

Speech by H.E. Alberto Beltrame, Minister for Social Development of Brazil on the occasion of the 2018 second regular session of the WFP Executive Board

H.E. Alberto Beltrame, Minister for Social Development of Brazil: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. Good morning, Mr President, Zoltán Kálmán. Good morning, Mr Executive Director, David Beasley. Excellencies, delegates, I will speak in Portuguese because my English is very, very bad when I am trying to speak in English. I apologize but I will speak in Portuguese.

(original language Portuguese) Ladies and gentlemen, it is a very great pleasure for me to represent the Brazilian Government at this second regular session of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. I am greatly honoured to be the special guest at this session and I am most grateful for this. I should also like to express the gratitude of the Brazilian Government.

The World Food Programme has been a very important partner for the Brazilian Government for quite a few decades in promoting South–South cooperation during these years. In 2010 we set up the first strategic partnership with WFP. The objective of this partnership was to support the expansion and the strengthening of school feeding, national programmes in developing countries, and this through an improvement and extension of the national capacities. This partnership today is based in three different areas and lines. First of all, we have cooperation in school feeding. This is the first one. The second being technical cooperation. And the third humanitarian cooperation.

Within the framework of this partnership in Brazil in November 2011, a Centre of Excellence against Hunger was founded for the purpose of sharing the good practices in school feeding developed by the Brazilian Government with the National Fund for the Development of Education, along with other developing countries, especially in Africa. Today this programme exists in 19 African countries, three countries in Asia and one in the Caribbean. Now above and beyond what is the work carried out in 23 developing countries, the Brazilian Government also supports from a technical and financial point of view other countries that are involved with these school feeding policies of the Brazilian Government, especially working with the Centre of Excellence against Hunger of WFP.

Now dealing with food schooling [school feeding], we have really made quite a bit of headway. One of the most important results was the adoption during the 26th summit of the heads of state of the African Union in 2016, the adoption of a resolution to promote school feeding through purchasing of food produced locally. And then we began with a very successful operation in Brazil. This was a strategy for the African continent, the purpose of which was to stimulate the generation of income and entrepreneurship in local communities. This was also reflected in the continental strategy in education for Africa 2016–2025 which set out the link and the connection between human capital and educational revolution.

In 2017, the technical cooperation of the partnership with PMA was further strengthened with implementation of the project called Alternatives for the Use of Sub-Products of Cotton and Other Crops in Africa which works with all the African countries producing cotton. Now the resources, the financing for the implementation of this partnership project was set up between the Brazilian Government and the Centre of Excellence against Hunger of WFP. It was also supported by the Brazilian federal Government and the Brazilian Institute for Cotton. It adds up approximately to a total of USD 21 million.

During all these years, more than 10 years of partnership, the results which were attained have given Brazil a great international visibility as a key actor in South–South cooperation inspiring other countries such as China, Russia, Côte d'Ivoire to set up other such centres of excellence with WFP similar to the model adopted by Brazil. We firmly believe that South–South cooperation has a very important role to play in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals agenda for 2030. It is necessary for developing countries to support one another in an effort to identify and come up



with solutions which will allow us to attain the very ambitious goals which have been defined by these agendas in this framework.

Even though things are now changing, we are having a new Government in Brazil, I do wish to ratify the undertaking made by the Brazilian Government concerning this cooperation which we began in the past and shall continue to do with great effort so that the SDGs, and especially SDG 2 referring to the eradication of hunger and referring also to sustainable agriculture, that these objectives, these goals be attained. It is not acceptable. It is really a shame for all of mankind that now in the 21st century with all the new technology which is available to us that in spite of this 821 million people and over 50 million children still suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Our efforts and the efforts of WFP are very fundamental because if we save one life, we save the whole world. We know that this is a very difficult task. We know that it is a social problem as well as a political problem which must be faced very clearly and very incisively and with cooperation because only with international cooperation and coordination can we make some headway.

The Brazilian Government and WFP must further strengthen their strategic partnership with more examples of cooperation and new initiatives for school feeding as well as other areas for the improvement of food security, including the promotion of short production chains, the promotion of healthy food, as well as prevention and also dealing with malnutrition, which unfortunately is increasing in many regions. Today we are facing a great epidemic of obesity alongside hunger and we must also unite our efforts so that we will be able to build systems of social protection. The programme of the family fund, which is a Brazilian project, has given economic access to food to almost 40 million people, 13.9 million families. The school feeding programme deals with 41 million children who are fed in school in Brazil every day. Brazil has done quite well with food security in recent years. These positive results were due to this new agenda for food security and nutritional security through the implementation of public policies that have promoted productions and access to healthy food as well as the setting up of a monitoring system which allowed us to assess where we were wrong and be able to correct mistakes.

In relation to the guarantee for production and access to food, our policies referred to the support of smallholder family, availability of small credit subsidies, technical assistance and also production security, minimum prices, especially dealing with public purchasing from smallholders. Thus, the purchasing of food from smallholders contributes to access of smallholders to the market, thus it renders social inclusion possible. It strengthens the incomes and as well as improves the trade possibilities through access to markets. And also by defining these policies for strengthening smallholder agriculture, we have improved food security. It is thus that the Brazilian Government is ready to continue working hand-in-hand with the World Food Programme and to continue to promote South-South cooperation for the purpose of strengthening food security and agriculture as well as healthy food and promoting food systems which are sustainable in developing countries.

In closing, I should like to thank the Brazilian Ambassador Fernando Abreu and his Ambassador Ruy Pereira from the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and all the members of the diplomatic core that have supported us in these efforts. I should like to thank you all for your attention and thank you for your kind invitation.

