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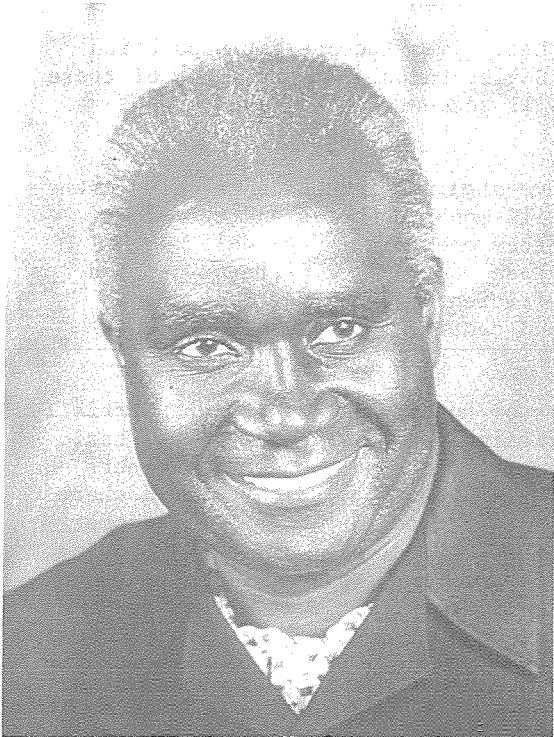
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THE FRANK MACDOUGALL MEMORIAL LECTURE
TO THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. KENNETH D. KAUNDA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

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His Excellency Dr. Kenneth D. Kaunda,
President of the Republic of Zambia

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director-General,
Your Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,
Guests,
Brothers and Sisters,

I am greatly moved by your kind invitation to me to deliver this year's MacDougall Memorial Lecture. I have accepted it to associate my compatriots and myself with the global quest for social justice which the banishment of hunger and poverty implies. It is a rare privilege and a great honour for me to give this lecture in memory of Frank MacDougall whose vision and effort greatly contributed to the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1945.

Mr. Director-General, under your able, inspiring and devoted leadership the Food and Agriculture Organization has been making every painstaking effort to uplift the plight of millions of people trapped in starvation, poverty and crippling despondency.

There are 4 billion people on the earth. 450 million of these are wretchedly poor and hunger is a daily companion. These are also the victims of malnutrition and the most vulnerable target for disease. The poor and hungry are twice as many as the total population of the United States of America. By the year 2000 AD the population of the World will have passed the 6 billion mark. It is estimated that the number of poor and hungry

people will be 600 million. That will be over two and half times the present population of the United States or two and half times that of the Soviet Union. The majority of these hungry people are in the Third World which by 2000 AD will account for at least 60% of total world. They now account for 52%.

The majority of the Developing World countries have attained independence only in the last twenty years. Their economies are by and large still mono economies and therefore highly vulnerable. This is even more the case because they are largely agricultural, dealing in commodities that are highly perishable. Because of the lack of resources and technological know-how their agriculture is largely inefficient and ineffective. As a group they do not produce enough to feed their people and continue to be dependent on international charity.

Their attempts to break out of the vicious circles of hunger and poverty are partially frustrated by the high cost of imports from the industrialized world. Thus even the basic implements for efficient agriculture such as ploughs and tractors, pesticides and others are generally beyond their means. To make ends meet they are contracting debts even where the hope of repayment is very remote. These debts are incurred to enable them to become an effective market for their creditors. This year alone the total debt of the Developing Countries owing to the Developed Countries is at least US \$300 billion. It is estimated that by 2000 AD the total outstanding and disbursed debt will be greatly in excess of US \$1 278 billion which is the estimate for 1990.

Against this situation, a crisis of expectations is sweeping through their countries. Their people are no longer prepared to wait for tomorrow to eat. They want to eat now. Their people want all the good things of life and when they can't have them ask 'why not?' So politically, the Developing Countries are in a political ferment arising mainly from the failure of their economies to develop at a faster pace than is the case now. We thus have, as an ingredient for world instability, not only the 450 million hungry people but the whole Developing World which is impatient about the distribution of prosperity in the world today.

