



Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

PRESS RELEASE

### **G8 Commitment on Hunger Must Support Smallholder Farmers and Sustainable Practices**

L'Aquila, July 8, 2009 –G8 discussions on the food crisis must include more than additional money, and prioritize agriculture and food policies that improve the position of small producers, in particular women.

CIDSE, an international alliance of Catholic development agencies, and U.S.-based Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) welcome the proposed increase in the share of development funding devoted to agriculture. “We call on the G8 to break away from past practice by shelving agriculture policies that reward short-term private profits over essential public priorities like food security, jobs and proper management of scarce natural resources,” said IATP’s Alexandra Spieldoch.

CIDSE and IATP welcome the focus on smallholder farmers and vulnerable groups by G8 governments, as well as their interest in exploring the feasibility of establishing a system of food reserves. We also call for coordinated action to discipline speculation on food prices.

“One billion people suffering from hunger should be enough to trigger serious action. G8 countries need to coordinate their support to developing countries to achieve food security. Agricultural policies designed in close collaboration with representative farmers organizations are needed to balance economic profitability and socio-ecological justice,” said Bernd Nilles, CIDSE Secretary General.

In a recent paper, *Global food responsibility*, CIDSE and IATP identify the role of major G8 members in creating the food crisis, and make the following recommendations for reforms:

- Global responses to the food crisis need to be inclusive, reinforce the U.N.’s role, and create binding commitments to end hunger;
- The right to food should guide policy-making around agriculture, food, and rural development;
- Support should reinforce agriculture’s role in ecological and social sustainability, land and water access for small scale producers and women farmers, as well as greater use of local seed varieties;
- Emphasis should be put on the development of infrastructure for local and regional markets. Investment is needed to overcome bottlenecks in agricultural value chains related to processing, transport, storage, and marketing;

- Develop rules to address price volatility, including food reserves and tougher regulation on speculation.

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**Notes to the editors:**

- **CIDSE** is an international alliance of Catholic development agencies. Its members share a common strategy in their efforts to eradicate poverty and establish global justice. CIDSE's advocacy work covers global governance; resources for development; climate change; food, agriculture & sustainable trade; EU development policy and business & human rights. [www.cidse.org](http://www.cidse.org).
- **The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)** works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. [www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org).
- **Read the report: [Global Food Responsibility – The European Union and the United States Must Chart a New Path](#)**, a CIDSE-IATP policy paper, May 2009
- The G8 Summit in L'Aquila comes on the heels of the announcement by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) that one sixth of humanity is undernourished in 2009, and that food prices have started rising again since January.