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Chair: Mr. Talbot (Guyana)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 26: Agriculture development and food security (A/67/86-E/2012/71 and A/67/294)

1. **Mr. Seth** (Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) said that, according to a report by the Rome-based agencies, 870 million people were currently undernourished. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on agriculture development and food security (A/67/294), he said that food prices were likely to continue to increase, due to global growth in demand for food and biofuels, rising incomes, changing diets, and declines in yield growth for major crops.

2. Events in 2012 had elevated the importance of food security and nutrition on the international agenda, and more countries must be empowered to enhance their food security. A cluster of interrelated issues — agriculture, food security, nutrition and land degradation— had to be integrated in discussions on the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and the sustainable development goals. The Zero Hunger Challenge, launched by the Secretary-General, attempted to tackle hunger internationally by focussing on five quantifiable objectives.

3. Boosting small-scale farmers' productivity and incomes must be prioritized, through investment in agriculture, better soil, water, land and ecosystem management: and women's empowerment. Decent work and social protection were also important for eradicating hunger. Governments played a vital role, but food and nutrition security also required renewed commitment from business and industry, civil society and the United Nations. The Secretary-General's High-level Task Force on Global Food Security had played an important role in developing an action framework. Encouragingly, investment in agricultural research was increasing. International effort had improved, following the twin-track approach: addressing immediate food and nutrition needs, while boosting long-term agricultural productivity.

4. Increasing productivity sustainably in the face of climate change would require better management of resources. Biofuel production must not raise the prices of staple foods. Women smallholders continued to have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities, and closing the gender gap was vital.

5. The nexus between water, energy, food and climate change needed to be better understood, and that understanding must inform actions. Promises made at Rio+20 must be given true meaning: social, economic and environmental issues must be treated holistically; there must be institutional and policy coherence; and implementation for results at national level.

6. **Ms. Woldegiorgies** (Ethiopia) drew attention to an inaccuracy in the report: there had been no serious disturbances or food-related riots in Ethiopia. Such misrepresentation called into question the report's credibility, and the incorrect information should be removed.

7. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the report did not adequately address the conflict of interest between biofuel production and food security.

8. **Mr. Seth** (Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) said that the Secretariat would investigate and reply to the representative of Ethiopia quickly.

9. In response to the comment by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, he said that the report did not deal with biofuel-related issues in any depth but only in relation to the volatility of food prices.

10. **The Chair** invited the Committee to hold a general discussion on the item.

11. **Mr. Djacta** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that sustained funding and targeted investment were necessary to enhance world food production. To achieve global food security, the agricultural sector in developing countries could be strengthened through empowerment of indigenous peoples, rural communities, and small-scale farmers; provision of technical and financial assistance; transfer of technology; and capacity-building and exchange of knowledge.

12. The agricultural gender gap reduced productivity as well as harming women. Rural women should be empowered as agents for rural and agricultural development, food security and nutrition. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would depend largely on reducing hunger, especially in rural areas, where the majority of the world's hungry lived. A long-term response to the food crisis must include

measures to increase small producers' access to credit and other financial services, markets, secure land tenure, health care, social services, education, training, and technology. Developed countries must break the Doha Round impasse and abandon unfair subsidies and other trade-distorting measures so as to enable developing countries' agricultural sectors to flourish. Food security strategies were a national issue, although consultation with regional and international stakeholders was appropriate.

13. **Mr. Zampetti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia and Ukraine, said that sustainably addressing the food and nutrition needs of the increasing global population must remain at the top of the international agenda. It was unacceptable that 12.5 per cent of the world's population was hungry or undernourished, and that 30 per cent suffered from 'hidden hunger'. The situation in Africa, where the number of undernourished continued to increase, was particularly worrisome.

14. European Union policies stressed the agricultural sector's multiplier role and the contribution which the private sector could make to economic growth, agriculture and rural development. The European Union had contributed to the launch of two initiatives to strengthen African resilience against food crises. It was also supporting African organizations in establishing emergency humanitarian food reserves.