That feeling of under-dog is not without a basis. Side by side with the poverty and abject hunger of their countries, the Developed World squanders - and there is no other word for it - at least US \$400 billion in armaments annually. Side by side with their squalor the Developed World reinforces its laagers of privilege by tariff barriers. The decade which is just coming to the end was dubbed the Second Development Decade. The target of 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) set for official development assistance remains, except for one or two countries in the whole Developed World, unreachable. It is unlikely to exceed 0.35% by 2000 AD. The response of the Developed World to the economic crisis that has swept the world has been further cuts in aid to the Developing Countries.

Contrasted with this kaleidoscope of unrelievable poverty and hunger on the one hand and shameless prosperity on the other, are the solid achievements which Man has claimed for himself in the field of human rights. Man may still be oppressed. But he knows now that he is meant to be free. And what is more, he knows now that there is hope because the rest of the world wishes and will make him free. He may be poor and hungry and in terms of property his only fixed assets may be his teeth. But he too knows that before the law courts of many countries, before the International Court of Justice, justice will be done to him because he is a human being.

Man may be useless as an instrument of production. But he too knows that he will not be cast away in justice for that very failure because as a human being he knows that he partakes of an intrinsic divinity which sets him apart from all other creatures. So, it is that through the decisions of national codes and national courts, through the precedents being set every day by the World Body, through Man's own actions and decisions, the frontiers of human rights are being expanded. The freedoms of free association, worship regardless of colour, race or creed, equal opportunity, justice and many others have become hallmarks of our international relations. I note with pleasure that the FAO was the first UN Agency to admit the Council for Namibia to full membership of the

Organization. This very fact and the Organization's leadership in the funding of the attendance of liberation movements to its conferences and meetings underlines your concern for the freedom and justice of man irrespective of where he comes from.

This outgoing decade may never be remembered by what it deliberately set out to achieve - development. But it will be remembered for advances made to consolidate Man's rights. It is this process that has made an international outcast of all the minority racist and fascist regimes of Southern Africa.

But freedom and human rights without food are like freeing a prisoner and then not giving him the key to get out of his cell. The 450 million people who today live in the shadow of hunger and death from malnutrition can never be free men and women, however entrenched their other freedoms may be. These freedoms are only prospects held out and not realised. Between them and the prospect lies a huge gulf of fire and they may never live to cross it to the other side. Freedom is for the living and not the dead. No man or woman can enjoy it unless he or she lives. Nature has ensured that the most intimate activity to life - breathing in and out - will continue from birth to death automatic and free. But nature has also ensured that while the urge to eat will be instinctive, its satisfaction will involve work and the use of scarce resources. We may sigh that if only our ancestor Adam had not eaten the forbidden fruit! But the reality is that nothing sweat, nothing eat.

I believe that the international community of Man appreciates fully this point that Man, goaded and persecuted by hunger, can never really be free. I believe that if it could simply be willed, all our countries would will that there be no hunger on this globe. But it cannot and in any case, an assembly of Ministers responsible for agriculture and their farmers, is hardly the platform for speculation in fiction. What alternatives are open to Man?

It seems to me that long before we tackle the business of resource transfers and others there are ideological bottlenecks which we should resolve because it is these and not the absolute level of resources which influence these very transfers. The first of these is the self-assuring conclusion on the part of those who have that because only 11% of mankind is wretchedly hungry today as against an almost certainly higher figure in the past, therefore the situation is improving. The protagonists of this position invent a rosier world to excuse inaction. Let us look at the nature of eating for a moment. Food production is less an individual business now than it used to be in the past. But eating continues very much as a highly individualist activity. Someone can eat the food meant for me. But he cannot eat that food on my behalf. When a man is hungry and dying it does not help him to know that he must die so that someone else must eat his food and live. This may be the stuff out of which heroes, mothers and martyrs are made. But it is not the stuff of ordinary mortals. The elimination of hunger is therefore not something that must wait to take its time. It is an action that must be undertaken with all the urgency that Man can summon.

