

Statement by Mr. Luca Alinovi, Officer in Charge FAO in Somalia – BR SEN

Award Ceremonies 2013

Mr Director General, your Excellencies, Ministers, Permanent Representatives, and FAO Colleagues, I'm honored to accept the BR Sen Award on behalf of hundreds of women and men, from Mogadishu to Rome, who work with determination, sometimes facing daily risk and danger to contribute to re-establishing a food secure nation.

This award highlights the breakthrough in response to the 2011 Somali famine that put half of the Somali population at great risk. While the situation has greatly improved today, 1 million hungry people is still too high a number. In our work to respond to one of the worst famines in the 21st Century, we had to be proactive. And thanks to our donors, we were able to respond fast and by using creative cash-based interventions, putting food on the table of many families. This was not FAO's achievement alone but one of a humanitarian community that stood up to the challenge of the time.

During our emergency response we continuously ask questions like: How do we reach those in need? How can we go beyond relief? And how can we prepare them to face future shocks? Answers vary but one is obvious: People are not helpless. This is why resilience building forms the bedrock of our current programming. With this renewed commitment, we are confident to achieve the objectives set by the FAO leadership.

As I conclude, please allow me to express special gratitude to the following people: the FAO management, the Director-General and his deputy, whose dedication to decentralized offices particularly in Somalia, inspired many of us. Lastly to FAO staff, from Rome to Mogadishu, I cannot thank you enough. Let this award be a sign of hope that, YES, TOGETHER WORKING AS ONE; WE CAN STILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.