15. Building on Group of 20 (G-20) outcomes, it was necessary to address excessive price volatility and shocks, through such initiatives as the Agricultural Market Information System. Public action was important in creating an environment conducive to hunger reduction, with fair access to resources and services, women's empowerment, and adequate social protection systems. Economically, environmentally and socially sustainable agricultural development and land management had important mitigation potential, and should be promoted, partly through investment in research. Sustainable long-term agricultural financing mechanisms were indispensable, and agricultural financing initiatives should be strengthened. Nutrition was a vital component of sustainable agriculture, and the Scaling Up Nutrition movement was welcomed. The European Union policy framework to assist

developing countries in addressing food security challenges paid special attention to smallholders, particularly women, and to vulnerable groups in the countries furthest from achieving the MDGs. Parallel adoption of a policy on humanitarian food assistance had enhanced coordination of European Union emergency and longer-term support.

16. Good governance for food and nutrition security was vital. Countries should implement the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security created by the Committee on World Food Security. Open, rule-based trade was key, and the European Union remained committed to the Doha Development Agenda. It looked forward to working with the Secretary-General on the Zero Hunger Challenge.

17. **Mr. Piminov** (Russian Federation) said that a number of major international forums had recently identified food security as one of the most important factors underlying sustainable development. His country fully shared that assessment and believed the issue should feature prominently in the post-2015 international development agenda. Food security could not be achieved without a modern and productive agricultural sector, which played a key role in poverty reduction efforts and in generating employment, and the task of developing its potential was directly related to the search for adequate responses to the challenges posed by the global food crisis.

18. Collective measures should be taken at all levels to respond to the food crisis and to prevent its recurrence, and he was confident that the Secretary-General's Zero Hunger Challenge would provide a much-needed stimulus to mobilization efforts in that direction. He further expressed the hope that the 2013 session of the Committee on World Food Security would adopt a practical, scientifically-based and depoliticized definition of the terms "food security" and "nutrition security".

19. His country was making significant contributions towards improving global food security by developing and modernizing agricultural production, strengthening its potential as a major food producer and cooperating on ways to stabilize the global food market. It was increasing its food assistance and cooperation in developing the agricultural sectors of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia and

Africa, and was generously funding United Nations activities, including those of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme. Its contribution to the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative between 2009 and 2011 had totalled some \$US330 million.

20. A school nutrition programme in the Eurasian region had been launched to mitigate the impact of economic and social crises on vulnerable households by providing children with nutritious meals and educating them on leading healthy lifestyles. Together with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research and the World Bank, it was implementing its own initiative to expand research and development of innovative technologies associated with food security and the development of the agricultural sector, to which it would contribute \$US15 million between 2010 and 2014.

21. **Mr. Sinhaseni** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that collective food-security mechanisms were required in order to meet the challenges posed by a growing global population, projected to reach 9 billion by 2050. ASEAN had launched two initiatives aimed at ensuring long-term food security, enhancing cooperation among ASEAN nations and improving farmers' livelihoods. The ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve had also been created to cope with potential regional food shortages. Sharing current information on production, consumption and food reserves could help cushion the impact of food price volatility, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ASEAN+3) had therefore established the ASEAN Food Security Information System to complement existing regional security mechanisms. The United Nations had a significant role to play in coordinating security mechanisms, as well as in providing information and policy guidance so that Member States' policies would be attuned to global trends.

22. It was imperative to increase investment in agricultural research and development, in order to improve productive capacity, especially in developing countries. ASEAN supported public-private sector partnerships and technology transfers. Trade in food must be fair, without non-tariff barriers; and the Doha Round should be concluded.

23. **Ms. Adhikari** (Nepal) said that, while agriculture was the lifeline of Nepal's economy, many Nepalese farmers merely subsisted. Approximately 40 per cent of Nepalese children suffered from malnutrition and stunting.

