

FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

Position Paper for the FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

As a founding Member State of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Federative Republic of Brazil has always shown its commitment to put poverty-eradication and the alleviation of inequality and hunger at the forefront of government action. The accomplishment of Goal 1 of the *Millennium Development Goals* (A/RES/55/2) is a major driving force for the Brazilian efforts aimed at reducing poverty and ensuring global food security. Brazil is proud to take part in the upcoming session of the Food and Agriculture Organization, which shall discuss the following agenda items: The Impact of Bioenergy on Food Security, furthermore, International and Regional Strategies to Address High Food Prices and The Impact of Water Scarcity on Social and Economic Development.

I. The Impact of Bioenergy on Food Security

The Federative Republic of Brazil has been the world's most advanced biofuels market for decades and produced 22.3 billion litres of bioethanol in 2007/2008. With respect to the grave environmental effects of climate change and the importance of fighting poverty and hunger worldwide, the Brazilian Government affirms its commitment to the aims of the *Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Environment and Development* and places special significance on the fundamental guidelines of the Millennium Summit and the Monterrey and Johannesburg Summits. Brazil further reiterates its efforts to effectively implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as well as Agenda 21, and made a strong contribution to mitigate the global effects of climate change by voluntarily meeting the targets of the Kyoto Protocol to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) (A/RES/48/189) as a non-Annex I Party.

As reported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA), Brazil possesses 354 million hectares of arable land. Of this, only 1% is used for ethanol production from sugar cane. At the same time Brazil is the world's second-largest food exporter and has increased its export rates significantly in 2008. Against this background, it is our firm belief that Brazilian biofuels are not threatening the food security of developing countries. On the contrary, the growing potential of bioenergy provides a major opportunity for many rural regions around the world to generate income and employment by reducing oil imports and exporting agriculture-based fuels. Brazil calls upon Member States to meet the current crisis with coordinated and solidary international cooperation. As the leading player in the international bioenergy sector, Brazil welcomes the Declaration adopted by the FAO *High-Level Conference on World Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy*, held 3-5 June 2008 in Rome, and urges industrialized and developing countries to further increase the liberalization of international agricultural commodity trade by reducing trade barriers and market distorting policies. Brazil considers the "International Conference on Biofuels", held in São Paulo in November 2008, a useful contribution to the development of a targeted strategy for the certified production and promotion of climate-neutral fuels. Brazil is honoured to be a founding member of the International Biofuels Forum, launched in March 2007, and remains steadfastly committed to the work of the Global BioEnergy Partnership (GBEP) and the World Future Energy Summit. Brazil furthermore expresses its dedication to constantly support the FAO Global Bioenergy Platform (IBEP) in "promoting sustainable development, energy security, poverty reduction and climate change mitigation". Recognizing the intertwining factors underlying the global food crisis, Brazil highlights the importance of regional cooperation and greater democracy in international decision-making. To this end, Brazil has joined India and South Africa in establishing IBSA, a dialogue forum focusing on south-south cooperation, free trade and development issues. Brazil remains equally committed to its regional bioenergy partnerships under the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) as well as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and strongly welcomes the establishment of the South American Energy Summit. In the field of scientific and academic exchange, Brazil has signed several bilateral agreements with countries such as the United States, Denmark, Germany and Sweden. The Federal Government of Brazil has furthermore established a broad body of national directives, including the Agroenergy Policy Guidelines, the National Climate Change Action Plan and the National Biotechnology Development Policy Plan (*Presidential Decree No. 6.041*), which are fostering innovation as well as social development and sustainability. In order to guarantee the preservation of environmentally sensible areas such as the Amazon, the Federal Government decided to set a target for reducing deforestation by 70 percent over the next decade and is right now discussing an agricultural zoning regulation that will prevent any sugar cane plantations and ethanol plants nearby these sensible areas.

II. International and Regional Strategies to Address High Food Prices

The Federative Republic of Brazil is fully aware that the global food crisis threatens to undermine the achievements of the world community in reducing world poverty and hunger. Bearing in mind Target 3 of Millennium Development Goal 1 (A/RES/55/2), Brazil fully supports the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, established under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General and bringing together the heads of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, Bretton Woods institutions and relevant parts of the UN Secretariat, in order to create a prioritized plan of action and coordinate its implementation. Today, the surging world food prices have crucial implications for the livelihoods of the poor by placing their food security and nutrition at high risk. Despite the great progress that has been made in recent years by halving the number of the very poor in the Brazilian society, about 7% of the population are still undernourished. With the support of the FAO Special Program for Food Security (SPFS), President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva launched the ambitious "Fome Zero" Program in 2003,

