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United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals
“Promoting Sustainable Development”
21 September, 2010

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The challenge to meet the Millennium Development Goals is a daunting one. From the DuPont Company perspective, we look forward to being part of the solution.

There are many factors that will contribute to our success in meeting these goals, but increasing agricultural productivity and food availability needs to be high on our list of priorities. Agriculture is the primary driver to abate hunger and reduce poverty. Throughout history, agricultural prosperity has led to successful economies. And food security has a direct impact on national and political security.

If I could emphasize one thing, it would be to remind us all that agriculture is local. It may sound obvious, but progress on a global level requires us to walk in the shoes of the local farmer and trace our way back to how we can address challenges on a global scale.

Today, approximately 85% of food never crosses an international border. When we discuss the challenge of increasing agricultural productivity to close the looming food gap, we often overlook the potential mismatch between the location of production and the location of people. Food only feeds those who have access to it and the income to afford it.

The likelihood for an agricultural “mismatch”, and the implications it would bring, can be only be avoided by encouraging increased agricultural productivity by all, by ensuring that food flows freely across borders and around the globe to places where it is needed, and by ensuring that economic development supports both local production and the purchase of imports. This will require changes in trade policy, food aid policy, international development policy, a concerted investment, and many other areas.

There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution in agriculture, but I would like to suggest three elements that we believe are critical for our collective success.

1. **First, recognition by nations of the role agriculture development can play in economic development, stability and national security.** With the recognition of the power of agriculture, supportive policies can follow that encourage investments in local agriculture and innovation and appropriate adoption of technologies that can support productivity improvement. This includes CAADP commitments in Africa and the commitments of the G8 meeting in L’Aquila with promises of more funding into agricultural development by both African governments and the major donors.
2. **Second, agriculture is knowledge-based and requires a holistic view.** We need an approach that is farmer-centered, ensuring they have access to the things they need to produce a crop – such as the best seed technologies, land, water, knowledge, inputs and credit. Rural infrastructure needs to be in place to allow for market access and farmers to sell their products.



3. **And finally, local agriculture production is vital to success.** Working closely with farmers is critical to understanding their needs and developing the products best suited for their local environments.

These are only a few of many opportunities across the value chain for our attention. No one company, university, NGO or government can solve these problems alone. It will take all of us, working in a concerted effort – collaborating at levels we have not reached before, both through public-private partnerships and other initiatives -- but I remain optimistic we can, collectively, deliver impactful results that improve the lives of people everywhere.

Thank you.