

## Fight against hunger needs greater investment from private sector, stresses UN agency



FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva. Photo: FAO/Ozan Kose

13 September 2012 – The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) have called on the private sector to invest massively in agriculture, stressing that this is vital to winning the fight against hunger.

“There can be no freedom from hunger – there can be no food security – without the active participation of all sectors of society, including the private sector,” [said](#) FAO’s Director-General, José Graziano da Silva.

Speaking at a high-level conference in Istanbul focused on promoting private agricultural investment and trade from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, Mr. Graziano da Silva said that

apart from important investments, financial and in-kind contributions, the private sector can make another important valuable contribution, namely political support to food security.

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“We need to build consensus and mobilize all stakeholders towards this goal. With the private sector on board, national and international efforts to fight hunger have added legitimacy,” he told the gathering of leaders in agribusiness and top level policy-makers.

The Director-General and his counterpart, EBRD President Sir Suma Chakrabarti, stressed that the fight against hunger can only be won in partnership between governments, civil society and farmer organizations and the private sector. They also called on governments to create an enabling policy environment that fosters private sector investment.

Sir Suma said he was impressed by the positive response by all the companies that were invited to the conference. “It shows that the private sector is concerned about food security. This meeting is another step forward to helping the private sector to enhance production and employment, using the expertise of the EBRD and FAO in the food and agricultural sectors,” he told the conference.

The conference explored ways to improve the trade conditions between transition countries and the southern and eastern rim of the Mediterranean, according to a news release issued by FAO. It also discussed different models to develop farming and maximize the efficiency of food chains.

Since the start of their partnership in 1994, FAO and the EBRD have implemented over 90 technical assistance projects, totalling about \$12 million, which have helped to address institutional and regulatory bottlenecks, as well as improve transparency and efficiency along the whole food value-chain in the countries in which EBRD operates.

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