, to development;

(c) Prepare and pursue well-planned post-emergency rehabilitation and development programmes to re-establish the capacity of households, including those headed by women, to meet their basic needs in the long term as well as to rebuild national production capacity and return to sustainable economic development and social progress as soon as possible. Where necessary, these should include operations to remove land mines.

COMMITMENT SIX

We will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas.

The Basis for Action

48. Many developing countries need to reverse the recent neglect of investment in agriculture and rural development and mobilize sufficient investment resources to support sustainable food security and diversified rural development. A sound policy environment, in which such food-related investment can fulfil its potential, is essential. Most of the resources required for investment will be generated from domestic private and public sources. Governments should provide an economic and legal framework which promotes efficient markets that encourage private sector mobilization of savings, investment and capital formation. They should also devote an appropriate proportion of their expenditure to investments which enhance sustainable food security.

49. The international community has a key role to play in supporting the adoption of appropriate national policies and, where necessary and appropriate, in providing technical and financial assistance to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in fostering food security. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and other private financial flows have increased considerably recently and provide an important source of external resources. Official Development Assistance (ODA) has exhibited a decline in recent years. In the context of food security, ODA is of critical importance, particularly for countries and sectors left aside by other external sources of finance.

50. All partners in development, including investors and donors, should place priority on sectors of developing countries' economies relating to food security. To

this end, governments should adopt policies that promote foreign and domestic direct investment and effective use of development assistance.

51. In view of their special situation, Small Island Developing States have identified key sectors of priority which require investment so as to achieve their sustainable development.

Objectives and Actions

52. Objective 6.1:

To create the policy framework and conditions so that optimal public and private investments are encouraged in equitable and sustainable development of the food systems, rural development and human resources on the scale needed to contribute to food security.

To this end, governments, in cooperation with all actors of civil society, international and private financing institutions, and technical assistance agencies will, as appropriate:

- (a) Promote policies and measures to enhance the flow and effectiveness of investments for food security;
- (b) Give priority to human resource development and strengthen public institutions, especially in LIFDCs, including through equipping and staff training, to enhance their supportive and facilitating role in promoting increased investment in food security;
- (c) Encourage the development of public-private partnerships and other institutions in promoting socially and environmentally responsible investment and re-investment from domestic and foreign resources, and increase the participation of local communities in investment;
- (d) Strengthen cooperation, at the regional and international level, to share the costs of investments in areas of common interest, such as appropriate technology generation through collaborative research and transfer, as well as to share investment experience and best practices.

53. Objective 6.2:

To endeavour to mobilize, and optimize the use of, technical and financial resources from all sources, including debt relief, in order to raise investment in activities related to sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food production in developing countries to the levels needed to contribute to food security.

To this end, governments, in cooperation with the international community and all actors of civil society, as well as international and private financing institutions will, as appropriate:

- (a) Undertake to raise sufficient and stable funding from private and public, domestic and foreign sources to achieve and sustain food security;
- (b) Encourage investment to create infrastructures and management systems that facilitate sustainable utilization and management of water resources;
- (c) Support investments that contribute to sustainable food security and further conservation and sustainable utilization and management of natural resources, including land, water, watersheds, fisheries and forests;
- (d) Strive to secure appropriate international financial assistance for sectors related to food security, where it is needed;
- (e) Strengthen efforts towards the fulfilment of the agreed ODA target of 0.7% of GNP. In striving to promote sustainable food security, development partners should endeavour to mobilize, and optimize the use of technical and financial resources at the levels needed to contribute to this goal and should ensure that this flow of concessional funding is directed to economically and environmentally sustainable activities;
- (f) Focus ODA towards countries that have a real need for it, especially low-income countries, and enhance their capacity to utilize it effectively;
- (g) Explore new ways of mobilizing public and private financial resources for food security, *inter alia*, through the appropriate reduction of excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures and the arms trade, and investment for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements;
- (h) Promote mechanisms to mobilize domestic savings, including rural savings;
- (i) Promote mechanisms to provide access to adequate credit, including micro-credit, for men and women equally, for activities in the food sector;
- (j) Promote investment to benefit small-scale food producers, especially women, and their organizations, in food security programmes; strengthen their capacity to design and implement these programmes;
- (k) Give priority to people-centred investments in education, health and nutrition in order to promote broad-based economic growth and sustainable food security;
- (l) Identify financial, physical and technical resources available internationally and encourage the enhancement of their transfer, where appropriate, into developing

