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Statement on behalf of the German government

**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY:
THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY**

3-5 June 2008

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Ladies and gentlemen,

- *Hunger is the main cause of death on this planet and that hunger is manmade.*
- When in the year 2000 the world's heads of state and government pledged in the Millennium Declaration to halve the proportion of people living in hunger and poverty across the world by 2015, it was out of a sense of human duty. And it is a goal to which Germany remains firmly committed!
- The current crisis is threatening to reverse the inroads we have made over the last seven years against hunger and poverty. If hunger were to take a hold once more, it would have dramatic consequences for all our goals. It is therefore crucial to our success that we overcome the current crisis.
- Poverty is denying over 850 million people access to food, even if food is actually available in their region. We therefore need to

adopt a two-pronged approach in our search for a lasting solution to the crisis.

- The 2008 World Development Report shows that the key is to boost the farm sector, particularly smallholding, with special emphasis on assisting women in their daily efforts to feed their families. The farm sector, and specifically smallholding, not only produces food, it also serves to reduce poverty.
- Sustainable farming is a subject that has been neglected for too long and that should move back up the international development agenda once more. Yet some structural problems exist, which must be tackled first and foremost by the governments concerned. Whether they succeed in charting a new course will be a measure of their level of good governance.
- In November 2004, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food were adopted. They provide a toolbox for good governance. Access to productive resources such as land, water and seed and also to education and medical care is vital to sustainable agricultural growth.
- The industrialised countries also have a duty to play their part. Germany is campaigning for international sustainability standards that should be applied to *all* agricultural commodities. Special action must be taken on agrofuels. The OECD and IFPRI are not alone in predicting a considerable impact on the market for food and increasing competition over resources between agrofuels and food production. All stakeholders must

be involved in the search for a solution, which guarantees the Human Right to food. Therefore, I welcome the UN Task Force initiated and led by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, to which all three Rome-based organisations make substantial contributions.

- We must join together in the Doha trade round to at last establish fair and development-friendly terms of trade. Export subsidies on agricultural products are a particularly harmful type of subsidy, by means of which the industrialised countries are hindering the development of agriculture in the developing countries through their agricultural policy.
- There are many indications that the current price rises are being aggravated by futures trading. My opinion is: those who speculate on increasing hunger in developing countries are violating human rights!
- I fully support the proposals put forward by the President of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, to involve sovereign wealth funds in the solution of the food crisis. I call on all sovereign wealth funds to use this opportunity, which holds benefits not only for the poor. To the IFC and other investment promotion banks I would say, help us to identify opportunities for investments to further develop the agricultural sector.
- The situation we are seeing at present will get progressively worse as a result of climate change. But we still have the chance today to take concerted action. With every day that we

remain inactive, it will become more and more difficult to achieve the MDGs.

- The FAO is eminently well placed to play a central role in achieving those goals. If it is to do so, the forthcoming reform of the organisation and the reform of food aid must urgently be put on the agenda.
- It is no exaggeration when Josette Sheeran says that the food crisis calls for "large-scale action" similar to that taken following the tsunami in late 2004.
- Last week, the World Bank adopted a comprehensive framework for addressing the food crisis. The World Bank will provide a total of 1.2 billion US dollars, with 200 million US dollars to be made available to the worst hit countries. Germany strongly supported the package of measures at the World Bank board.
- Germany will use all available means to support the efforts of the international community. Through German bilateral cooperation, we are restructuring our programmes so that up to 500 million euros will be invested in food security this year using a variety of instruments. We will be using those funds to get supplies directly to families currently in particular crisis and to increase our focus on rural development, agriculture, and social security systems.