24. The current three-year national plan was intended to enhance agriculture's contribution to food and nutritional security, employment generation, and poverty reduction; and to improve the balance of trade, through modernization and commercialization of the sector. However, in addition to natural phenomena related to climate change, Nepal was suffering from a rapid loss of land fertility and declining crop yields. Economic shocks, coupled with extreme poverty, aggravated food insecurity.

25. Present food insecurity—due largely to low investment, a lack of structural changes to agricultural practice, limited application of appropriate technology, and decreasing official development assistance (ODA)—should be addressed by the international community, and particularly Nepal's development partners. The Doha Round must conclude, and provide for equitable market access. The developed countries and international financial institutions should help national governments pay for social safety nets, and should make technology transfer simpler. The Istanbul Programme of Action should be implemented, and agricultural development and food security issues should be integrated into the agendas of the relevant United Nations programmes, including the framing of the sustainable development goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

26. **Ms. Look** (Chile) said that her country welcomed the important Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. Food security was closely linked to employment, which depended on economic growth and supportive social policies. The most effective way to achieve food security was by reducing poverty, strengthening economic growth and consolidating political and social stability.

27. There would be an estimated 3 billion additional mouths to feed by 2050, from a limited natural resource base. International trade would have a fundamental role to play in achieving food security, ensuring physical access to food for a balanced diet, as well as economic access through employment opportunities. It was imperative to break the Doha

Round stalemate, and to end developed countries' agricultural protectionism. A fair, rule-based multilateral trading system would promote agricultural and rural development in developing countries and contribute to international food security. Development, and the resulting increased availability of products and employment opportunities, complemented by safety nets that guaranteed food for the poorest, was the best way for Chile to achieve food security.

28. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) said that the guarantee of food security was one of the pillars of international and national economic security, and was at the top of every Government's list of priorities. In 2004, his country had adopted a national strategy aimed at guaranteeing food security, which had engendered a positive long-term trend with respect to the availability and affordability of food. Excepting grain, its per capita access to basic agricultural commodities ranked first among the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, while milk production was twice the volume achieved by other agriculturally-based economies.

29. The sustainability of food security was directly contingent on the effective functioning of the agricultural sector, which in turn was made possible by proactive Government policies. A number of successful programmes currently promoted the sustainable development of agriculture and the agro-industrial complex, including potato and vegetable cultivation, as well as fisheries, meat and milk production, and poultry farming.

30. Such comprehensive agricultural initiatives had undeniably improved the socio-economic situation of the country as a whole, while the profitability of the agro-industrial complex in particular had been multiplied by a factor of six in 2011 relative to 2005. His country enjoyed enormous agricultural export and production potential, and consequently was highly motivated to contribute to international programmes aimed at providing food to regions suffering from agricultural shortfalls. It was likewise eager to share its experience and promote close and fruitful cooperation with developing countries in the agricultural sphere, as it believed that such cooperation was essential to guaranteeing food security.

31. The practice of imposing unilateral sanctions and protectionist measures on the agricultural commodities of developing countries was unacceptable. For many

developing countries, revenues from the agricultural sector represented a substantial portion of the resources available for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. It was vital to accelerate the transfer and dissemination of agricultural technologies.

32. His delegation attached importance to the issue of strengthening the role played by international organizations in cooperating with Member States on the task of guaranteeing food security at the regional, national and international levels.

33. **Mr. Laguna** (Mexico) said that food security was a priority for Mexico as a developing country, particularly because of the global financial and economic crisis. A three-pronged approach should be taken to agricultural development and food security, focussing on provision for emergencies, structural change, and the right to food. An integrated, long-term solution must be sustainable economically, commercially, socially and environmentally and must also cover health-related aspects.

