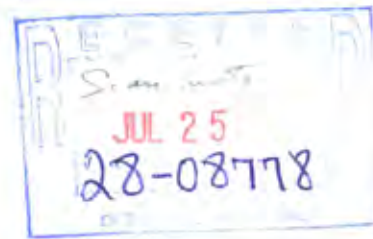


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Note to the Secretary-General

MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE FOOD AND FUEL CRISIS ✓

1. Following your introductory statement, more than sixty Member States took the floor during the General Assembly's discussion of the food and fuel crisis on 18 and 21 July, stretching the session into a second day. Member States welcomed your leadership on the food issue, and the High-Level Task Force was praised for producing the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). The CFA's analysis, its "two track approach", and recommendations on follow-up actions were widely accepted.
2. The overall tone of interventions was positive, though unsurprising differences of opinion between developing states and their richer counterparts were evident. The emphasis of statements from the floor was clearly on food, with fuel prices being mentioned mostly as a major contributing factor. The issue where the connection between food and fuel issues was most obvious was biofuels, and it was notable that both Brazil and the US presented more nuanced positions than they did at Rome, they both added new emphasis on the need to balance energy security policies with food security imperatives. Only the Marshall Islands considered high fuel prices a crisis in itself, as their own supplies will run out in two months.
3. Developing countries, particularly groups like the G-77, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Group of Small Island States, had the most to say. Member States, including Antigua (on behalf of G-77 and China), Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), India, and Indonesia made clear their view that the CFA process had not included enough consultation with Member States. Bangladesh, for example, wondered aloud whether a document that did not reflect the views of least developed countries could really address their troubles. LDCs also felt the CFA should emphasize the need for more ODA, particularly in agriculture, and include more specific suggestions for securing the necessary funding.
4. Traditional development and humanitarian donors welcomed the CFA with more enthusiasm, and were very much in tune with its recommendations for action. Many, such as the US and Japan, noted the financial contributions they had made in responding to the crisis, and recognized the need to make more. Others, like France and Russia, emphasized the importance of policy changes in areas like subsidies and biofuels, much along the lines of the G8 Leaders' Statement on the Global Food Crisis, which had been issued two weeks earlier. Encouragingly, they also noted the long-term nature of the crisis and committed themselves to remaining engaged for the foreseeable future.
5. Many of the major sub-themes of the debate reflected other issues covered in the CFA. Developing states such as Egypt and Libya emphasized the impact of speculation more explicitly than the CFA does, and were more strident in their calls to rich countries to alter their trade and agricultural subsidy policies. Pakistan, India, and Colombia, for example, stressed the need for more North-South technology transfers and emphasized the need for assistance with the balance of payment problems resulting from the food and fuel price spikes. Finally, there was broad support for the proposal of making the food issue central to the discussions of the upcoming session of the General Assembly.

Enclosure

John Holmes
24 July 2008

John Holmes
John Holmes

Rec'd. at 7:18 p.m.
on Monday, 4 August
2008
SG OFFICE #1282

Meeting of the General Assembly on the Food and Fuel Crisis 18 July 2008

Summary of Discussion

The President of the General Assembly, said the alarming increase in food and oil prices had been compounded by the unpredictable effects of climate change and the depressed world economy. Recent reports indicated that the crisis had reduced GDP by 40-50 percent in some places and severely weakening the economies of up to 75 developing countries, slowing growth and raising inflation and unemployment rates for many. He indicated that a coherent and coordinated response was necessary with the United Nations system playing a central role.

He described the CFA as having two key objectives, including meeting the needs of vulnerable populations and building long-term global food security. To achieve that, the Secretary-General had called on the international community to provide \$25 billion per year to support those goals. Currently, the amount raised was well short of what was needed annually. Donors and the multilateral system must do more.

He said that the GA should provide overall policy direction through such initiatives as financing for development, the MDG process and the overall UN reform agenda. He said that food and energy security should be a focus of the 63rd session of the GA. Member States should adopt a resolution calling for immediate and concerted global action.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations described the work of the HLTF and identified three critical challenges: realizing the Millennium Goals, addressing climate change and responding to the global food and energy crises. He said these issues require the sustained attention of Governments, donors, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector for years to come. He noted that leaders at the Group of Eight (G-8) Summit of the world's richest countries had made commitments to tackle climate change, the Millennium Goals and the food and energy crises while the Economic and Social Council, in its recent Ministerial Declaration, had reiterated the need for a comprehensive response from the international community. He noted the European Commission proposed to provide a special \$1.5 billion rapid-response facility for the food crisis, with those funds going to the countries most in need.

Calling for a Global Partnership for Food to help attain the Millennium Goal on reducing poverty and hunger, he said it would feature Governments at its centre. It should be guided by the Comprehensive Framework for Action developed by the High-Level Task Force and identified a series of crucial steps including fairness in trade, increased investment in agriculture, reduction of agricultural subsidies, minimizing export restrictions, reconsideration of biofuels, and rapid conclusion of the Doha Round. He said that \$25-40 billion was required annually to achieve the outcomes of the CFA.

