



### SUMMARY MINUTES

#### Director General's meeting with IAAH partners and Ms Eva Clayton

The meeting was held on Friday 17 October from 15h00 to 16h00 in the Australia Room .

**The Director General** opened the meeting thanking Ms Eva Clayton and participants for their availability. He wished to hold an informal brain storming meeting on the future of the IAAH . The Director General recalled that the joint statement of Heads of Rome based Agencies issued on May 2006 constituted a solid basis for reinvigorating the Alliance. However RBAs needed to be working more closely together in the framework of the IAAH with Civil Society and Private Sector partners. In particular the role of small farmer's organizations needed to be strengthened. The Director General mentioned the challenges created by the food crisis which were amply debated during the High Level Conference and the CFS. The food crisis further aggravated by the financial crisis had finally led world political leaders to the conclusion that there was an urgent need for a global governance on food security issues. However the necessity of building on existing institutions was also recognized. Ms Clayton has been requested to examine the possible role of the IAAH in this context taking stock of discussions at the CFS and the side events.

**Ms Eva Clayton- honorary co-chair of the US alliance to end Hunger and former Head of IAAH Secretariat-** explained that her mission aimed at examining the strengths and weaknesses of the IAAH through informal consultations with Permanent Representatives, members of Civil Society, farmer organizations and Rome based Agencies including key FAO managers. She had mentioned to her interlocutors that the IAAH had reached a very critical point after five years of existence. The influence and impact of IAAH needed to be significantly improved .Time had therefore come for founders and partners of the Alliance to be more serious with regard to both their political commitment and their financial engagement. It seemed to her that FAO managers were not sufficiently aware of the objectives and activities of the IAAH . She recognized having asked "unashamedly "more resources to WFP, IFAD and Bioversity. Her conversations with Permanent Representatives reinforced her conviction that views on National Alliances role varied considerably from a country to another. In her own country or in Brazil , although the process was initiated before the creation of the IAAH it was felt that this new initiative was adding value to their national efforts while in Germany this was not the case. In this country the Government had intensive consultations with a very powerful network of NGO/CSOs working in the field of hunger and poverty reduction so as to explore their interest in forming a National Alliance. The response was negative because this network felt that they

would lose their identity and subsequently their influence if they were to be renamed as the German Alliance against Hunger. Ms Clayton suggested that joining IAAH did not imply necessarily for an existing organization -with similar objectives- to change its own name. At the contrary the IAAH was welcoming partners willing to maintain their identity and priorities. What was at stake was not absorption or integration, but opening a new space allowing very diverse national entities to dialogue with each other, exchanging views and best practices, eventually engaging in twinning arrangements and wanting to join forces to make their voices stronger in the international scene. Small farmer's representatives seemed somewhat sceptical about their participation as key players in the process of creating and developing National Alliances and they requested IAAH to unambiguously state that small farmer organizations should be having a central role. Ms Clayton said that most of her interlocutors stressed that IAAH should be more explicit on the rationale for its advocacy role. In addition advocacy activities should be very precisely targeted. Finally the issue of mobilizing resources for the IAAH depended heavily on its ability of attracting more partners, being more visible and more result oriented.

**Max Finberg - Director of the US Alliance to end Hunger** - reminded that IAAH was born from the decision of world political leaders at the World Food Summit to translate their commitment to end hunger into a mechanism allowing governments to share their aims and responsibilities with key sectors of civil society. He said there was no better inspiration for emerging national alliances than the example of Brazil. In this country the President of Republic and Government authorities are engaged since a few years in a true and effective dialogue with civil society and private sector identifying priorities for hunger and poverty eradication and providing significant budget allocations directly benefiting to the poor. He mentioned that the US alliance to end hunger - operating in a totally different context- had also the merit of constituting a wide multi stakeholders platform. He believed that IAAH had an essential role in stimulating fruitful exchanges between National Alliances as testified by twinning arrangements between US Alliance and Ghana, Guatemala and Jordan. Guatemala had adopted a law guaranteeing the right to food to its citizens which is now considered as a model in the Latin American and Caribbean region including Brazil.

**Elisabeth Atinanga - Plateforme des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC)**

briefly presented the aims and achievements of her organization which focuses on providing advice and support to small farmers/ producers -women and men - on their various activities ( production, market, training etc..). A key activity of the platform is to provide small farmers with policy advice so as to strengthen their ability to influence food and agriculture policies. She underlined the central role of small farmers/producers in agriculture production and stressed that there will be no progress achieved towards food security without their participating to policy and programme formulation and implementation. Ms Atinanga urged IAAH to facilitate inclusion of small farmer's organizations into national alliances where they should have their interests seriously taken into consideration by Governments and other stakeholders. She also stressed that National Alliances in Africa cannot be credible if their membership does not include rural women organizations which constitute the backbone of agriculture production and food markets

**Paul Larsen - Director of external relations -WFP**

confirmed the necessity for Rome Based Agencies to pursue their efforts in strengthening their cooperation and mentioned that IAAH is a key part of this process. The twin track approach should continue to guide RBAs work at country level where there is ample evidence that this is the most effective way of addressing food problems. Mr. Larsen

underlined that the credibility of IAAH depends on its capacity to promote, coordinate and assist a solid network of National Alliances. With regard to mobilizing resources for the IAAH/NAAH he suggested to explore with greater emphasis opportunities with donor countries as he believed that the new context of high food prices had constrained political leaders to revisit their aid priorities and engage more significantly in supporting adequate policies for a rapid and sustainable increase of food production in food deficit countries.