34. As president of the G-20, Mexico had established food security as a priority, with the specific aim of increasing joint public-private investment in agriculture, developing technology to increase productivity, and spurring the Agricultural Market Information System to become more transparent. It had also fostered international cooperation in agricultural research and development and facilitated dialogue on policy by organizing the Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists. It had continued work on reducing price volatility in relation to agriculture, and implemented the Los Cabos Growth and Jobs Action Plan (2012).

35. The United Nations had a vital role to play in discussions on agricultural development and food security, and in economic and financial governance, where it should act to curb excessive price volatility. His delegation supported the work of the Committee on World Food Security and specifically its facilitation of countries' evaluations of their sustainable food production. It likewise supported the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

36. **Mr. Kushneruk** (Ukraine) said that, although progress had been made towards goal 1 of the MDGs, much remained to be done. Ukraine supported G-8 and G-20 initiatives to strengthen global food governance by improving the work of relevant multilateral

institutions. The United Nations should coordinate the work of its agencies in keeping with its “Delivering as one” initiative, including at the country level.

37. A strong agricultural sector, a growing economy and effective social protection programmes were essential to poverty and food insecurity eradication. Finance for agriculture must be increased. Improved access to regional and international markets for emerging countries’ agricultural products was key to ensuring world food sustainability.

38. Agricultural development drove economic growth. Ukraine had launched a programme aimed at increasing grain production, developing logistics, and maximising the use of modern technology and financial resources. In 2009 it had become a World Food Programme donor, and had subsequently provided humanitarian assistance to countries in the Horn of Africa. Ukraine was open to the idea of playing a greater role in the international fight against malnutrition and hunger.

39. **Mr. Aksornsawad** (Thailand) said that his country suffered from floods, droughts and pest and disease outbreaks, which were aggravated by climate change and which heightened food insecurity. Food insecurity needed to be tackled from various angles. The nexus between water and other natural resources, energy, and infrastructure should be examined, and instruments to help cushion shock and build resilience should be considered. Increased investment was needed, as was technology transfer to developing countries. The international community should promote market efficiency by reducing unfair non-tariff barriers. The root causes of excessive food price volatility had to be addressed so that everyone had access to quality food.

40. Shared, reliable information on production, consumption and food reserves helped to reduce the impact of price volatility. ASEAN already had mechanisms in place, and States Members of the United Nations should enhance efforts to share information. Thailand had proposed to host the secretariat of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve, and hoped that it would serve as a model for future food security cooperation.

41. Thailand was striving to improve its infrastructure, specifically its transport, in order to become one of Asia’s main transportation, logistics, and production and distribution hubs. Connectedness

would help to create a reliable supply chain for food, which would facilitate regional and global economic growth.

42. Sustainable development could not be achieved without food security, which must be incorporated into the sustainable development goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

43. **Mr. Llorentty** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that those who suffered most from food insecurity were indigenous people and rural farmers. The Government aimed to eradicate extreme poverty by 2025, a target which reinforced the Latin America and the Caribbean without Hunger 2025 Initiative. Indigenous villagers, businesspeople, producers’ associations, cooperatives and other parties had been convened to draft a poverty-reduction plan. Extreme poverty had fallen dramatically between 2005 and 2012, largely due to the nationalization of the country’s natural resources, particularly its hydrocarbons.

44. At present, the main problems facing indigenous people and small farmers were: privatization and commodification of water, contamination by extractive industries, individual land ownership and concentration of land in the hands of landowners or mega-firms, privatization and expropriation of the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples, and single-crop farming and use of agrochemicals.

45. Indigenous peoples had lived in harmony with nature for thousands of years. They had monitored, protected and preserved native plants and seeds that would provide food for present and future generations. Quinoa, for example, an ancient, nutritious food crop, would continue to significantly contribute to world food and nutrition security.