countries and countries with economies in transition while also developing an enabling environment, notably through strengthening national capacities, including human resources;

(m) Intensify the search for practical and effective solutions to debt problems of developing countries and support the recent initiatives of international financial institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank), to reduce the total external debt burden of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries;

(n) Explore the possibilities for countries to direct the funds released by debt swaps towards the achievement of food security.

COMMITMENT SEVEN

We will implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community.

The Basis for Action

54. World food security is of concern to all members of the international community because of its increasing interdependence with respect to issues such as political stability and peace, poverty eradication, prevention of and reaction to crises and disasters, environmental degradation, trade, global threats to the sustainability of food security, growing world population, trans-border population movements, and technology, research, investment, and financial cooperation.

55. National, regional and international mechanisms for political, financial and technical cooperation should be focused on the earliest possible achievement of sustainable world food security.

56. Governments have the primary responsibility for creating an economic and political environment that assures the food security of their citizens, involving for this purpose all elements of civil society. The international community, and the UN system, including FAO, as well as other agencies and bodies according to their mandates, have important contributions to offer to the goal of food security for all.

57. The multi-dimensional nature of the follow-up to the World Food Summit includes actions at the national, intergovernmental and inter-agency levels. In addition to the indispensable mobilization of national efforts, the effective implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action requires strong international cooperation and a monitoring process at the national, regional and global levels, using existing mechanisms and fora for its operation. To allow for better cooperation, the information regarding the different actors in the field of food security and agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development and their activities and resources needs to be improved, where appropriate. Setting realistic

targets and monitoring progress towards them call for reliable and relevant information and analysis which are still often unavailable at the national and international levels. For the follow-up to the World Food Summit, coordination and cooperation within the UN system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, is vital and should take into account the mandate of FAO and other relevant organizations. Bearing in mind UNGA Resolution 50/109, the outcome of the World Food Summit should be included in the follow-up to major international UN conferences and summits, including the implementation of their respective programmes of action in conformity with UNGA Resolution 50/227 and ECOSOC Resolution 1996/36, in order to promote sustainable food security for all as a fundamental element of the UN system's effort to eradicate poverty. In this context, the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action requires actions at the intergovernmental level, in particular through the CFS and at the inter-agency level through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). In the field, the representatives of all UN agencies should work within the UN resident coordinators' system to support country-level implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Objectives and Actions

58. Objective 7.1:

To adopt actions within each country's national framework to enhance food security and enable the implementation of the commitments of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

To this end, governments will, where appropriate:

- (a) Review and revise, as appropriate, their national plans, programmes and strategies with a view to achieving food security consistent with the World Food Summit commitments;
- (b) Establish or improve national mechanisms to set priorities, develop, implement and monitor the components of action for food security within designated time frames, based both on national and local needs, and provide the necessary resources for their functioning;
- (c) In collaboration with civil society, formulate and launch national Food for All Campaigns to mobilize all stakeholders at all levels of society and their resources in each country, in support of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action;
- (d) Actively encourage a greater role for, and alliances with, civil society organizations in addressing food security;
- (e) Strive to mobilize public and private resources to support community food security initiatives;

(f) Establish mechanisms to collect information on the nutritional status of all members of communities, especially the poor, women, children and members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, to monitor and improve their household food security;

(g) Complement existing national plans of action on nutrition, developed as a follow-up to the ICN, with action on relevant aspects of food security or, where necessary, develop such plans in accordance with the recommendations of this Summit and the ICN, in partnership with all actors of civil society;

(h) Plan and monitor in a coordinated manner the implementation of relevant recommendations of all UN conferences aimed at eradicating poverty and improving food security and nutrition.