Honduras commended the work of the HLTF and said that tackling the challenges of climate change and food insecurity would require the world to work together. Those with the greatest means must help those with less in addressing those issues on a global scale and bridging the gulf between both so that all countries could do more. Trade must be reformed, markets opened, and trade barriers and subsidies dropped. Solidarity must govern relations between all the world's peoples and regions.

The **Dominican Republic** said that CFA provided a direction as to what measures were needed to address the crises. However, further funding mechanisms for implementation were required. A global oil solidarity fund should be established and administered by United Nations agencies. Nations with \$6,000 or less per capita annual income should form a solidarity coalition and present a declaration to oil producers. Emphasis should also be placed on supporting investments in activities to achieve the diversification of energy resources and the development of renewable energy sources.

El Salvador said that it had already begun implementing, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, a number of programmes to tackle the various challenges arising from the global food and energy crises.

Antigua and Barbuda (G77) said that developing countries and China, said he was pleased to note the attention given to the current food crisis but concerned about the financial implications of the Comprehensive Framework for Action. The document correctly recognized the considerable financial implications of the crisis, but the High-Level Task Force only urged donor countries to increase official development assistance for food aid, thereby inviting a reallocation of existing assistance. At the same time, the Task Force called on developing countries to allocate additional budgetary resources for social protection systems at a time when their national budgets were under very significant strain. He said that the G77 did not have enough time to consider the document fully, but that it should remain a “living framework” that would allow for wider governmental and societal input, acceptance and approval towards urgent action, involvement and transparency. Technology transfer should be highlighted more prominently.

France (on behalf of the EU) said that partnership should include both a political component to decide on strengthening international coordination between all relevant actors and a financial component to decide on scaling up financing in the fight against food insecurity. The Comprehensive Framework should serve as the basis for an “international strategy for food security”. Expressing support for the establishment of an international partnership to facilitate dialogue, coordination and mobilization for food security, he called for the reform of sectoral policies in such areas as trade and tax. There was also a need to develop strategy mechanisms and approaches at the national, regional and international levels. Emergency responses to humanitarian situations must fit into long-term development thinking. He said the EU would promote an agreement at the Doha Round that would create an international trade environment supportive of small producers in developing countries. It would also promote reform of FAO so that the synergies of the three Rome-based United Nations agencies allowed for greater effectiveness in addressing the food crisis.

Ethiopia, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said the revised version of the Comprehensive Framework for Action was a concrete testimony to the continued efforts of the United Nations system, and the Bretton Woods organizations to respond to the global food crisis in a coordinated manner. He said that a lack of long-term investment in that sector had been a major factor in plunging African countries into economic turmoil. For that reason, leaders at the recent African Union Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh had adopted a declaration calling for a global partnership to deal with the causes and repercussions of the food crisis.

Dominica (on behalf of CARICOM), “Noted” the CFA, and that CARICOM countries were still studying it. Rising food costs had already sparked protests in the Caribbean region, prompting national and regional responses. However, the complex problems were global and lay beyond the control of the small Caribbean States. CARICOM, therefore, called on the international community to take urgent and collective action to address the food crisis, including its structural causes. Such action should increase global food production and investment in agriculture, reduce the negative effects of speculative activity, transform the global trade regime, and ensure greater sustainability in the production of biofuels. Dominica joined others in the call make food issues a major focus of next GA.

Tonga (on behalf of pacific small island states) commended the SG’s leadership, especially his support changing structures, helping small holders, eliminating trade and taxation, and focusing on research and development. Pacific small-island developing States, which were threatened by global warming and rising seas, also depended heavily on imported food. Increased research in food production and adaptation measures was a priority for the region. Pacific small islands were the most vulnerable to the food and energy crises. For example, urgent international action was taken; the Marshall Islands would be without energy in early September 2008. Energy prices had placed staple foods out of reach for many and transportation and commerce very difficult. These problems needed to be addressed at high levels. The help of the UN, Donors and others was needed to help secure more affordable sources of energy, including alternative energy. Tonga looked forward to working closely with the High Level Task Force and appreciated the CFA’s simultaneous approach to long term and short term needs.

New Zealand (on behalf Canada and Australia) said the world faced multiple unprecedented challenges, threatening the progress made toward achieving the MDGs. The G8’s recent statement on the food crisis was welcome, especially its focus on improving agricultural productivity. Doha round’s successful conclusion would improve trade and food flows. CANZ supported strongly the HLTF and welcomed the CFA, in particular its two-track approach. The key would be in implementing the CFA, and the CANZ were studying the document to see what should be prioritized. The Secretary-General may wish to use a model like avian flu task force for implementing the CFA. In the meantime, all countries were encouraged to put in place appropriate measures. Resources dedicated to responding to food and fuel crisis needed to be used to maximum effect. States should avoid establishing food export restrictions and untargeted food subsidies, and remove restrictions on the export of food for humanitarian purposes.

