



SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL BY 2020

September 4–6, 2001 ! Bonn, Germany



SUMMARY NOTE

Speaker: Professor Apolo Nsibambi, The Right Honourable Prime Minister of Uganda on behalf of H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, The President of the Republic of Uganda

Title: Sustainable Food Security for All by the Year 2020

Mr. President, Joachim Rau; Honourable Ministers; The Lady Mayor of Bonn; The Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); Distinguished Participants.

I bring warm greetings from President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda who is also the Chairman of the International Advisory Committee of IFPRI. Because of heavy national and international duties, he was unable to attend this Conference and he asked me to represent him.

Food security is access to adequate amounts of nutritious food to all people at all times. Under Vision 2020 Initiative, it is planned that there shall be sustainable food security for all by the year 2020. I am saddened to point out that 800 hundred million people are food insecure. Why are we failing to realize sustainable increased food production and distribution? Many developing countries lack a deliberate food policy. It is important for developing countries to accept our internal weaknesses before we blame external factors. Accordingly, I have initially focused my attention on the internal weaknesses of the developing countries which must be addressed. In our view, a Country which possess a deliberate food policy, must do the following:

- (1) Must know the quantity of food required to feed its people and the necessary nutritional value;
- (2) Its Ministry of Agriculture must get a fair share of the recurrent and the development budget. This share must not be less than 5% of the total budget;
- (3) Invest in water for production so that it is not dependent on rainfed agriculture which cannot stand the shock of drought;
- (4) Invest in market development and promotion;
- (5) Have an effective marketed oriented system;
- (6) Carry out Land Reform which grapple with inaccessibility of people to land, insecurity of tenure and other problems, which hinder food production;
- (7) Invest in post-harvest handling; and
- (8) Invest in an effective communication system.

Unfortunately, many developing countries lack a deliberate food policy. Worse still, developed countries which produce surplus food, readily supply their surplus food to these countries as a result of which the developing countries do not get adequate pressure to adopt deliberate food policies. The food deficit countries tend to ignore the fact that it is not possible to pursue independent food policies when they are dependent on food aid from developed countries.

Critical inhibitors of increasing food production in developing countries are attributable to the negative External Factors. These include giving high subsidies to their literate farmers whereas the same illiterate farmers of developing countries are denied similar subsidies. And thus the playing field is not level. We realize that there are significant political pressures from farmers in developed countries to maintain subsidy. However, if there is political will and proper explanation to the farmers in the developed countries, the subsidy can be phased out. This Conference should come out with a timetable for tackling this problem.

Another problem is that developed countries which have surplus food tend to dump it into developing countries through export subsidized arrangements. Consequently, developing countries lose the capacity to sell their produce locally and in the international market. This practice in turn destroys the incentive of the farmers to produce more food. Technological development and transfer is yet another issue which must be rigorously addressed.

In order to increase production, developing countries must encourage their farmers to adopt use of improved seeds and stock in order to realize increase in food production. Animal traction, use of appropriate tractor and solar energy as well as rural electrification are important tools for increasing food production on a sustainable basis.

However, in order for farmers to embrace the use of improved technology, they need guaranteed internal and external markets. It is in this light that we welcome the AGOA Act (The African Growth Opportunity Act) and the recent move by the European Union to open up its markets to elected agricultural products from developing countries. These include apple, bananas, pineapples, and fish. The challenge to the developing countries is to produce enough quantity of quality products.

The issue of credit accessibility by farmers and the impact of globalisation on trade must be expeditiously addressed if we are to increase food production on a sustainable basis. Micro finance is necessary to enable farmers acquire the new technologies for increasing food production. With regards to globalisation, it is important that rules governing world trade organisations be reviewed. For example, currently tariff and non-tariff rates of WTO favour developed countries.

I am saddened to point out that the scourge of HIV/AIDS has globally crippled the health of the labour force. President Museveni of Uganda who was transparent, was able to define the nature and the quantum of the problem of HIV/AIDS correctly to take deliberate policies, which have enabled Uganda to reduce the HIV/AIDS scourge from 35% in 1986 to fewer than 6% today. We must tackle this scourge globally by making affordable drug and by adopting other practical measures.

An illiterate population tends to be over localized and it finds it difficult in responding to the challenges of modernizing Agriculture. Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE), a measure that is enabling us to give relevant skills to the population which has to grapple with the problems of modernising Agriculture.

We have to invest heavily in conflict prevention and management so that our effort and finances may not be squandered in fighting secondary and stupid wars. We must network together in order to promote Good Governance. All these measures would enable us to create a propitious environment for producing adequate food in a sustainable manner.

Conclusion

We wish to point out that the achievement of a sustainable food security for all by the year 2020, requires radical Internal and External reforms and Leaders who possess political will to implement our cherished vision. This challenge applies to the developing and developed countries. It is my sincere hope that this Conference will come out with clear recommendations and practical strategies that will enable us to achieve a sustainable food security for all.

I thank the Government of Germany and the City of Bonn for their excellent hospitality. We are also grateful to the Organizers and the Financiers of this timely conference.

Note: The views expressed in this summary note are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by or representative of IFPRI or of the cosponsoring or supporting organizations.