
Report from the UN

More People Than Ever Are Victims of Hunger

by Leni Rubinstein

“A dangerous mix of the global economic slowdown, combined with the stubbornly high food prices in many countries, has pushed some 100 million more people than last year into chronic hunger and poverty. The silent hunger crisis—affecting one-sixth of all humanity—poses a serious risk for world peace and security. We urgently need to forge a broad consensus on the total and rapid eradication of hunger in the world and to take the necessary actions.”

—FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf,
June 19, 2009



Jacques Diouf

While the bankruptcy of the international financial system has caused most of states in the United States to become bankrupt, millions to lose their jobs, millions to lose their homes to foreclosure, and a situation, where now, one out of every nine Americans receives food stamps, the poor of the world are victims of hunger and in danger of starvation.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 1.02 billion people are undernourished worldwide. This is the first time in human history that more than 1 billion people are going hungry. And the target that the World Food Summit (WFS) and FAO had set for reducing, by half, the number of hungry people, to no more than 420 million by year 2015—the year of the UN’s Millennium Development Goal—has been scrapped as being unreachable.

The FAO blames the global economic crisis for being at the core of the sharp increase in world hunger, because of the reduction of incomes and increased unemployment, compounded by the rise in fuel and food prices. (The well-known fact, that global financial

speculation caused the rise in fuel and food, is only hinted at.)

Plenty of Food Is Being Produced

According to the FAO, the undernourishment is not a result of poor global harvests. FAO Food Outlook estimates a strong world cereal production in 2009, almost at the level of last year’s record output, but states, that the rapid and sharp increases in staple food prices during 2006-08, put these staples out of reach for millions. In many developing nations, basic domestic foodstuffs still cost an average of 24% more, in real terms, than two years earlier. For people in the developing nations, who on average spend 60% of their income on food, this means starvation.

For the year 2009 (in addition to the higher prices for fuel and food), add the estimated drop by about 25%, of Official Development Assistance to the poorest 71 countries. Furthermore, an estimated decline of 32% in foreign direct investment, a sharp fall in remittances from migrant workers, tighter credit conditions, and shrinking export opportunities, and you have a situation, where millions will die for lack of sufficient food.

On July 31, 2009, FAO director-general Jacques Diouf, issued an invitation to governments around the world to participate in a World Summit on Food Security, to take place Nov. 16-18, 2009 in Rome, Italy. To that end, Diouf sent out a document, entitled “Secretariat contribution to defining the objectives and possible decisions of the World Summit on Food Security on 16, 17 and 18 November, 2009.” The document calls for a complete eradication of hunger from the face of the Earth by 2025, and for doubling world food production by 2050, to secure sufficient and nutritious food supplies for a world population, estimated to reach 9.2 billion, by that time.

We can, indeed, feed the population of the world well, and many times over. As documented earlier by *EIR*, the world—with the use of current technologies—could produce enough food to feed 25 billion people. However, as should be abundantly clear to most people by now, only a complete policy shift, putting the rights and dignity of man, as outlined by Lyndon LaRouche, at the center of economic policies, meaning: monetarism must go, the bailouts must be cancelled, and a total bankruptcy reorganization instituted. A new credit system, issuing long-term, cheap credits for in-depth infrastructure development, including water, power, and transportation, alone will provide a future for mankind.