When a tragedy occurs, there are always two ways of responding to it. One is to do something about it. The other is to exclude oneself from being part of the solution, to draw up one's shutters, to hope that one can forget and go to sleep. Thus the innkeeper to whom Joseph went to ask for room in the inn solved the problem by shutting the door in Joseph's face and exclaiming 'No room at the inn.' That however did not stop Jesus being born and being born in the stable among the lowing sheep. In our world of today, more than at any other time, man is busiest building walls of separation from fellow Man. Just at the time when a universal ethic appears to be at its highest, the nation state, buttressed by modern technology, is also at its arrogant and defiant worst. When we had the village and then the city state Man was more universal than he is today. He thought less in terms of his state and more in terms of Man. These nation states carried too far are going to kill Man because they blunt his sensitivity to the sufferings of the whole of mankind. I will be moved generally about the hunger of 450 million people. But I am unlikely to do anything about it unless some of those hungry people are my fellow

countrymen. Fellowship in humanity has become more and more identified with a common national state. Is it therefore surprising that nation states with the affluence to do something about the problem will choose to fritter away their resources on advertisements to push up the sales of this or that beverage rather than divert these very resources to the hungry and dying?

The metaphysical poet John Donne once wrote that no Man was an island and that the sufferings of another Man diminish him. That statement is as true today as it was then. The evil social and political consequences of hunger can no longer be confined to the hungry areas of the world in these days of quick mass communications. Hungry men never won a war. Even less so the men and women drifting inexorably to their end on the barge of malnutrition. But hunger breeds in men the worst form of despair and the great upheavals of this world have their origins in the despair of men. Do not expect me to have any vested interest in the peace and security of a world that is only so secure because it keeps me and my children hungry. That kind of peace is an imposition. It failed, perhaps for the thousandth time in the history of Man, to still the hungry crowds that stormed the Tuilleries in 1789, decapitated the Ancien Regime and set in train the most lethal weapon against dictatorships that has ever shaped the political history of Man. The socialism of the East as represented by Karl Marx and Engels may still be uneasy bedfellows with the Capitalism to which the American Revolution gave birth. But both these processes owe their origin in some part to the French Revolution and to that irrational wave of anger that one day sent the Paris crowds on the march to Versailles to demand food from the beleaguered but insensitive monarchy. Those were only a few thousand people. Now there are 450 million in every way in worse circumstances than ever before.

In this greatly civilised world success and triumph should be conceivable without the defeat and deprivation of others. We must cling to the vision of the triumph and advance of any one nation being the success of the whole of mankind. To envisage otherwise is to mistake the enemy and the battleground. The enemy to our freedom is not the hungry person. It is hunger. The battleground is not the country of starvation. It is the whole earth because the result of the defeat of one people has far-reaching consequences for humanity. In this matter of hunger, let humanity see itself as one people ranged against hunger. For so long as a section of humanity is deprived and hungry for that long will hunger continue to lurk silently in the shadows of the banquet halls of the affluent peoples. If we have no conscience to trouble us let us at least have the instinct of self-interest and self-preservation to prod us into exceptional effort to wipe out hunger.

My introductory remarks are really meant to make only one point, namely, that the problem of hunger is the business of the whole of humanity, and not just of those who are afflicted by it. The quality of human freedom itself depends on the resolution of this problem as does peace itself. Therefore this is not a matter to which mankind should be indifferent. It is a matter for urgent international action.

In the short term the strategy for ensuring world food security is essentially a distribution problem. Food aid by way of switching surpluses to needy areas of the globe has played an important role in relieving hunger and malnutrition and here I would like to commend the FAO for this programme and its efficient administration of the programme. Last year alone the FAO moved approximately US \$90 million of food aid from surplus to starving areas. This prompt response from the FAO must be a justification on the part of the surplus areas for more aid and not less. I congratulate the nations that have responded and call upon them and all of us to contribute to these efforts which relieve hunger.

But dependence on these massive transfers of food as the major strategy for securing world food security is not enough. Indeed it is an inadequate response. The FAO Bulletin entitled 'Food Outlook' carried the following ominous comment on the movement of food stocks:

'Import requirements of wheat and coarse grains in 1979/80 are forecast by FAO at 169 million tons, 11 million above last season and the largest ever. But if current transport problems in the main exporting countries are not quickly resolved, actual shipments may fall short of forecast requirements.'

