

CGIAR Annual General Meeting
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Chairman's Opening Statement

*"The CGIAR and Sustainable Development
-- Global Partnerships for Local Impact"*

**By
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1. Introduction: Thanks and Exhortation

We are especially grateful to the President Arroyo of the Republic of the Philippines for declaring this week International Agricultural Research Week, by decree. I thank Vice President Teofisto Guingona for his warm welcome. His thoughtful comments will influence our discussions. I thank Secretary of Agriculture Leonardo Montemayor for his participation as well.

I thank the Philippines Government and IRRI for co-hosting AGM02. This combined endeavor, and high-level engagement in AGM02, reaffirm the close involvement of the Philippines in the work of the CGIAR. Significant aspects of this collaboration are captured in the new publication, "Partnership in Action," a joint effort by the Philippines Government and IRRI.

This is the first AGM to be held outside World Bank headquarters in Washington DC. It will not be the last. We have moved swiftly to implement the Group's decision that an AGM should replace the two-meeting structure, and that AGM should be held in different locations on alternate years, "one in a developing Member country and the other in the US (at the World Bank) or in another developed Member country."

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a full agenda to cover in three days. I look forward to sharply focused discussion at the Stakeholder Meeting. Assessments and suggestions from that meeting will feed into the Business Meeting, the decision-making phase of AGM. We need clear and concise decisions that will determine the effectiveness and impact of the CGIAR System well into the future.

2. The World of 2050

What kind of future will that be?

The great transformations of the past 50 years suggest what we can expect some 50 years ahead. Science and technology have moved at an astounding pace. A knowledge explosion, combined with the revolution in information technology, have expanded the extent and substance of what we know, and determined how we use that knowledge. Today's agricultural productivity and food abundance, laser surgery, DNA testing, and the worldwide web, for instance, were unknown in the early 1950s. Tomorrow's world will be even more exciting, and challenging, as a new generation of innovation replaces what is commonplace today.

The world's population is expected to reach 9.3 billion by 2050, up from today's 6 billion. About \$110 trillion will be added to the current \$32 trillion global economy. If the anticipated economic growth is more equitably distributed, a wide swathe of the human family will benefit. Poverty, hunger and malnutrition,

destructive diseases, child mortality, gender disparities, illiteracy and ignorance, will all be affected.

Increased growth in poor countries must be utilized to eliminate poverty, and growth has to be environmentally and socially responsible. Sustainable development is the key.

If annual growth increases of 3.3 percent in low and middle-income countries were attained – these increases are roughly consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and past experience -- that would result in \$6300 per capita in those countries by 2050. This would make it possible for the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter to be met. How should such a sustained growth be achieved?

Historically, agricultural growth has been the catalyst of overall development and economic growth. Today, when 900 million of the world's poor live in rural areas, it is beyond doubt that agriculture and rural development must be on the front lines of any successful assault on poverty. Agriculture (encompassing crops, livestock, fisheries, and forestry) is the single most important sector in the economies of most poor countries. A one percent increase in yield can reduce the numbers living on under \$1 per day poverty by six and a quarter million, in the poorest countries. Poor people's links to the land are critical for the sustainability of communities, pastures, forests, and other natural resources.

The necessary caution is that if agricultural development is environmentally harmful it will inhibit sustainable development. We are already degrading natural resources:

- 40 percent of the world's cropland is degraded to some extent;
- Biodiversity is being lost at unprecedented rates;
- 40 percent of the world's fish stocks have been fished to the limit;
- 20-30 percent of the world's forests have been converted to agriculture;
- Agriculture uses some 70 percent of the world's fresh water resources;
- Agriculture and natural resources management are inextricably linked.

The demand for food is likely to double over the next 40-50 years, as a result of burgeoning population, with most of that increase in developing countries. Increased incomes could change dietary patterns with greater demand for livestock. These trends will increase existing strains on the environment unless productivity is fully sustainable. We must mobilize cutting edge science to make this happen.

Developing countries need support to broaden and deepen their scientific and technological capacities, create modern institutions, develop human resources for the new institutions, and create dynamic public and private sector alliances.

With the application of science and technology, we can strive to protect the world's precious biodiversity, ensure that our forests carry out essential environmental services, use and manage water more productively, and mitigate the disastrous consequences of climate change on tropical agriculture. Extreme weather events such as droughts and floods are already more frequent and more intense in Asia and Africa.

Yet science and technology must be fully supportive of sustainable development, ensuring both economic responsibility and social accountability.

We can, as well, press for "market security." Agricultural subsidies in industrialized countries amount to \$350 billion every year, a thousand times the expenditures of the CGIAR. . This blatant discrimination against developing country producers must be addressed. It is an economic and moral imperative. Trade reform could produce significant benefits if coupled with domestic agricultural sector reform. Estimates vary, but the benefits may be as high as \$137 billion for developing countries.

3. Towards Sustainable Development

As we seek to mobilize resources for sustainable development, we can draw strength from the rich mosaic of commitments that has emerged from the summits of the recent past.

This process began at the Earth Summit in Rio, which sparked a new development paradigm of environmentally and socially sustainable development, underpinned by international conventions on biodiversity, climate change, and desertification.

The UN Millennium Summit adopted the Millennium Development Goals for halving extreme poverty in the world by 2015. It focused on income; hunger, access to services; and the environment; among other issues.