Bangladesh (on behalf of Least Developed Countries) Many factors lay behind the current crisis: speculation; bio fuels; and high energy costs all played roles. High fuel costs contributed to financial difficulties, meaning that LDCs needed help with balance of payments. HLTF’s CFA still being examined, but some issues were already clear. The CFA contained a “menu of actions” to assist those in need had been suggested but there were no concrete recommendations on how to finance implementation of measures by countries that were also constrained in terms of resources. LDCs were hardest hit by the global crises but their particular concerns had not

been addressed. The importance of ODA and foreign direct investment in stimulating and sustaining agricultural production was not properly reflected in the CFA. ODA for agriculture and research had dropped to woeful lows. Trade reforms to be addressed at the Doha Round should receive more attention, as should issues of South-South cooperation. A global food bank and an international food fund should be established to reduce volatility in food prices in the global market and provide hedging against shortfalls and price shocks.

Belarus said that primary responsibility for the response to this crisis, which was global and threatened mankind, lay with developed states. Belarus reiterated its appeal to all to help, noting the positive contributions of FAO and WFP. The CFA recognized the various threats posed by the crisis, so its dual-track approach was logical. Implementation, now the priority, would cost \$25 to \$40 billion per year, and the CFA called for these funds to be additional and focused on agricultural development. The outcome of the recent G8 meeting, including the group's intention to remain engaged on the issue was positive. Belarus noted the letter of 19 June to the President of the GA from Chile, Egypt and Indonesia, and joined its call to place food issues high on agenda of the 63rd General Assembly.

Egypt opined that international community's consideration of the current global food crisis should start by admitting that the international early warning system was not working properly. There was an urgent need for a "global partnership" to deal with the causes and effects of the current food and energy crises for both developing and developed countries. The crises called for an international dialogue based on common interests and mutual interdependence, with a view to establishing an international code of conduct that addressed the current expansion in the production of biofuels as an alternative source of energy.

Algeria supported both the HLTF and its CFA. The food crisis had been exacerbated by speculation, so a comprehensive solution would require structural changes within the global economy. Contrary to the claims of some Member States, rising energy costs were not the main cause of the rise in food prices. Indeed, the rise in food prices had far exceeded those of oil over the past six years. Instead, the root cause of the food crisis could be found in the drop in production by developing countries as a result of the agricultural policies they had followed in conformity with the "severe doctrine" of comparative advantage. In particular, the international community must provide the support necessary for the poorest countries to have the possibility to feed themselves through their own agricultural production.

The Philippines commented that the SG and the HLTF were to be commended for producing the CFA, a very strong document, in the shortest possible time. The "unparalleled speed" was "incontrovertible proof" of the UN's dedication and ability to respond quickly. The current crisis had come about through a confluence of difficult circumstances, one of which was. According to FAO's intervention at ECOSOC's humanitarian segment was that that demand now outstrips supply. For the Philippines, immediate action meant implementing a Rice Self-Sufficiency Plan that would up output to 19.8 million metric tons by 2010. Such an achievement would require bilateral assistance to provide the necessary funding for research and development, infrastructure, technology and education. On the international level, it would make

“a world of difference” if the GA the General Assembly implemented the proposals contained in the CFA.

China appreciated the measures taken by SG, and supported the HLTF’s efforts. Food was vital to human survival and had a direct impact on the whole world’s development and security. Developing countries were the hardest hit by the food crisis, which had caused social unrest in some cases. The crisis was not conducive to lasting peace and common prosperity. Though the causes were complex, the world did not lack the means to solve the food problem. Recently there had been an argument stressing the “responsibility of big developing countries”, which “blamed” their development for worldwide food-price rises. That did not tally with the facts, nor was it a constructive attitude towards solving the problem; China urged every country to approach the crisis from a strategic perspective by putting it on top of their national development agenda. China closed by emphasizing the importance it placed on agriculture, noting that it exports 8 million tones of food annually.

Japan appreciated the leadership of SG, BWIs, and the CFA, which was an important foundation for action, were appreciated. Japan hoped the CFA would translate into country-level implementation plans. As host of both TICAD IV and the G-8 Summit this year, Japan had made every effort to increase the synergies between those international groups and the United Nations system. TICAD’s Yokohama Action Plan emphasized strengthening agricultural capacity in Africa and financing small-scale water management schemes to achieve food security and alleviate poverty, he said. G8 leaders had renewed their commitment to assist those suffering from food insecurity or hunger. To that end, it was imperative that export restrictions be removed. Improvements in irrigation, transportation and storage infrastructure should also be supported. With the will of the international community to tackle the food crisis confirmed, it was now time for more concrete actions and follow-up, which should be coordinated by the UN.

