



G8 Summit Addresses Key Food Security Priorities

- *Farming First Urges World Leaders to Keep Food Security As Recurring Agenda Item* -

28 June 2010. The Farming First coalition welcomes the G8's efforts at increased accountability and continued commitments to food security emerging from this year's G8 summit in Muskoka, Canada.

For the first time, the G8 has produced a publicly shared review of its work and its commitments. The Muskoka Accountability Report will become a regular practice of the group and will encourage progress in achieving G8 goals. In particular, Farming First welcomes the focus of the upcoming 2011 report on health and food security.

However, whilst the Accountability Report mentions the AFSI and the Global Donor Platform as examples of key coordinating mechanisms for global food security policy, where the G8's efforts merge with other initiatives, such as the UN's High-Level Task Force, remains unclear.

Whilst food security was not as prominently featured as last year's summit, ministers delivered key messages reiterating its importance. Evidently, the global food challenge is an issue that cannot appear only once on the political agenda, and instead must be a recurring item if we are to feed 2.3 billion more people in 2050 :

"Food security remains an urgent global development challenge, exacerbated by climate change, increasing global food demand, past underinvestment in the agricultural sector, and extreme price volatility which has strong damaging impacts on the most vulnerable."

Ajay Vashee, President of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) says: "The G8's commitment to transparency and to providing direction to similar food security initiatives is a positive trend that we hope will characterize global efforts in the future."

With an abundance of food security initiatives taking shape around the world, the G8 has declared it will prioritize providing guidance to promote a coherent and coordinated approach to national, regional and global efforts. This operational oversight is crucial to ensure that programmes do not overlap or compete and that funding potential is maximized. The G8 emphasised that the many current programmes should be seen as "mutually complementary initiatives" which should help and not hinder efforts to achieve a common goal of food security for all.

Of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) launched last year, the G8 leaders showed their commitment to transparency by stating their actual allocated funding to date - US \$6.5 billion - and assured that their full individual pledges would be met by 2012. Previously, little information had been available showing how much of the pledged US \$22 billion had been delivered since last year. This ethos of accountability is key to ensuring that world leaders commit to their investments.

The G8 underlined the importance of "the contribution of research to fight hunger and poverty, notably by increasing sustainable agricultural productivity". Farming First welcomes this focus on research and those agricultural innovations that can sustainably increase productivity. Full transparency around how funding is invested is important for ensuring multiple programmes can work together to meet all criteria for achieving long-term food security.

Within the Muskoka declaration, the G8 also emphasized the need for a global effort to address food security, in which all relevant stakeholders, including “the private sector, foundations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, as well as international organization[s]”, interact with governments to achieve the most effective food security outcomes.

ENDS

Media Contact:

Michael Hoewel
Glasshouse Partnership
+44 (0)20 7079 9220
michaelh@glasshousepartnership.com

About Farming First

Farming First is a global coalition of 131 organisations representing the world’s farmers, scientists, engineers and industry. Farming First calls for a broad-based, knowledge-centred approach to increase agricultural output in a sustainable and socially responsible manner.

www.farmingfirst.org

To view Farming First’s Guide to Food Security Initiatives, visit:

www.farmingfirst.org/foodsecurity