The Monterrey Consensus laid the basis for a new development partnership founded on mutual accountability. These principles will drive implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The World Food Summit and the World Food Summit: *five years later* affirmed the Plan of Action to reduce hunger by half by 2015.

The Doha meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreed on a new round of trade negotiations that can be a "development round," setting out equitable rules for trade in areas ranging from agriculture to services.

We move, then, to the Johannesburg Summit or WSSD, where the CGIAR was actively and capably represented. The CGIAR was frequently mentioned in documents and discussions, and the CGIAR contribution was included in a

framework paper for action on agriculture, as part of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's WEHAB (water, energy, health, agriculture, and biodiversity) initiative.

The WSSD set targets and timetables for action on a number of fronts including reducing biodiversity loss by 2010, restoring depleted fisheries by 2015, halving the proportion of people who lack access to clean water or sanitation by 2015 and, by 2020, using and producing chemicals that do not harm human health and the environment.

There was more. The centrality of agriculture was reaffirmed. The World Bank with FAO launched a new international consultative process on the use of agricultural science and technology to reduce hunger and improve rural livelihoods. Thanks to the efforts of the CGIAR Private Sector Committee, CEOs of major private sector agricultural institutions signed a statement of corporate support for strengthening cooperation between the private and public sectors to promote agricultural research and agricultural development.

At Johannesburg, agricultural issues of trade, IPR, biodiversity, food security, productivity, and economic growth linkages dominated much discussion and debate. The groundwork has been laid to place agriculture in its rightful context, and to make progress toward the goal of sustainable development.

4. The CGIAR Response

The CGIAR has been preparing itself to participate fully in the global push for sustainable development. To be ready for our common future.

To ensure that our decision-making is effective, we streamlined our meeting structure and established an Executive Council (ExCo).

To develop coherence in governance, research, communications, and resource mobilization, we agreed to set up a System Office.

To strengthen mutually reinforcing linkages with the global science community, we decided that TAC should be transformed into a high-level Science Council. The Science Council will be ideally positioned to be involved in the international science initiative to which I have referred.

To re-focus our research agenda and build effective, working-level partnerships, we opted for Challenge Programs, to deal with the long-term, large and complex issues facing us. They will complement core research activities at each Center and cooperative working programs among Centers. Taken together and fully funded, they provide a coherent and cogent action agenda.

The specific niche of the CGIAR is research for development. But the CGIAR produces more than research. We produce knowledge, which enables us to mobilize

minds and energize thinking. Partnerships involving all the custodians of knowledge, traditional and contemporary, are indispensable, if we are to mobilize an array of knowledge resources at a global level to ensure local impact, and utilize and array of local knowledge as a basis for global impact.

Challenge Programs can encourage broad-based coalitions, harness cutting-edge science, benefit the deprived and disadvantaged, protect the environment, and strengthen the social network. All the ideas submitted for Challenge Programs are connected with the Millennium Development Goals and those of WSSD. They recognize the need for special efforts in Africa. More and more, they are being developed in collaboration with NARS and other groups such as NGOs and farmers' associations.

Two Challenge Programs in the "pilot" process, on "Biofortified Crops for Human Nutrition" and on "Water and Food" will be presented at the Stakeholder Meeting. They will then move to the Business Meeting where we all hope they will be approved. The CP process continues.

5. Conclusion: Moving Ahead

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Two years ago, at my first CGIAR meeting, I suggested that we needed to "elevate our game." To do that, our first challenge was to work together to help place agriculture more firmly on the international agenda as a foundation for support to research and development. Our efforts are beginning to be rewarded. Agriculture is firmly back on the development agenda: as an engine of economic growth, as a guardian of our fragile environment, and as a source of social well-being. That is a salutary development, but we cannot stop there.

You will hear more at AGM of how the Reform Program is progressing. Let us remember, however, that our Reform Program is only the initial response of the CGIAR to continually evolving global circumstances. Further innovation and experimentation will undoubtedly occur.

Internal transformation in response to external change is the basis of survival itself. Experimentation reinforces effectiveness, as well, by producing new ideas and mechanisms for dealing with complex issues. The CGIAR, moreover, is intrinsically oriented towards experimentation, innovation, and change, core characteristics of science. Corporate responsibility must also become an essential element of change.

Center scientists, the core resource of the CGIAR System, have as always reacted positively to the need for change. They remain committed to mobilizing knowledge to serve the needs of the poor and hungry. We will honor our scientists and their NARS partners later today, when this year's Science Awards are announced. In

doing so, we need to remind ourselves that Center scientists often work under grueling conditions. In recent weeks, WARDA management and staff have been particularly challenged. Let us show our appreciation of their efforts with a round of applause.

I wish to thank CGIAR Center Directors and members, too, for their leadership and support that guarantee the dynamism and continued relevance of the CGIAR System. Membership continues to be strong in its dedication to the goals of the CGIAR, and to grow in numbers. Israel, Malaysia, Morocco, and the Syngenta Foundation wish to join the CGIAR. I suggest that, in customary CGIAR fashion, we welcome them as new members by acclamation. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues. We have work to do. Welcome to AGM02. Thank you.

Chairman: I now invite the heads of the new member delegations, currently seated as observers, to take their seats as members, and to speak briefly, if they so desire. (New members may speak in the following order: Israel, Malaysia, Morocco, and the Syngenta Foundation. Adoption of the Agenda will follow.)