46. **Mr. Haase** (Australia) said that, despite improvements in the supply of some commodities and the emergence of more favourable international policy settings, growth in agricultural output had declined to a mere 1.7 per cent annually. Yet agricultural production would have to increase by 60 per cent over the next 40 years in order to meet the rising demand for food. Supplies of agricultural commodities remained low and were insufficient to withstand global production shortfalls due to adverse climate events.

47. His country understood the importance of the agricultural sector and the challenges created by land degradation, climate change and reduced water

availability. Adoption of sustainable agricultural practices was a dire necessity, and consequently his Government had broadly adopted agricultural best practices, such as minimum till and the variable application of fertilizer and pesticides, with a resulting improvement in the use of inputs and better environmental outcomes. In the developing world, the use of cell phones by farmers to find the best markets for their produce was another example of the use of technology to maximize returns.

48. Increased support for research and development, in partnership with the private sector, would create the scientific knowledge required to improve productivity and to protect the environment. His country had promoted key strategic partnerships to that end.

49. A comprehensive approach to food security should include emergency assistance and longer-term protection for the most vulnerable, as well as appropriate economic and trade policies and efficient markets complementing an increased focus on agricultural production and distribution. His country's aid programme had supported a comprehensive approach to assistance by helping to address the food security challenges of the poorest, including smallholder producers in the developing world. Women in particular, as key contributors to agricultural production throughout the developing world, should be given access to new agricultural technologies and inputs.

50. With respect to market access, his country was assisting poor people to access the value chains and financial services necessary to set up viable and sustainable market enterprises. It was also supporting a growing number of social protection programmes to ensure that those most in need could have regular access to food, as well as the means to manage the risks posed by food supply shocks and high prices.

51. His Government remained committed to agricultural trade liberalization across the globe as a means of increasing returns for farmers, as well as to providing access to food supplies for all countries, particularly net food importers. As a member of the Cairns Group, it had consistently advocated against the ongoing use of production and trade-distorting subsidies, market access barriers and export subsidies in advanced developed countries.

52. **Mr. Chowdhury** (India) said that rising food prices and associated volatility were seriously

undermining efforts to mitigate hunger, poverty and malnutrition throughout the world, a situation which had been exacerbated by the global economic crisis. Recent spikes in global food prices had exposed the inherent limitations of unsustainable market practices, consumption patterns and farming methods, and a large number of poor countries, particularly in Africa, continued to live with chronic food insecurity.

53. Food waste was equal to one third of total annual global food production, and would suffice to feed the world's one billion hungry people. Similarly, unsustainable consumption patterns, emphasis on non-food crops, environmental degradation and stagnant agricultural productivity had led to a mismatch between global food supply and demand, while the flow of speculative capital into global commodity markets and an increase in futures trading in developed countries had contributed to price hikes and volatility. That situation could be corrected only by improved regulation of commodity markets.

54. In the developing world, agriculture was a question of livelihood. In his country, 70 per cent of the population depended on agriculture for a living, while two thirds of its crops were rain-fed, leaving them vulnerable to the vagaries of nature. In response, his Government had undertaken a number of measures aimed at ensuring food security and agricultural development in an integrated manner, and had implemented a national policy to improve the economic viability of farming, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, empowering small and marginal farmers, and adopting appropriate price and trade policy mechanisms.

55. His Government had committed itself to guaranteeing food security, and was considering a proposal that would furnish subsidized grains to more than 600 million people, with special provisions for women and children. Meanwhile, a public distribution system continued to provide essential commodities to the poor. A National Food Security Mission had been launched as a way of enhancing the production of rice and wheat, efforts had been made to insulate small and marginal farmers from market shocks through price support initiatives, and steps had been taken to provide crop and cattle insurance. Information on market intelligence and price analyses were provided to farmers and other stakeholders.

56. Enhancing global food security called for global action, which required improved policy coordination and coherence for food security among countries. Collective efforts should ensure greater investment and use of modern technology, as well as greater access to farm credit. In particular, a special focus was needed to empower women as critical agents of change. His country remained committed to sharing its technical expertise in order to ensure the food security of other developing countries.

