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## UN anti-hunger petition has 250,000 signatures and counting



A farmer in Guatemala signs the anti-hunger petition

3 August 2010 – A United Nations-drafted petition that aims to encourage governments to make the elimination of hunger their top priority has so far been signed by more than 250,000 people and is on track to achieve its goal of a million signatures by the end of November, the UN agriculture agency **said** today.

The petition campaign, the brainchild of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (**FAO**), can be signed online at the [http://www.1billionhungry.org website](http://www.1billionhungry.org).

"The ball is now rolling and we are on track to meet our goal of one million signatures by the end of November," said FAO Director General Jacques Diouf. "I encourage everyone to sign the online petition to show their solidarity with the one billion hungry."

**The World Food Summit of 1996 attended by 185 countries agreed the target of reducing the number of hungry people by half to no more than 420 million by 2015.**

The agency said the petition should be signed by anyone who "finds it unacceptable that close to one billion people are chronically hungry. We call upon governments to make the elimination of hunger their top priority until that goal is reached," it added.

One of the tools for the campaign is a promotional video made by British actor Jeremy Irons in which he plays a character based on a famous scene from the classic 1970s film Network.

It also uses innovative software developed by Riley Crane, post-doctoral fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Laboratory in the United States, which allows users to visualize their personal impact on a world map as their friends pass on the link. The Google map also keeps continuous track of the number of signatures in each country.

Friend-to-friend contacts through Facebook and other social media platforms are the key means by which news of the petition is spreading. A new Facebook application now enables users to sign the petition and encourage friends and family to sign all within [Facebook](#).

The World Food Summit of 1996 attended by 185 countries agreed the target of reducing the number of hungry people by half to no more than 420 million by 2015.

However, if the world continues at the current pace of hunger reduction, that target will only be reached in 2150, with hundreds of millions of needless deaths and incalculable suffering as a result, according to FAO.

The FAO campaign uses a yellow whistle as a campaign icon, signifying "enough is enough." Banners encouraging people to sign the petition have now been translated into 13 languages.

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