



**Message by Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, United Nations
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the
Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

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We are commemorating today the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations six decades ago and observing it as the World Food Day. This day has a very special significance for the most vulnerable countries of the world as the Food and Agriculture Organization represents our collective responsibility to ensure freedom from hunger for the humanity. This is, of course, a daunting challenge as we endeavour to cut by half the number of hungry people by 2015, as called for by the World Food Summit and the Millennium Summit.

The challenges in achieving food security encompass poverty eradication, increase in food security without degrading natural environment, stabilizing population growth and sustainable urbanization. The situation gets even more complex when biodiversity is threatened. Poverty eradication is critical in improving access to food. Hunger is both a cause and the result of extreme poverty. Food and nutritional security must be a part of a greater framework of sustainable rural development and poverty eradication.

At the center of these challenges are the hungry and the poor in the fifty Least Developed Countries of the world. Absence of food security as well as poor nutritional levels are pervasive in these countries, thirty-four of whom are in the African continent. Of the most vulnerable groups of countries, impact of biodiversity on food security is glaring in the small island developing states. It is in the best interest of all of us that we get together to encourage the determined efforts of FAO in support of these vulnerable countries.