There is also of course the problem of sufficient early warning to enable effective action. For we must remember that whereas it takes weeks and even months to move surpluses from one country to another, it only takes days for the human body to give in to hunger and for the spirit to wilt.

The long-term answer for world food security lies in ensuring self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs for the Third World where the majority of the hungry people are. I want to put myself in the position of the surplus areas and to anticipate their problems in this strategy of the shift of emphasis from food aid as such to aid to develop the food resources of the Third World. For the farmer from the Developed World the food aid programme, insofar as it moves food surpluses off his national market represents an expansion of the market and a firming up of his local market. He is much happier with a government buying up his surpluses at remunerative prices, even if it is to make a gift of them to another country than with a policy of self-sufficiency for the recipients of food aid which makes it impossible for him to dispose of his surpluses. From the recipient's point of view there is also a problem. If people starve they will ask why their government cannot secure emergency food aid for them. But if it imports that food, that special section of the community called farmers and its representation in politics will blame it for policies that result in insufficient production and in the offering of national markets to foreign farmers. Food transfers that do not take into account the capacity of the local farming industry to make up the shortage certainly end up ruining the local farming industry which must be encouraged to expand, sometimes at all costs. The transfers have to continue but the dumping must not be part of the equation. But the emphasis must be on these Developing Countries becoming self-sufficient in basic production. Besides, it is not honourable to continue to depend on others to feed you. In our tradition in Zambia we give a stranger food for the first few days. If he stays on we give him an axe and a hoe. The symbolism is that no one who is not a stranger has a right to food grown by some one else. He must grow it himself.

But food self-sufficiency for the Third World should not be the only objective of the strategy for world food security. In countable years to come most of the Developed World will run out of land and other resources. Even given its falling rate of population increase, that land will still become insufficient to support even programmes for self-sufficiency. It will also reach a point where it will become only marginally responsive to further doses of technological know-how.

If we are tempted to dismiss this claim as unrealistic let us remember that except for the fact that the Developed World brought its technical know-how and other resources to bear on the production of oil in the Arab countries, the world might never have made the atomic and nuclear age because oil has been basic to the technological advances of Man in the last century. Now, just as the fact that there are still vast oil resources in the Arab world today does not mean that there will always be these resources, it does not follow that because there is enough land to cultivate in the Developed world today, there will always be enough land. In fact we know that there won't be and that the cards will certainly be reversed unless technology is harnessed now to render the vast untapped lands of the Third World productive. We thus have, as a human race, a common interest in ensuring greatly increased production in the new areas. If the human race does not merely want to see the hunger belt move from one region to another it must devote resources, and now is the time, to the full development of the capacity of every region to provide food.

The great talk, in the wake of the oil crisis, is that nuclear energy is the strong runner as an alternative. Until only recently, the oil crisis was not a crisis of the availability of oil. It was a crisis of price. Today inflation has so eroded into profit that the issue is no longer price but the future world security of oil supplies. But although there is some realisation that reserves are running out, the world is still obsessed with price and therefore not doing enough to seek out genuine and viable alternatives. I would like to suggest to you that biological energy will prove to be the most viable alternative. Whether it is a derivative of some corn, molasses or plant, it will need land. It may well turn out that the only viable bio-energy can only be derived

from crops grown in the tropics. If that should happen, how will the world secure its future unless it starts now? The world must think of the oil crisis as a crisis of the uncertainty of future oil supplies and start now to seek alternatives. Those alternatives may lie as much in nuclear energy as in bio-energy and therefore agriculture.

