



WORLD FOOD PRIZE LAUREATES CALL FOR ACTION TO END GLOBAL HUNGER AS FAMINE WARNINGS RISE



March 26, 2024

Esteemed Leaders of the G20:

Brazil's Presidency of the G20 comes at a pivotal time. The dramatic rise in hunger and famine in recent years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change and violent conflict has stalled progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet transforming our food systems to deliver healthy, nutritious diets equitably and sustainably remains vitally important to accelerate progress towards 2030 and invigorate the Paris Agreement climate goals. As his fellow World Food Prize Laureates, we are encouraged by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's focus on addressing hunger and poverty in the G20 Presidency. We urge all leaders to follow his example and **champion bold action to tackle the global food crisis** and put us on a path to achieving SDG 2, our shared global goal to end hunger in all its forms.

This is urgent. Right now, 735 million people are hungry. A quarter of a billion people face acute food insecurity, with women and children disproportionately affected. Food prices remain high, with the poorest hit the hardest. Ironically, the very people the world relies on—farmers—are struggling to survive. Most concerning, the United Nations (UN) has warned of imminent famine facing several areas of the world. Furthermore, tackling hunger is critical to addressing poverty, inequality, climate change and many other issues.

But it is not too late—2024 could be the turning point. In our work, we are inspired every day by examples of individuals, communities and organizations leading the charge against hunger and malnutrition, helped by innovation and technology. In recognition of one such inspiration, we are releasing this letter to coincide with the 110th birth anniversary of Dr. Norman Borlaug, who was instrumental in turning around a dire global food crisis in the mid-20th century.

In the 21st century, it is primarily the lack of political will and leadership that allow hunger and malnutrition to persist and to rise. President Lula knows this better than anyone. In his first administration, he put zero hunger at the heart of his priorities and achieved inspiring results. The World Food Prize he received in 2011 was a testament to his leadership in halving hunger and poverty. The programs he implemented—cash aid to poor families, purchasing food from smallholder farmers and a school meals program—are the kind of measures which must be scaled up internationally.

President Lula's decision to place hunger among his top G20 priorities and to establish the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty is most welcome. We are hopeful that these initiatives will coalesce cooperative action on saving lives, building resilience and securing the future. As World Food Prize Laureates who have dedicated decades of our careers to ending hunger, we ask the leaders of the G20 to help secure an updated global plan, backed by evidence and sustained investment, to get the world back on track toward the end of hunger.

THAT PLAN MUST INCLUDE MEASURES TO:

- **Save Lives:** Fully fund the UN's humanitarian appeals for food and nutrition assistance;
- **Scale Up Resilience:** Support the scaling of climate-resilient agricultural technologies to reach hundreds of millions of smallholder farmers, as well as effective social protection, nutrition, school feeding and climate adaptation programs reaching women health workers, youth and communities on the frontlines of the food crisis;
- **Secure the Future:** Reform the multilateral financial system to fix the unsustainable debt of low-income countries and unlock the finance needed to transform the global food system and expand climate action. This will bring about more sustainable farming, better access to affordable healthy diets and reduced food waste; and
- **Enhance Cooperation:** Strengthen coordination and accountability across governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks, international financial institutions, bilateral donors, philanthropy, research and development institutions, civil society, farmer organizations and the private sector.

With your leadership, nations could commit to this plan by the end of Brazil's G20 Presidency. When the world returns to Brazil in 2025 for COP30, it will be to intensified international action on climate change, led by the food and agriculture sector.

This is vital to us all. This should be the year we begin to sunset hunger, and the World Food Prize Laureates are ready to work with you to play our part.

Signed in Partnership,

World Food Prize Laureates

Akinwumi A. Adesina | President, African Development Bank; 2017 Laureate
Maria Andrade | Principal Scientist, International Potato Center; 2016 Laureate
David Beckmann | President Emeritus, Bread for the World; 2010 Laureate
Howarth Bouis | Emeritus Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute; 2016 Laureate
Mary-Dell Chilton | 2023 National Medal of Technology & Innovation Recipient; 2013 Laureate
Gebisa Ejeta | Director, Purdue Center for Global Food Security; 2023 National Medal of Science Recipient; 2009 Laureate
Robert T. Fraley | Former Executive VP & CTO, Monsanto; 2013 Laureate
Simon N. Groot | Founder/Honorary Chairman, East-West Seed Group; 2019 Laureate
Modadugu V. Gupta | Senior Research Fellow, WorldFish; 2005 Laureate
Lawrence Haddad | Executive Director, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition; 2018 Laureate
Hans R. Herren | President, Millennium Institute & Biovision Foundation; 1995 Laureate
Gurdev S. Khush | Professor Emeritus, University of California, Davis; 1996 Laureate
John Agyekum Kufuor | President of Ghana 2001-2009; 2011 Laureate
Heidi Kühn | Founder and CEO, Roots of Peace; 2023 Laureate
Rattan Lal | Director, CFAES Rattan Lal Center for Carbon Management and Sequestration; 2020 Laureate
Jan W. Low | Managing Director, JWLOW Limited; 2016 Laureate
Jo Luck | Former President, Heifer International; 2010 Laureate
Robert Mwangi | Former Sweet Potato Breeder, International Potato Center; 2016 Laureate
David Nabarro | Co-lead, UN Global Crisis Response Group; 2018 Laureate
Philip E. Nelson | Professor Emeritus, Purdue University; 2007 Laureate
Per Pinstrup-Andersen | Professor Emeritus, Cornell University; 2001 Laureate
Cynthia Rosenzweig | Senior Research Scientist, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies; 2022 Laureate
Pedro Sanchez | Professor, Tropical Soils, University of Florida; 2002 Laureate
Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted | Global Lead for Nutrition and Public Health, WorldFish; 2021 Laureate
Marc Van Montagu | Chairman, VIB - International Plant Biotechnology Outreach, Belgium; 2013 Laureate
Surinder Vasal | Former Maize Breeder, CIMMYT; 2000 Laureate
Muhammad Yunus | Founder, Grameen Bank; Chairman, Yunus Centre; 1994 Laureate