



BRASIL

Statement by H.E. Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva,
President of the Federative Republic of Brazil,
at the Separate Meeting
on Financing for Development.

New York, 14 September 2005

(check against delivery)

Josue de Castro, a Brazilian geographer and citizen of the world, once said that "hunger is the biological expression of sociological evils."

Hunger is a scourge of our own making inflicted on our own kind.

These ideas are still very up to date.

I have made the fight against hunger my government's priority.

This struggle expresses the broader challenge of promoting development with social justice and political democracy.

This is what we are doing in Brazil.

We have recovered economic stability.

We have regained the path of sustained growth.

We are creating more jobs, distributing income, financing family farms and small companies.

A year ago in New York I organized, together with my colleagues from France, Chile and Spain, a high-level meeting to promote an International Action against Hunger and Poverty.

Sixty Heads of State and Government, along with over 100 delegations, have responded positively.

Today we are following-up on a debate launched at the Millennium Summit.

We must ensure the full achievement of the goals we have set. The Sachs Report showed that this objective is attainable.

The debate on innovative mechanisms to finance development is no longer a taboo.

The United Nations has placed this theme at center-stage.

The World Bank, the IMF and the G-8 have been sensitized to the issue.

This debate and the various parallel events on the Millennium Development Goals express the strength of this mobilization.

Those goals will not be met unless the international community gets seriously involved.

We must act fast. We must move from words to deeds.

We need to intensify partnerships among governments, business and civil society.

Last year, we put forward mechanisms to raise additional funds that would allow for more efficient aid, on a stable and predictable basis.

This year, the technical group, with major support from new members Germany and Algeria, discussed initiatives that are feasible in the short term.

We are moving to implement some of these ideas as pilot projects.

I firmly support my friend President Chirac's proposal for a solidarity contribution to be collected on airline tickets. I know that France and other European countries, as well as Chile, are already moving in this direction.

In Brazil, I have determined that technical studies be undertaken so that we may also adopt this measure as soon as possible.

This mechanism will help raise a major volume of funds, in addition to its even more important demonstration effect.

We shall prove that creativity and solidarity allow us to find innovative approaches to fight extreme poverty.

We are also tabling a draft agreement in the General Assembly to reduce the cost of international money remittances from migrant workers.

We want that money to reach the recipients intact.

This will help generate income and jobs for the families of those who have left home to seek a better chance.

Mr. President,

I am certain that Brazil's biggest contribution to eradicating hunger in the world is the unprecedented effort we are making in our own country.

All the actions taken under the Zero Hunger program are part of the crucial transformations underway in Brazil and contribute directly to five of the eight Millennium Goals.

The Family Stipend program already provides basic income for 7.5 million families. By the end of 2006, it will cover all of the 40 million Brazilians living below the poverty line.

Approximately 37 million children and teenagers are being fed today by school meal programs.

We are not only transferring income, but putting into effect the right to education and health as well.

We condition family benefits upon school attendance by children and upon participation by children and expecting mothers in healthcare programs.

The food-purchase program focused on family farmers has already included 120,000 farmers.

Our countryside, which has always fed the rest of Brazil, will no longer have the worst hunger rates.

Brazil is also helping overcome poverty and inequality as it actively fosters discussions on the need for more balanced and fair international trade.

Outrageous economic subsidies granted every year to farmers in industrialized countries are six times greater than the additional US\$50 billion needed annually to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

In a world beset by instability, I am convinced that the eradication of poverty is a sine qua non condition for the emergence of a more stable and peaceful international order.

The time to act is now.

Thank you very much.