Croatia joined others in praising the SG and HLTF for actions taken in response to the crisis and welcomed the CFA. Important next steps were building partnerships with NGOs and the private sector. Increased investment in agricultural development would be the most helpful step in long term, but short-term action was needed to save lives. Croatia would welcome a successful conclusion of the Doha round.

Brazil noted that the HLTF, under John Holmes’ leadership, had produced the very useful CFA, which was “a thorough analysis and set of actions” for tackling the food and fuel crisis. Deep-seated distortions plaguing the world farming trade were among the driving factors, as poor farmers in developing countries, already unable to compete on local and world markets because of the developed world’s subsidized exports, now faced rising cost of farming inputs. The production of food and renewable sources of clean energy could be harmonized, she went on to say that biofuels derived from non-cereal crops represented a better source of income for farmers and it could be an important tool in fighting climate change. Sustainable land management, increased investments and official development assistance directed to the agricultural sector, capacity-building, technology transfer and market access would be important elements in overcoming the food crisis. In addition, biofuels could provide an opportunity for countries with a comparative advantage in feedstock production. Brazil would hold a conference to explore the possibilities in November.

Colombia

Thanked the Secretary-General for leading the response to the food crisis. They commended the CFA and valued its integral character, stressing the necessity to increase international assistance to respond to immediate needs. Colombia called for a reduction of imbalances and distortions in the multilateral trading system, as well as an increase of agricultural production in developing countries. Countries should also face the situation created by energy supply/demand dynamics, which is reflected in the price of fertilizers. Renewable energy seemed to be a viable alternative and could increase energy security at the national and international levels. They stressed the importance of avoiding a generalized reduction of biofuels (which absorbs less than 0.07% of global food production) and argued that the specific conditions of each producing country had to be taken into account. They argued that, in Colombia, the production of biofuels had not lead to a decrease in food production, reiterating that biofuels production was part of the solution to energy security and sustainable development. They stated that the CFA was limited to the issue of biofuels and did not include broad guidelines on global energy policy. They would like to see more ambitious actions in the general context of a global energy crisis. They stated that they would conduct a detailed assessment of the guidelines contained in the CFA.

Thailand expressed concern regarding high energy prices – especially the cost of fuel. Thailand stated that more information would be useful on the impact of speculation on prices of food and fuel. They noted that the country was not a net-importer, but agreed that steps should be taken to ease the burden on countries which were net-importers.

Pakistan noted that the triple challenge (food, fuel, and finance) would have a large affect on achieving the MDGs. Neglect of agriculture, bad trade policies, speculation, biofuels and climate change all contributed to the current crisis. The international community should aim to enlarge production and address the structural issues. He noted the need for greater interaction of HLTF with Member States and that Member States could provide periodic review of the CFA implementation. Pakistan would provide further comments at a later opportunity. He supported the proposal that food should be main theme of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly. Speculators were also part of the problem along with poor security situations in oil exporting countries. He proposed that there should be legislation to curb speculation on food and fuel. It was important for the IMF to provide balance of payment support to countries in need. He noted that he was discouraged by shrinking levels of ODA toward agriculture. Finally, he noted that financing and technology were the most needed and that the UN should take the lead in responding to the crisis.

Chile reminded all present that Egypt, Indonesia, and Chile called for the general debate of 63rd General Assembly to focus on the food crisis and sustainable development. He agreed that the HLTF was an important step to tackle the crisis and thanked the HLTF for the CFA. He noted that he would have preferred that the CFA made clearer reference to causal relationship between subsidies and trade distorting practices and the current food crisis. He noted that high oil prices had encouraged conservation and development of alternative/renewable energy sources and that Chile imported 75% of its energy. His government was working to diversify Chile's energy matrix. He expressed concern about speculation and noted that the problem was not supply, but access to food. Boosts to agriculture were needed that required research, access to inputs, and

new technology. He encouraged elimination of all agricultural subsidies and trade distorting subsidies that were hurting the developing world and stated that the Doha round should include a discussion on the rise in food prices.

Indonesia the representative congratulated the SG on the presentation of the CFA and aligned with the G77 statement. She called on the international community to take immediate action to address the food crisis. She noted that the GA should take leadership to address this crisis and that it required massive investment and a global partnership for agricultural revitalization. Additionally, response would require: increased flow of investment, transfer of technology and mainstreaming of the agricultural sector. The CFA provided an outline for supporting agriculture at the country level, she noted, and a framework for global partnership could be established. She noted the importance of elaboration on implementation and on partnerships. The CFA was silent on costs of carrying out the menu of actions and projection of costs would provide valuable insights. Follow-up and monitoring systems would be needed. It would be highly valuable to establish targets, time frames and a monitoring system. The GA can play a leading role to monitor and evaluate the global efforts to work toward food security. There was a need to develop a better monitoring system that could also act as early warning in the future. Egypt, Indonesia, and Chile proposed devoting the 63rd GA session to food. She also noted the importance of ASEAN food security reserves and that it may be useful to explore emergency stocks at the global level.

