

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF NAMIBIA, ON THE OCCASION
OF THE HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE
ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY**

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**Check Against Delivery*

**Mr Chairman,
Your Excellencies Heads of State and
Governments,
Secretary General of United Nations,
Director General of FAO,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This Conference is convened to address the burning issues of food security around the world and the impact of climate change on development.

These issues have become critical as basic foodstuffs become prohibitively unaffordable and climatic conditions render it more difficult to grow food, resulting in reduced agricultural output, which is further compounded by increasing incidents of droughts, floods, veld fires, hurricanes, cyclones, storms, and other natural disasters.

We have come here to join the rest of the world in search of appropriate and durable solutions aimed at saving humanity from the perils of hunger and starvation. The effects of climate change are becoming more destructive with every passing decade. Many regions of the world have witnessed droughts, floods and desertification as a result of changing global

weather patterns. The impact of these extreme climatic conditions can no longer be ignored.

The shortages of food being experienced in many regions of the world today result from climatic change, failure to produce enough food and the diversion of food crops from human consumption to bio fuel production. Of particular concern, is the fact that staple food such as, maize and rice, which are consumed by the vast majority of people in the world, are subjected to rising and unaffordable prices, especially the poor people in developing countries.

Our pressing challenge today, is to find ways of how to produce more food and make it accessible at affordable prices, in order to feed the world population, especially the poor. Rural communities in developing countries must be empowered to produce more food by way of agricultural financing and by providing them with agricultural inputs.

Failing to act now will not only expose more poor people to the vagaries of hunger, but it will also undermine our collective efforts to achieve our stated targets within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals. The goal to improve food security has

enjoyed international consensus for many years. It is well articulated in the declarations which were adopted at the 1996 and 2002 World Food Summits, respectively.

The current situation demands effective leadership and political will to act with requisite urgency. It requires joint action by governments, international organizations, private sector and civil society to secure a brighter future for the present and future generations.

I believe that with the present technological advances, agricultural production methods and techniques at our disposal, we should be able to produce enough food for all.

It is in our collective best interest to ensure that no child is robbed of his or her normal life by the indignity of hunger and malnutrition. We as world leaders must stand together and co-operate to create conditions where the basic rights of the most vulnerable members of the human family are protected. This includes ensuring that all human beings on our planet have access to food, water and other basic necessities of life.

History will judge us harshly, should we fail to address the impact of climate-change on world food security. Acting now and decisively would make a major contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to FAO and other co-organizers for taking the timely initiative to organize this High Level Conference.

I thank you.