**Magdalena Kropinwicka - Action Aid** - said she was speaking on behalf of her organization and OXFAM , both organizations deeply involved in global advocacy but also in providing support to the whole range of actors working on hunger and poverty issues. She recalled that Action Aid is an active partner of the IAAH and is looking forward to increase its participation to IAAH activities. She has underlined that both organizations are fully supportive of IAAH and want to see it as the lead mechanism for building the Global Partnership on Hunger. In terms of building dialogue with civil society on national level, engagement with the International Food Security Network should be further explored.

Action Aid is facing restrictions in human and financial resources which put limits on the current possibility of investment into IAAH this year. At the same time she mentioned the very positive recent step taken by the IAAH secretariat in initiating consultations for rotating the Chair of the IAAH and added that Action Aid would welcome IFAD as next Chair. At the same time, being mindful of the financial support given by FAO to the Secretariat of the Alliance, she wonders whether it would be feasible to move the Secretariat.

#### **Ms Amira Muammar - IFAD**

confirmed that IFAD is very supportive of the IAAH and wants it to focus its operations at country level , especially in Africa . National Alliances are multi- stakeholders platforms where small farmers should be playing a key role. She mentioned that IFAD had just approved a small grant aiming at building the capacities of National Alliances in advocacy and communication . Food security theme groups and small farmers participating to IFAD's small farmer's forum were invited to participate in the project. She recognized that the high food prices created a new momentum for the IAAH and for NAAH. The momentum should not be lost.

**Ms. Sarala Gopalan- International Federation of Agriculture Producers (IFAP)** recalled that this global network of farmer's organizations was the biggest forum for family farmers in the world. IFAP conveys the message that farmers have the right to protect and develop their source of revenue. IFAP has recently estimated that 50% of world harvests were lost. She believed that FAO and national alliances should work together to rapidly disseminate knowledge on preventing food losses. Ms Gopalan highlighted that IFAP was focussing on building the capacities of farmers in all food security related issues. The aim is to make family farmers increasingly self reliant and influential in shaping national and global policies. In this regard IFAP and IAAH were natural partners and they should be seeking to find practical ways for cooperating.

**Mr. Jeremy Cherfas - Bioversity International** - stressed the importance of the IAAH website as a platform of exchange between national Alliances and confirmed that his organization stands ready to assist in this matter. He also mentioned that the Bioversity was open to any suggestion susceptible to strengthen the IAAH and the sense of ownership of its members .However the true challenge for IAAH is to an effective mechanism for building capacities in advocacy and communication at country level.

**Ms Clayton-** mentioned that some of her interlocutors acknowledged that despite its openness IAAH was viewed as not sufficiently independent from FAO. Therefore it seemed to her that the longstanding issue of providing the IAAH with a suitable governance structure allowing equal participation in the management of the IAAH had to be examined. This issue was also related to the role the IAAH could play in the envisaged global partnership for global agriculture and food security. She believes that the ball is in the RBA court to come up with a proposal that would respond to such global partnership. RBAs are equipped to do more together for strengthening the capacities of National Alliances. Small farmers should be given more access to RBA advice and expertise at country level. FAO Departments, regional and country offices needed to be more proactive.

**Ms Lorraine Williams** - recalled that since the foundation of the IAAH by Rome based Agencies, FAO was assuming the costs of the Secretariat . However, National Alliances needed more tangible support. She mentioned that during their mission to Headquarters FAO Representatives were systematically briefed on the IAAH and solicited to actively facilitate the creation and/or development of National Alliances. They were invited to seriously explore existing opportunities to foster the dialogue and cooperation among UN Agencies, Governments, civil society, farmer's organizations and private sector. She believed that management should encourage FAORs in this sense. Finally she added she welcomed the proposal for rotating the Chair of IAAH and would advise that the process of nominating the Chair be participatory and transparent .

**Ms Lamia Tabet-Nême** recalled that the sub- regional forum of National Alliances held in Jordan last December showed case in an exemplary manner of fruitful cooperation among various components of the IAAH . The Forum hosted by the Jordanian Alliance was organized with the participation of the US and Brazilian Alliances, WFP Office in Jordan, various FAO country offices and the FAO Regional Office. Such approach could be replicated in other countries and/ or regions.

**The Director General** observed that IAAH should remain a very flexible process at global level. Only National Alliances needed to be structured with a view to become credible forums owned by main actors involved in food security. As recognized by participants the structure of National Alliances owe to be different and the challenge for IAAH is to respond adequately to a wide range of situations and requests. Indeed he believed that the role of the IAAH was to facilitate and nurture country driven processes.

The Director General concluded the meeting with warm thanks to Ms Clayton for her useful mission and he expressed his satisfaction of KCD's work as head of the Secretariat. He also thanked participants for their commitment to the IAAH and for their advice on making it more attractive to its partners.