Ghana welcomed the CFA and commended the HLTF. He was particularly pleased at the elaboration on tools and actions at the country level in the revised version of the CFA. The diverse compilation of the HLTF represented the comprehensiveness of the global issue. Global food and nutrition security should redefine the global partnerships. He states that governments must be allowed the policy space to make decisions that work for their country. For example, he noted the decisions in Malawi that led to boosts in agricultural production. He noted that countries must base actions on national priorities. The CFA would provide a useful backdrop to the upcoming summits on food. Within agreed frameworks, such as NEPAD, he urged all to continue conversations on the food crisis.

Ecuador appreciated the flexible and holistic approach of the CFA, which would make it possible for each country to use it toward their individual needs. Due to short time, they had not completed a detailed analysis of the CFA. He noted that agricultural subsidies have given rise to grave market distortions and noted the need for equitable conclusion to the Doha Round. He highlighted previous declarations, including the Managua Declaration on sovereignty and food security. He noted that Ecuador was one of 12 mega-diverse countries in the world and that his government had developed a comprehensive strategy and was in the process of implementing the national plan to stimulate production. Ecuador hoped to create its own food reserve. He noted that right to food was a responsibility of the international community, not just markets. It was imperative, he noted, to work together toward a new development ethic.

Ukraine thanked the SG for his statement to the General Assembly and for CFA. He expressed support for the proposal of holding the 63rd GA session on food. Ukraine was providing humanitarian supplies to countries in need. Mechanisms in the CFA should be carried out to be

effective, transparent, and less bureaucratic. He stated that work was needed at all levels within the UN framework to reduce hunger and poverty in the world.

Panama hailed the initiatives to address the current crisis and focused on fuel price rises. They noted causes of high oil prices as changes in consumption patterns, weakened dollar, and conflict in oil exporting areas. Panama stressed the need for affordable, clean and renewable energy.

Namibia thanked the SG for the CFA and associated the country with the G77 and the African Group statements. The food crisis was worsened by high energy prices and weather and could turn in to a security problem. Namibia – as importer of both food and fuel – has been hit hard. Local production has been impacted by weather. Domestically, this year, Namibia would produce 50% of needed food stocks. The GA should call on governments to scale up investment in agriculture and production and should also look in to food hoarding and export restrictions. Within Namibia, the government has carried out national programs aimed to boost production, improve irrigation and construction of storage facilities, subsidize agricultural inputs, and ensure access to farming extension services. He noted that the international community should address the impact of speculators on commodity markets and that the crisis was a result of man-made causes.

Morocco welcomed the SG for his briefing, and, noting the broad basis of the crisis, stressed the importance of coordinating within the UN family. He highlighted the triple threat and that South would be most affected by these threats. He quoted elements of the CFA and noted the need for massive investment in food and water. He asked for significant reduction/elimination of agricultural subsidies and stated that the UN and IFI's should support vulnerable countries and regions. He also called for the reversal of the trend of lowering ODA, especially for agricultural. He commended the outcome of the G8 Summit in regard to food. He stressed the need for social safety net programs in countries.

Uruguay aligned itself with the G77 statement and welcomed CFA of the HLTF. He stressed the importance of keeping the Member States informed and involved in the process. He noted that the CFA contained important policy guidelines and actions and Uruguay valued its contribution. He called for the international community to correct distortions in agricultural trade and work toward a successful conclusion of the Doha round in establishing a fairer, more open and efficient global system, particularly around agriculture. He noted that technology transfer and sustainability initiatives were essential. He stated that production of bioenergy had benefits and risks – research and technical assistance were needed to make the most of the benefits while not compromising food security.

Yemen noted the crisis affected progress toward the MDGs and welcomed the HLTF to promote a unified and comprehensive response. Yemen had embarked on reforms and the development of a poverty reduction strategy with the hope for support of this strategy as they work toward achieving the MDGs. He extended sincere thanks and appreciation to all who supported development in Yemen.

India suggested it was appropriate to deal with the food and energy crisis together. He shared preliminary comments on CFA. The CFA, he noted, represented the consensus view of the UN

system but included minimum, if any at all, contributions from the Member States. He stated that the Member States were being asked to implement something that they did not help to create. The contents of the CFA would be easier to implement if developed with Member States, however, he was pleased that it called for ongoing consultation with Member States and that there were a range of actions from which countries could choose. He stated that parts of the CFA continued to make recommendations that countries enact actions that resulted in the food crisis in the first place. He noted the need for more detail on implementation and for greater pressure to reduce subsidies. He thought that issue of biofuels had been hidden, for example food based biofuels vs. non-food based were not discussed. He stated that increased consumption in developing countries did not contribute to higher food prices, rather biofuels production was a main cause. He noted that the CFA was missing reference to technology which was crucial to enhanced production. He stated that CGIAR must be supported. The CFA analysis of causes was not optimal, therefore recommendations are not optimal. He did, however, support parts of the CFA which outlined school feeding, safety net programs, and rural and smallholder farmer investment. Despite shortcomings, he noted, at least the CFA attempted to address the food crisis – no such effort existed on the energy crisis. He noted that it was time to take concerted global action. India would have record harvests in 2008 and is working toward self-sufficiency.