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aimed at guaranteeing food security and eliminating hunger in Brazil through an integrated set of policies, including a conditional cash transfer program (Bolsa Familia) for the poorest families in situations of food insecurity, which significantly improved the nutritional condition of more than 8 million families by 2005. Within national law, the right to adequate nutrition is enforced by the *Organic Law of Food and Nutrition Security* (LOSAN), which also implements the National System of Food and Nutrition Security (SISAN). On a regional level, Brazil is committed to join its neighbours in tackling the problem of food and nutrition insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean. During the Latin-American Chronic Hunger Summit in 2005, the governments of Brazil and Guatemala initiated the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (HFLAC), which encourages the exchange of knowledge, experience and resources and aims at eradicating hunger in the region by 2015. On a global scale, Brazil launched the "Action Against Hunger and Poverty – World Leaders Meeting" in 2004 and remains dedicated to the goals of the World Food Summit (WFS), such as halving the number of hungry people in the world by 2015. Brazil is deeply concerned that as a result of high food prices the number of hungry people increased by about 50 million in 2007 and therefore emphasizes the importance to effectively implement relevant measures discussed at recent high-level intergovernmental meetings, including the ECOSOC High-Level session on the Global Food Crisis and the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security, held 3-5 June 2008 in Rome. Brazil is explicitly worried about the continuing lack of coherence in international measures that relate to rural development, agricultural development and poverty eradication in developing countries. Brazil is keenly conscious that global food security is influenced by income and consumer demand, production and what the producers offer, as well as by prices and price stability on the food markets. Today, world hunger is an economic phenomenon in the first place. People suffer from hunger because they lack the purchasing power to buy enough food for their families. Emphasizing the importance of *Sustained economic growth for social development, including the eradication of poverty and hunger* (E/RES/2006/4) and recalling *The Right to Food* (A/RES/62/164), Brazil believes that the challenge developing countries face when it comes to fulfilling the human right to food is not just to achieve food security by having sufficient income and access to food, but to achieve genuine food sovereignty through autonomous control of the food production process and the right to define agrarian policies in a way that excludes market distorting regulations. As the world's second-largest exporter of food commodities, Brazil is currently expanding its agricultural production in order to meet the growing demand from burgeoning economies as well as the demand of the poorest part of the world population. In this regard, Brazil calls upon the world community to develop a more efficient system of food distribution and combine national, regional and international efforts against hunger to develop synergies and channels of exchange.

III. The Impact of Water Scarcity on Social and Economic Development

It is the firm belief of the Federative Republic of Brazil that the access to clean water is a basic human right and a precondition for health, development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially Target 3 of Goal 7, aimed at halving the proportion of people without access to sanitation and drinking water by 2015. With regard to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the decision of declaring 2008 the "*International Year of Sanitation*" (A/RES/61/192), the Federal Government of Brazil is deeply worried that still more than one billion people are denied the right to clean water. With respect to Chapter 18 (Section II) of Agenda 21, outlining the need to protect the quality and supply of freshwater resources, the National Agency for Water Resources (ANA) launched several programs to improve water resources quality in Brazil and gathered independent experts to discuss water resource issues and the impact of water policies on our country's diverse regions and ecosystems. Brazil has also implemented the Water Resources National Policy (*Federal Law No. 9.433/97*) in 1997, introducing water tariffs in order to encourage rational water use and raise revenues for financing national water management programs.

Brazil welcomes the financial and technical assistance through the World Bank's Second Water and Sanitation Project for Low-Income Populations (PROSANEAR II), aimed at extending basic water and sanitation services for the urban poor. In addition, Brazil is strongly committed to continue its cooperation with the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and other developing economies in order to improve modern transboundary water management and close the service gap between urban and rural populations with access to sanitation facilities. In 2008, the Americas Regional Consortium (ARC) organized the "Water Forum of the Americas" (WFA), held 24-25 November 2008 in Foz do Iguacu, Paraná, Brazil. During the WFA, specialized government representatives, members of civil society, academia and water user organizations analyzed the development and progress that the countries of the four sub-regions (North America, Central America, Caribbean and South America) achieved over the last decade in the area of water policy. With the support of the Federal Government, the Ministry of Environment established the National Desertification Plan in order to propose targeted actions to prevent land degradation and fight the effects of desertification in States affected by drought, especially in Northeast region and the São Francisco River basin. Since severe drought has repeatedly damaged corn and soybean crops in southern Brazil by the beginning of 2009, the necessity to "fulfill international commitments made on water and water-related issues by 2015", set forth as the primary goal of the "*Water for Life Decade 2005-2015*" (A/RES/58/217), remains a high priority for the Federative Republic of Brazil. Therefore, the Federative Republic of Brazil calls upon all Member States to join hands in providing access to safe and clean water for all.