59. Objective 7.2:

To improve sub-regional, regional, and international cooperation and to mobilize, and optimize the use of, available resources to support national efforts for the earliest possible achievement of sustainable world food security.

To this end, governments, in cooperation among themselves and with international institutions, using information on food insecurity and vulnerability, including mapping, will, as appropriate:

(a) Reinforce poverty eradication strategies and orient the development assistance policies of the international agencies of the UN system, with broad participation of the developing countries, so that resources are directed towards sustainable development, including agriculture for food security, and effectively contribute to the improved situation of food insecure households;

(b) Encourage relevant agencies within the UN system to initiate, *inter alia* within the framework of the ACC, consultations on the further elaboration and definition of a food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system to be developed in a coordinated manner; member countries and their institutions and other organizations, as appropriate, should be included in the development, operation and use of the system; FAO should play a catalytic role in this effort, within the framework of the ad hoc inter-agency task forces on the follow-up of the UN conferences. The results of that work should be reported to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) through the ACC;

(c) Improve the collection, through definition of common standards, and the analysis, dissemination and utilization of information and data, disaggregated *inter alia* by gender, needed to guide and monitor progress towards the achievement of food security; in this context, the contribution of NGOs is recognized;

(d) Continue, within the framework of UNGA resolutions 50/120, 50/227 and the coordinated follow-up by the UN system to the major UN conferences and summits since 1990, the review of functions and capacities of the UN system, including the

specialized agencies, programmes and funds, in their relation to food security; this review should aim at reducing duplications and filling gaps in coverage, defining the tasks of each organization within its mandate, making concrete proposals for their strengthening and for improving coordination with governments, and for avoiding duplication of work between relevant organizations, and implement these proposals as a matter of urgency;

(e) Starting in 1997, review the adequacy and effectiveness of the allocation and use of financial and human resources for action required to ensure food for all as a follow-up to the World Food Summit, and reallocate available resources accordingly, with special reference to the needs of countries facing deteriorating food security, nutrition, health and resource degradation;

(f) Review and streamline existing mechanisms, increase cooperation and the sharing of knowledge and experience among developing countries and with developed countries, and improve coordination amongst and between all partners involved in order to maximize synergy for the attainment of food security;

(g) Focus technical assistance more effectively on building-up and mobilizing national capacity, expertise and local institutions;

(h) Invite the ACC through its Chairman, the Secretary General of the UN, to ensure appropriate inter-agency coordination in accordance with UNGA Resolution 50/227 and, when considering the Chair of any ACC mechanisms for inter-agency follow-up to the World Food Summit, to recognize, in the spirit of ECOSOC Resolution 1996/36, the major role of FAO in the field of food security, within its mandate.

With clear tasks given to each within its mandate and under system-wide coordination within the framework of the coordinated follow-up to UN conferences, in accordance with UNGA Resolution 50/120, FAO and the other relevant organizations of the UN system, as well as the international finance and trade institutions and other international and regional technical assistance organizations, are invited to:

(i) On request, assist countries in reviewing and formulating national plans of action including targets, goals and timetables for achieving food security;

(j) Facilitate a coherent and coordinated UN system follow-up to the World Food Summit at the field level, through the resident coordinators, in full consultation with governments, and in coordination with international financial institutions;

(k) Provide technical assistance to member countries to facilitate implementation of food security programmes in order to meet targets established by governments;

(l) Assist in arranging partnerships for economic and technical cooperation among countries on food security;

(m) Raise the global profile of food security issues through UN system-wide advocacy and sustain the World Food Summit commitments to world food security.