Norway stated that interventions and actions should be looked at in the bigger picture. Norway applauded the efforts of Kofi Annan in establishing AGRA. They noted that the private sector had to play a central role. Also, land tenure and property rights should be considered. Norway thanked the SG on leadership to develop concrete measures and welcomed the CFA and was committed to playing an active role in the response.

Congo stated that the food crisis had dealt a fatal blow to fragile economies and social cohesion. He was concerned about the “triple challenge” and noted that this crisis was different than previous crises and had various causes. He thanked the SG and the HLTF for sharing the CFA with Member States. The CFA took account of a multi-dimensional approach and catered to the need to be implemented flexibly. He noted the importance of supporting the poorest countries and of supporting WFP in responding to the crisis. He welcomed actions of countries to support increased food aid, for example the United States, Japan, and Saudi Arabia. He noted the establishment within the African Development Bank of a mechanism to provide access to fertilizer. It was important, he noted, to balance between food security and energy strategy. This was an opportunity to restore agriculture as a priority.

Cape Verde thanked the SG and the HLTF and noted that the world was facing global challenges that threatened security. The CFA should be taken as a common strategy, he stated. It was crucial to strengthen political will to ensure that the actions in the CFA would be implemented around the world, with consideration of the national context. There was opportunity to make positive changes in the world order and support the agriculture sector, particularly in Africa. He noted that the possibility to achieve the MDGs was diminishing, and called for countries to meet their 0.7% commitment. Technology transfer and investment in infrastructure were urgent needs and completion of the Doha round and forgiveness of debt were complementary elements. Cape Verde greatly depended on oil imports and food commodities and price increases have deeply affected their economy, as does climate change. Cape Verde supported the proposal of focusing the 63rd GA session on food.

Costa Rica thanked the PGA and the SG and endorsed the statement by Honduras and the G77. He stated that the unprecedented challenge required novel solutions which would increase productivity and enhance of agricultural outputs. He was concerned by the twin challenge of energy and food price crises, and by biofuel production. He noted that there would be no easy solution and new displays of solidarity must guide the UN. The HLTF was commended in the development of the CFA. Costa Rica called for the UN target toward development assistance – last year only four member countries of the development assistance committee exceeded the 0.7% commitment. The world would need to move toward new targets and new goals, he stressed.

Nicaragua expressed support for the SG for determining causes and proposing solutions and aligned with G77 and Honduras statements. The delegation was analyzing CFA in a detailed manner, and agreed that the crisis was structural. He noted that the CFA should aim to reduce the existing gaps between humanitarian assistance and development assistance. He was concerned about the amount of time needed to study the impact of biofuels on food security and stated that it was inhuman to plant food to fuel machines and not humans. Nicaragua reasserted the need to eliminate trade distortions and urged developed countries to change wasteful consumption patterns. Instead of focusing on how to produce more, he stated that there was a need to think about how to promote conservation and reduce consumption.

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya noted that dealing with the food and fuel crisis in the GA allowed for a discussion of various viewpoints and that the CFA provided an opportunity to discuss and interact to share points of view. He stated that sustainable development was the common framework to address the challenge and expressed concern about the decline in agricultural investment. He stated that the rise in energy costs was not a significant cause of the high food prices and highlighted that investment in agriculture was a principal tool to address the food crisis. He stressed that developing countries needed access to technology for agriculture. He compared the amount of money spent on arms to the significantly lower amount needed for food security. He noted the importance of coordinating efforts at national, regional, and international levels and that the focus should be on building national capacities. Libya was a food importing countries and import fees and tariffs on food had been abolished. He noted the importance of regional complementarity and asked that the international community deal with this honestly and not in a political manner.

Russian Federation noted that large countries could mostly feed themselves, so the food crisis would not be as difficult for these nations. He stated that the abrupt shift to production of biofuels was a major cause of the crisis and subsequent export restrictions exacerbated the problem. There was now stagnation in agriculture in many developing countries. He highlighted the need for a two track response – humanitarian and longer-term. He urged for a careful approach to GMOs which were promising for production. He noted the need for a wide ranging global partnership on food with the coordinator role played by the UN. In Russia, he noted that they had maximized stepping up food production and infrastructure investment. He highlighted that Russia used to be one of highest grain producers and they were working toward this again. He also noted Russia's interest in contributing to agricultural research. He stated that FAO should have central role. At G8 summit, Russia proposed a number of ideas, including a meeting

of G8 agricultural ministers. Also, he noted the proposal to host a world grain summit in Moscow in 2009 so that high-level participants, international organizations, and major producers could discuss measures regarding grains, including establishing virtual grain reserves.