57. **Mr. Al Otaibi** (Saudi Arabia) said that international efforts to develop agriculture and guarantee food security had thus far been inadequate and should be complemented with further investment and scientific research. A more comprehensive approach was needed, including an international strategy to tackle the current food crisis over the short, medium and long terms. Particular emphasis should be placed on the section on food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex).

58. Saudi Arabia had a number of programmes to ensure that every resident had access to affordable food. It was developing trade and consumption policies to ensure adequate food supplies, promoting sustainable development in the agriculture sector through the optimal use of natural resources, especially water, and encouraging the private sector to invest in countries with high agricultural potential. His country was a prominent aid provider and had donated \$500 million to the World Food Programme.

59. **Mr. Khalil** (Egypt) said that the relevant reports of the Secretary-General underscored the extent of food insecurity and the deterioration of farm land and infrastructure in the developing world. A more integrated and sustainable approach was required, including new and additional resources to help developing countries respond to the food crisis. The international community must fulfil its commitments, including the pledge of \$20 billion for food security which had been agreed at the Group of Eight Summit held in l'Aquila, Italy, in 2009. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development had acknowledged that food security and nutrition had become a pressing global challenge and reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing food security and access to adequate, safe and nutritious food for present and

future generations. The topic should be given due importance and incorporated in the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. The General Assembly's annual resolutions on agriculture development and food security, most recently resolution 66/220, had an important part to play in counteracting the neglect that had prevailed until the 2008 food crisis.

60. Because much of the land in Arab States was arid or semi-arid, the region faced difficulties in meeting the growing food needs of its population. The African continent, too, was particularly vulnerable to climate change, drought, floods and low rainfall, and that risk had been compounded by the global economic and financial crises. If global food prices remained high, the situation of Africa could only worsen. The international community should invest in rural development and tackle farming subsidies in the developed world, which prevented farmers in developing countries from competing.

61. **Mr. Yeo Sho Hor** (Singapore) said that the global economic crisis had brought to light the particular vulnerabilities of urban populations as they struggled with escalating food prices and declining household incomes. The food security issues they faced were multifaceted, and their sources of food were dependent on their purchasing power, leaving them prone to malnutrition. Therefore, while his country acknowledged the importance of increasing food production globally and of recognizing the plight of the starving, it wished to draw attention to the complexities of the food security issue in urban settings.

62. His country was a small island developing economy with few natural resources and no hinterland. As a result, food security was a primary concern, as more than 90 per cent of its food was imported and it was continually being challenged by food price and supply volatility. In response, its core strategy had been to rely on food source diversification, coupled with efforts to reduce waste.

63. His Government had established a \$20 million Food Fund through its Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority with the aim of enhancing local production of eggs, fish and vegetables, while its urban farming scheme had exploited cutting-edge farming technologies, such as vertical farming systems. Other research and development efforts included

collaboration to develop higher-yield and disease-resistant rice. His country was also committed to supporting regional food security through investments in agricultural research, promotion and setting of food safety standards and facilitation of technology transfers.

64. Food security was a key issue for the United Nations and the international community, and it was to be hoped that, with greater global partnership and cooperation between countries, Governments, academia and the private sector, coupled with investment, research and sustainable agricultural practices, the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger by 2015 and of ultimately eradicating it could be achieved.

65. **Ms. Feng Xin** (China) said that impoverished countries had been the most severely affected by the global economic crisis. Food prices remained stubbornly high and volatile, and the outlook for global food security remained grave.

66. Some 868 million people continued to live with hunger, and attainment of the Millennium Development Goal of poverty and hunger reduction remained an uphill battle. Food security had a direct bearing not only on the economies of countries and people's livelihoods, but also on global development and security. The international community should therefore take active measures to stabilize the price of bulk commodities, including food, guard against speculation and jointly safeguard global food security.