In cooperation among themselves, governments and international financial institutions will:

(n) Make every effort to ensure that goals and programmes aimed at food security and poverty eradication are safeguarded in difficult times of economic transition, budget austerity and structural adjustment;

(o) Encourage the multilateral development banks to enhance their support of developing country efforts to increase food security, especially in Africa.

60. Objective 7.3:

To monitor actively the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, in coordination with relevant international institutions and, in conformity with ECOSOC Resolution 1996/36 on the follow-up to the major international UN conferences and summits, as appropriate, will:

(a) Establish, through the CFS, a timetable, procedures and standardized reporting formats, which do not duplicate similar reports to the UN, FAO and other agencies, on the national, sub-regional and regional implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action;

(b) Set out in the CFS a process for developing targets and verifiable indicators of national and global food security where they do not exist;

(c) Report to the CFS on national, sub-regional and regional implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, drawing on a food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system, once established, as an analytical aid;

(d) Invite the Secretary-General of the UN to request the ACC to report to ECOSOC in accordance with established procedures progress on the follow-up by UN agencies to the World Food Summit;

(e) Monitor through the CFS the national, sub-regional, regional and international implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, using reports from national governments, reports on UN agency follow-up and inter-agency coordination, and information from other relevant international institutions;

(f) Provide regular reports on implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action through the CFS via the FAO Council to ECOSOC;

(g) Encourage the effective participation of relevant actors of civil society in the CFS monitoring process, recognizing their critical role in enhancing food security;

(h) By 2006, undertake, in the CFS and within available resources, a major broad-based progress assessment of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and a mid-term review of achieving the target of reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015. This progress assessment and review should be in the context of a special forum of a regular session of the CFS and involve active participation from governments, relevant international organizations and actors of civil society.

61. Objective 7.4:

To clarify the content of the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, as stated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other relevant international and regional instruments, and to give particular attention to implementation and full and progressive realization of this right as a means of achieving food security for all.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

(a) Make every effort to implement the provisions of Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Covenant) and relevant provisions of other international and regional instruments;

(b) Urge States that are not yet Parties to the Covenant to adhere to the Covenant at the earliest possible time;

(c) Invite the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to give particular attention to this Plan of Action in the framework of its activities and to continue to monitor the implementation of the specific measures provided for in Article 11 of the Covenant;

(d) Invite relevant treaty bodies and appropriate specialized agencies of the UN to consider how they might contribute, within the framework of the coordinated follow-up by the UN system to the major international UN conferences and summits, including the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993, within the scope of their mandates, to the further implementation of this right;

(e) Invite the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in consultation with relevant treaty bodies, and in collaboration with relevant specialized agencies and programmes of the UN system and appropriate intergovernmental mechanisms, to better define the rights related to food in Article 11 of the Covenant and to propose ways to implement and realize these rights as a means of achieving the commitments and objectives of the World Food Summit, taking into account the possibility of formulating voluntary guidelines for food security for all.

62. Objective 7.5:

To share responsibilities in achieving food security for all so that implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action takes place at the lowest possible level at which its purpose could be best achieved.

In implementing this Plan of Action, it is recognized that:

(a) Individuals and households have a key role in decisions and actions affecting their food security. They must be enabled and encouraged to participate actively, both individually and also collectively, through producers, consumers and other organizations of civil society;

(b) Governments have the responsibility to ensure an enabling environment conducive to the achievement of food security;

(c) Regional cooperation takes advantage of geographic complementarities within regions and of economies of scale;

(d) In view of growing interdependence between nations and regions, international cooperation and solidarity between areas experiencing different levels of development are indispensable to achieving food security for all.

Notes

²In this document, "agriculture" and "agricultural" include livestock.

³References in this Plan of Action to UNCLOS, UN Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and other International Agreements, do not prejudice the position of any State with respect to signature, ratification or accession to that Convention or to such other agreements.

⁴Ibid.