Tunisia thanked the President of the General Assembly for organizing a GA meeting on the food and energy crisis and agreed that coordinated approach and integrated response to the crisis was necessary. He raised the question of funding and mobilization of resources and said that in view of the urgency of the situation, his delegation would propose the use of existing mechanisms. In that regard, he mentioned the appeal of 28 April 2008 by the President of Tunisia for countries to contribute collectively to the fight to end world hunger by allocating one dollar per barrel of oil to the Global Solidarity Fund created before 2002 through a GA resolution. He also alluded to a UNDP trust fund (an existing legal framework) to support human development towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals notably reduction of poverty, access to potable water, education, health and social services.

Vietnam thanked the GA President for convening the meeting on food and energy crisis and commended the Secretary-General's initiative to establish the high level task force and for promoting a unified response to the crisis through the CFA. The document should expand its coverage of soaring oil price which he said was the main and direct cause of the food crisis. He said that his government had taken emergency measures to ensure sufficient rice supply for longer term security for which he believed the CFA would serve essential input. He also added that his government would continue to intensify measures to increase agricultural production through research and development, improvement of rice varieties, provide farmers with fertilizers, technical assistance, irrigation networks, storage and transport facilities. He proposed a UN comprehensive study on the energy crisis to produce a set of policy measures at the national, regional and global levels, similar to the CFA on food crisis.

Cuba welcomed the debate on food and energy crisis and thanked the Secretary-General for his briefing. He stated that the food crisis was part of a serious structural crisis of the international economy. He said that there was enough food in the world but the developed countries, by imposing trade liberalization, trade rules to South, have ruined the small farmers transforming them into net food importers. He called on the North to eliminate agricultural subsidies, unjust trade rules, price manipulation, speculation, manipulation of distribution channels including control of transport, genetics and production of fertilizers and pesticides. He added that non-compliance to ODA, the lack of transfer of technology and war games also contributed to the crisis. The government of Cuba would study the CFA further.

Saudi Arabia thanked the GA President for convening the meeting and the Secretary-General for his briefing on the food and energy crisis. Saudi Arabia was working to stabilize the world energy markets and economic development of developing countries to promote global prosperity: it has earmarked US\$1 billion to help poorest countries; devoted US\$500 million for preferential terms toward developing countries, contributed \$500million to the WFP to tackle food crisis, among others. He urged to continue to revising policies to attract investments in the agricultural sector.

United States expressed appreciation for the SG's briefing, and establishment of the HLTF which he said could help ensure a timely, comprehensive UN system response. He noted the important steps taken by the international community at the Rome conference in June and said that it reflected international consensus on the factors contributing to increased food prices. The global food crisis required a multi-tiered approach – both immediate emergency assistance and long term actions. Pres. Bush requested \$770 million in additional food related assistance from Congress in May 2008, he added. He also said that with other food assistance programs in place, the US would spend nearly US\$5 billion in 2008 and 2009 to fight world hunger. The US would pursue a three- prong approach to assist countries most in need i.e., provide humanitarian assistance, support agricultural productivity and development and promote trade liberalization and increased access to advance agricultural technologies, he further added. He said the US would encourage the WTO members to conclude the Doha round this year and to lift restrictions on agricultural exports, expand research and promote science- based regulations and adoption of technology and biotechnology. The US would also collaborate with the UN system and the G8 and reaffirmed its shared interest on promoting energy security and to ensure compatibility of sustainable biofuels policies with food security through accelerated development of sustainable second generation biofuels from nonfood plant materials.

Marshall Islands expressed a need for immediate and urgent assistance. He said that their fuel supply would be exhausted by September. President Litokwa Tomeing declared a state of emergency on 2 July because of rising fuel and food crisis. He added that energy price shocks had increased the cost of their basic food staple beyond reach of its population and had crippled transport of basic necessities and medical care. He appealed for assistance from all member states, bilateral partners, the Secretary General, United Nations system and agencies and said that his country was in the front line of this crisis.

Malaysia commended the GA President for his initiative and thanked the Secretary-General for his briefing on the CFA. He said that to effectively address the crisis, 1) conceptual clarity, 2) evidence and, 3) will to action. The food and fuel crisis were an offshoot of unattained promises of sustainable development. Evidence of both crises were increasing demand, supply constraints and speculation. He added that evidence of speculation was based on a recent UNCTAD paper which mentioned a 32 percent increase in the volume of globally traded grains and futures compared to last year. Increases were likely to be linked to the global financial turmoil (caused by sub-prime crisis) with speculators reorienting towards commodities although more evidence on that was needed. His delegation would analyze the CFA but noted that the for the CFA to be comprehensive, the operational aspect must be in some way “married” to funding. In addition, an evaluation framework must be built into the implementation and evolution. He said that they looked forward to interaction with the HLTF.