67. Countries should likewise greatly increase their investment in agriculture, while developed countries should provide assistance to developing countries in technology, finance and market access. They should also oppose trade protectionism, promote a successful conclusion to the Doha Round and demonstrate greater sincerity in matters related to agricultural subsidies in order to provide developing countries with greater market access. Finally, scientific guidance should be given for the development of bio-energy, and speculation in agricultural products should be effectively curbed.

68. China remained a developing country with a large population, and feeding over one billion people would always be a top priority for its Government. With just 9 per cent of the world's arable land, it was already feeding 20 per cent of the world's population. At the same time, the number of rural poor had been reduced

by 250 million, making China the first country to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people living in poverty.

69. Food production had been growing for nine consecutive years, which had provided vigorous guarantees for continued economic and social development. Her country actively participated in international efforts to eliminate hunger and poverty and to assist developing countries, particularly in Africa, to develop their agricultural sectors. It had always supported the work of FAO, and had contributed \$30 million to establish a trust fund. It would also soon contribute \$20 billion in credit to African countries over the next three years, with an emphasis on agriculture and infrastructure, and had provided substantial emergency food aid to the Horn of Africa. Finally, it would always stand ready to work with the international community to enhance global food security and to improve people's lives.

70. **Mr. Al-Hammadany** (Iraq) said that, because his country's agricultural sector was highly vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations, national food security policy was of paramount importance. The wars and economic embargo of the previous century had caused considerable land deterioration and infrastructure damage. The proportion of cultivated land remained low. In 2003 and 2008, special funds had been established in order to provide low-interest loans for small-scale farmers. In 2008, the Government had fixed prices for wheat, barley and rice, while giving farmers the freedom to market their own produce.

71. The cultivation of rice, new high-yield crops, cotton and corn had increased, and more resistant types of grain were being introduced. The development of a reliable irrigation system remained a major priority. A database on irrigation and water management was being created in order to harness best practices. Dams and channels were being maintained, and a national project had been developed with a view to assessing the impact of climate change. The relevant ministries were exploring ways to reduce waste and introduce non-traditional water resources such as waste recycling. In 2008, Iraq had opened the largest desalination plant of its kind in the Middle East.

72. Another important priority for Iraq was the conclusion of a water-sharing agreement with the source countries of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their tributaries. His country had long maintained that

water disputes with neighbouring States should be settled equitably in accordance with international law, for the benefit of all parties, but that had yet to become a reality.

73. **Mr. Rishchynski** (Canada) said that 870 million people were still chronically undernourished. More importantly, meaningful progress in reducing hunger globally had stalled since the food crisis of 2007-2008.

74. Addressing food insecurity required a concerted global effort, and his country had been working with other Governments, donors and stakeholders to shape the evolving global food security and nutrition agenda. Specifically, the Canadian International Development Agency had put in place a Food Security Strategy to empower the poorest and most disadvantaged by reducing vulnerabilities to food shortages, market barriers and constraints on agricultural productivity.

75. Together with other G-8 members, his country had pledged in L'Aquila in 2009 to mobilize at least \$20 billion over three years for sustainable agricultural development, and as of 2011 it had fully disbursed its pledge of \$1.18 billion. Rural women comprised 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries and as such were important agents of economic development and food security. The role of women in sustainable agricultural development was an issue warranting top priority in the post-2015 development agenda.

76. In addition, the New Alliance for Food Security, launched in the wake of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, had pledged to lift 50 million people out of poverty over the next 10 years. His country had contributed \$219 million over three years, with a particular focus on Ghana and Ethiopia. There had likewise been a determined focus on the issue of undernutrition, and Canada had been heartened by the progress of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement over the past year, including the development of a strategy to guide action. His Government had underwritten a number of global nutrition programmes, including the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger Initiative. With over 30 countries participating in the Movement, all stakeholders, from the United Nations to civil society and other development partners, should continue to work together in providing effective and coordinated support.

