



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER MARCELO SUAREZ SALVIA, PERMANENT MISSION OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 25: AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (New York, 24 October 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. As was defined by the FAO, "food security exists when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".
3. The global food crisis, reinforced by the ongoing global financial and economic crisis, has become a major challenge for development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It has emerged in a situation of significant mal-distribution of the world food supply and lack of coherence in international policies, as well as unfavorable environment towards development, including rural development, agriculture and food production.
4. Moreover, underdevelopment, desertification and land degradation, as well as extreme weather events have undermined the livelihood, food security and nutrition in the Horn of Africa and other regions, including the ongoing severe floods in Southeast Asia. In this regard, the G77 and China calls for an integrated approach from the international community in the form of immediate, medium and long-term actions to addressing food security and nutrition.

Mr. Chairman,

5. It has to be noted that without rapid progress in reducing hunger, achieving all of the other MDGs will be difficult, if not impossible. Moreover, the fight to eliminate hunger and reach the other MDGs will be won or lost in the rural areas where the vast majority of the world's hungry people live.
6. In this context, we reaffirm that hunger constitutes a violation of human dignity and call for urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination. Moreover, the Group would like to stress that the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger.
7. In this regard, Mr. Chairman, the G77 and China emphasizes the urgent need to increase efforts at all levels to address food security and agriculture development as an integral part of the international development agenda. We underline the need for sustained funding and increased targeted investment to enhance world food production and call for new and additional financial resources from all sources to achieve sustainable agriculture development and food security.
8. The challenges facing the agriculture sector are many, particularly for developing countries. The achievement of food security requires strengthening and revitalizing the agriculture sector in developing countries, including through the empowerment of women, indigenous peoples, rural communities, small and medium scale farmers, providing technical and financial assistance, access to and transfer of technology, capacity building, research for food and agriculture, including

research to adapt to and mitigate climate change and exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Mr. Chairman,

9. However, increasing food production alone will not suffice in achieving food security. The problem at the root of food crises is also the access and distribution of food. We should focus our policies at the national and international level to improve production and strengthen the capacity of the people to have an access to food, especially for the poor and most vulnerable in developing countries.

10. It is also important to stress that agricultural subsidies and other trade distortions by developed countries have severely harmed the agricultural sector in developing countries, limiting the ability of this key sector to contribute meaningfully to poverty eradication, rural development and sustainable, sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. Therefore, we urge the developed countries to demonstrate the necessary flexibility and political will to address meaningfully these key concerns of developing countries at the Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

11. This profound neglect of the agriculture sector has marginalized and destroyed smallholder farmers' livelihoods in developing countries. The recent food crisis speaks to the need for sustained international cooperation, to ensure global food security. Prompt international cooperation in a coherent and effective manner through a coordinated global action by governments, multilateral agencies, as well as donors, is imperative in order to make good the decades-old promise to end hunger and to prevent another global crisis.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The first seven MDGs focus on objectives that must be attained largely through the efforts of the governments and people of developing countries themselves. MDG 8 highlights the responsibility of wealthier industrialized nations to assist those efforts. It calls for increased aid, more equitable trade, relief from the crushing burden of debt and better access to technology, medicines and jobs. Meeting the aid targets of MDG 8 would substantially contribute to national efforts to meet the rest of the MDGs.

13. Agriculture and the rural economy are key sectors for supporting livelihoods in protracted crises; a healthy agriculture sector can provide an economic and employment buffer in times of crisis, especially in poorer countries. However, they are not properly reflected in aid flows. The current aid architecture needs to address both immediate needs and the structural causes of protracted crises. The reform of the international financial and economic architecture is urgent for solving the structural economic problems faced by developing countries which affect all sectors, including the agricultural sector.

14. Beyond the crisis, there is need to enhance agricultural productivity and promote sustainable agricultural practices, in ways that respect the lives of the local people as well as biodiversity of the ecosystem, which will necessitate financial and technical support for research into appropriate and advanced environmentally sound technologies.

15. In conclusion, improving food security in protracted crises requires going beyond short-term responses in order to protect and promote people's livelihoods over the longer term. Many developing countries have been forced to become net food importers due to decrease in agricultural investment. In that regard, we emphasize that the increase in agricultural investment and international cooperation remains critical to sustainable long-term food security and there is a

need to promote adequate investment in rural infrastructure, enhance market access for developing countries and promote responsible international investment in agriculture.

16. Finally, Mr. Chairman, the G77 and China would like to highlight the particular importance of the thematic discussion on agriculture development and food security, given the vital role that this sector plays in eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving sustainable development, and the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, particularly in developing countries.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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