Venezuela wondered whether the food crisis was momentary or was an outcome of a model capitalist structure. At the root of the food crisis were 1) geopolitical factors in energy and food markets 2) vulnerability of those markets to speculative action of public and private actors. He reiterated the statement made by Venezuela's authorities during the Summit of Heads of government in Managua in May 2008, and the PETROCARIBE summit held in Maracaibo on July 12, 2008, identifying the crisis of the capitalist model as being the structural cause of both the food crisis and the global energy problems.

Republic of Korea commended the President of the General Assembly for convening the meeting and thanked the Secretary General for his remarks and HLTF for their tireless effort. A triple challenge that posed a threat to global stability and growth he pointed out the need for urgent, coordinated and collective international response. He stated that his government welcomed and supported the CFA and believed that it would serve as a valuable guideline to overcome the crisis. In order to better implement the CFA, there must be consensus among stakeholders on issues such as bio-fuel, export restriction, reform of financial systems, speculative investment, GMOs, food assistance and procurement. He added that the global food crisis, if handled properly could be an opportunity to revitalize the agricultural infrastructure and pointed out the Secretary-General's address at the G-8 on a global partnership on food.

Maldives thanked the GA President and the Secretary-General and said that the CFA was a step in the right direction. He was concerned about the global food and fuel crisis and aware of the risks involved but was encouraged by the international community's response to the issue. He said that his country placed agriculture as a priority in the 7th National Development Plan and added that it was on track with its MDG targets. However, he said that the nutrition was potentially threatened by food crisis. He looked forward to the early completion of the DOHA round and the importance of post Bali conference. He also raised concern about the depletion of water resources.

Macedonia expressed gratitude to the GA President for convening the timely meeting. Macedonia, he said aligned itself to the statement made by France on behalf of the European Union. The crisis was a product of a worldwide neglect of the agricultural sector. He said that the government of Macedonia had initiated long term measures and financial investment in the agricultural sector and would take into account the recommendations at the Rome and G8 summits. Although the food and security crisis threatened the MDG goals, the international community must use the crisis as an opportunity for countries to revitalize global agricultural production, and look toward sustained financial and political commitment and the UN leadership on new initiatives.

Syria thanked the Secretary General for his initiative. The foreign policy of the major powers in the Middle East, as well as speculation on crude oil and commodities compounded the price surge. Natural catastrophes and increased environmental pollution were other factors accounting for the reduction of agricultural production. They noted that there should be genuine political will behind a future strategy to combat food insecurity, especially in developing countries. They emphasized that Syria had achieved food security, and that agriculture constituted an important component of Syrian GDP. They had not had an opportunity to study the CFA, as it had been provided one day prior to the meeting. They stressed the importance of adequate resources for the implementation of the CFA. They called for acceptance of the CFA by member states and for a greater role of the GA and ECOSOC in formulating an international strategy. They demanded more interaction between GA and the HLTF.

Kazakhstan welcomed the CFA and agreed that the food crisis posed important threats. They shared the view that food crisis is due to numerous, intertwined causes and that dealing with them required a holistic and coordinated approach. Political will was crucial to bring about a new

trade regime. They underscored the necessity to complete the Doha Trade Round and review the role of international financial institutions. They stated that a clear mention of subsidies as a source of distortion should have been made in the CFA.

Qatar thanked for the initiative to establish the HLTF and for developing a plan of action and coordination. They stated the reasons why the food crisis negatively affected the poor in developing countries. They stressed that the situation should be top priority and required coordinated action by the UN and international community. They noted that, when coupled with global warming, soaring food commodity prices would delay the realization of poverty reduction. They valued initiative of the FAO to provide \$200 million to boost agricultural production and increase food commodity stocks in world markets.

Asian African Legal consultative organization stressed that the problem of inadequate food supply was not new for developing countries. They stated that the knowledge and resources to attack this problem existed and that political will was necessary. They welcomed the CFA and recognized the right to food, calling upon states to fulfill their obligations to eliminate hunger and implement the CFA. They argued that the “food for fuel” program advocated by some governments and UN bodies should be seriously reviewed and that consensus on this issue should be developed. They would like to see the CFA address the critical role of oceans in food stock supply. They raised attention to the link between food security issues and over-fishing. They called for the development of intercoastal zone management and for more systematic capacity building to supply food.

<u>DCDC</u>	<u>CDC</u>	<u>SG</u>
Recommended Action: <i>SG's info</i> Date: <i>31/1/08</i> Comment (if applicable): <i>76</i>	For SG's approval <input type="checkbox"/> For SG's attention <input type="checkbox"/> For SG's information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For SG's signature <input type="checkbox"/> Date: <i>4.08.08</i> Comment (if applicable):	Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Noted <input type="checkbox"/> Seen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signed <input type="checkbox"/> Date:

20-08778



Note to Mr. Nambiar

**MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE FOOD AND FUEL
CRISIS**

Please find attached a note to the Secretary-General on a meeting of the General Assembly on the Food and Fuel Crisis.

I would be grateful if you could kindly submit the attached note to the Secretary-General.


John Holmes
24 July 2008