77. **Mr. Silberberg** (Germany) said that, for many people around the world, the right to food was purely

theoretical. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food provided practical guidance for developing effective institutional and adequate legal frameworks, establishing independent monitoring mechanisms and implementing those frameworks. His country had provided significant support for the development of those Guidelines, and it encouraged all Governments to apply them in developing their strategies, policies, programmes and activities.

78. The Committee on World Food Security was the central political platform to discuss global strategies in the fight against hunger, whose inclusiveness allowed the poor and hungry a voice through the full participation of civil society organizations. The Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition adopted by that Committee was designed to be a single reference document for policy recommendations, and would be updated in the future to include new consensus decisions of its members. His Government strongly supported improved land governance along the lines set out in the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests. The Committee should be linked with the United Nations human rights system in Geneva as regards the human right to food.

79. Agriculture played a crucial role in addressing the needs of a growing global population and was inextricably linked in developing countries with poverty eradication. Integrated and sustainable agricultural and rural development was therefore essential to the achievement of enhanced food security and the realization of the right to food.

80. However, ensuring global food security required adequate investment, both public and private. Investments in agriculture and rural areas, in infrastructure, education, adapted technologies, innovation and research were key to fighting hunger. Such investments should be planned and realized in a responsible manner, and should benefit first and foremost those who needed them most, namely small-scale rural farmers.

81. **Mr. Duffy** (Ireland) said that food insecurity was a global and persistent issue, highlighted by recurrent crises. In 2011, the situation in the Horn of Africa had been the overriding concern, while in 2012 the world's attention had shifted to the Sahel region. His country was responding to the crisis in concert with the international community with direct and immediate

assistance. However, once the emergency had passed, the vulnerabilities to similar future shocks would remain, and the combined forces of drought, conflict and high food prices would continue to impact people's food security.

82. Food insecurity manifested itself in different ways around the world, and each situation had complex and interdependent underlying causes. Therefore, addressing it required an integrated approach, incorporating interventions and strong policies from local to global levels. It was imperative that short-term relief should be part of a longer-term strategy that addressed vulnerabilities to hunger and food insecurity.

83. In response to the Hunger Task Force Report commissioned by his Government in 2008, the issue of food and nutrition security had been elevated within its aid programme. The report had identified three areas in which his country could best contribute to reducing global hunger, including boosting smallholder productivity, especially of women farmers, targeting undernutrition in infants, children and mothers, and promoting governance and leadership in order to reduce global hunger at the national and international levels. The Hunger Task Force had also called for devoting 20 per cent of the aid budget to hunger-related initiatives by 2012, a goal which had been achieved. That development had marked a significant milestone, underscoring his country's commitment to reducing global hunger.

84. Smallholder farmers, especially women, should be at the heart of any sustainable solution to global hunger, and support would be most effective if the entire food production cycle was considered. Agricultural research should be supported vigorously, and should be made accessible to smallholder farmers. Access to credit should likewise be improved, climate-smart agricultural practices should be encouraged, and ties with the private sector should be promoted.

85. When given equal rights, access to land and other critical inputs, as well as an equal say in decision-making, women were often powerful agents of change. Therefore, empowering women should be at the heart of any strategy to boost agricultural activity. However, agricultural productivity did not always translate directly into improved nutritional outcomes at the household level, and therefore the improved health and nutrition of the poorest of the poor should remain the central focus.

86. All of his country's programmes on hunger remained focused on improving nutrition and on ensuring that hunger-related programmes addressed not just quantity but quality. It actively supported the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, which had demonstrated genuine potential to improve nutritional outcomes, and had achieved some notable successes over the past two years. In order to sustain that momentum, mobilizing resources at the country and global levels was imperative in order to effectively mitigate undernutrition in the 37 member countries. All stakeholders, including those involved in health, education, water, sanitation and gender issues, should integrate the problem of nutrition into all their work.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.