Between now and the turn of the century agricultural production in the Third World will not make dramatic progress without exceptional effort on the part of all of us. Indeed estimates show that output in these countries will already have declined as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) from 19% in 1975 to 14% by 1990. Against this, the share of the developing countries, manufactured exports in the markets of the industrialised countries will only be around 15%. If real progress is to be made, the key factor will be the millions of farmers, large and small. So the question of their readiness to adapt to changed methods must be asked before all else. There is no point in a massive re-direction of resources to the Third World if the farmer will not - and this is sometimes used as justification for minimum effort by the Developed countries - change. I have overwhelming confidence in the commonsense of the farmer in the Third World. Indeed I go so far as to say he is no different to the farmer in the Developed World in his reactions to situations. The farmer the world-over is a realist. His politics are land, weather, the cost and availability of inputs and prices of this products. He is an eternal complainer because the grass is always greener across the fence. But he will not give up his side of the fence for anything. His ambition is to develop his land and whether it is an individual or collective farm, he wants to feel that his children and their children will somehow relate. I say that he is a chronic complainer. The measure of this talent is that he sees nothing wrong in complaining against God. He is likely to see even less wrong in complaining against his government. The farmer is not responsive to direction. The only direction that he understands is a worthwhile return for his labours and investment. It is INCENTIVES. These incentives have to include not only a high but free market price for his produce but also a very low and controlled price for his inputs. He does not want to be the man who suffers from a controlled or free market price operation. The farmer the world-over is not necessarily unresponsive to new technologies. He is suspicious of them. He has paid dearly in the past as a guinea pig. Why should he now assume that any new methods will help him? His own governments have rarely been protective to him, themselves wilting under the pressure of the high salesmanship and sometimes commissions of the Developed World. If he is in the Third World he has seen the real value of his labours fall and he has seen himself over the years reduced to a cog in a big conveyor system that exists to pamper the politically articulate urban masses.

The task of change is the task of doing something about the condition of this farmer in the Third World even though I dare say that what I have stated above applies equally to all farmers. I know that given clear demonstration that he can benefit from change, the farmer is not a conservative. He will move faster than his political mentors. The challenge is therefore that we should all do more to motivate him than we are doing now. In this respect let me commend the results of the recent conference held under the auspices of the FAO between 12th and 20th July here in Rome on the subject of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. Your recommendations and resolutions constitute in themselves, a unique charter for the peasant farmer. Never before has world opinion focussed on him and his plight so closely and intimately. It is right that this should be so because it is not resources nor machines alone but mainly Man that will change the situation.

But that Man needs the aid of resources to be productive. The most important resource is his personal improvement that comes by way of various educational programmes aimed at the farmer. But beyond that he still needs aid and that is where this organization comes in firmly. Aid comes hard to the farmer and most of it is not without strings. What aid there is, therefore, the use of that aid must be maximised. The FAO is through its dynamic Director-General giving an impressive lead, a lead which other international organizations could well emulate, in this direction. Faced with the problem of marshalling resources for greater effectiveness you Sir, Mr. Director-General, did not only cut back on a large number of publications, posts and meetings to save money for more worthwhile ventures, but you also established out of these savings the Technical Cooperation Programme which is now

making it possible for this organization to move speedily to provide emergency aid, badly needed inputs including agricultural machinery and quick disbursing pre-investment project preparation. Through the food security scheme you will now be able to assist developing countries in the formulation of national food security policies and mobilize external aid for the realisation of these policies. Your programme for the prevention of food losses is indeed a welcome action and is contributing to the total stock of available food for the human race. It is hoped this programme can be expanded and made even more effective. I urge you, Mr. Director-General and this organization to continue this good work. A breath of fresh air is breezing through this edifice called the FAO. Through the appointment of country representatives your work is being brought to the door steps of the peasant of the Third World. You are the interface between the peasant and the nations that have the resources. I pray that you will continue with the momentum of urgency with which this organization is now invested. The existence of international organizations such as this organization and others underline the need for an international action in this struggle. This required intensified common effort has not been readily forthcoming. What has been forthcoming instead, has been the strengthening of definitive economic blocks of the rich countries.

The strengthening of economic blocks and the present trade policies have resulted in locking up of resources and technologies in these countries. This situation can only change if the international community accepts absolutely inter-dependence. Developing countries require resources, science and technology to enable them to increase their food production levels. All of these exist in developed countries. The international action required must be an agreement to transfer resources from developed to developing countries. These resources should be utilised to accelerate food production in developing countries. Until it is possible for developing countries to have access to resources which abound in the developed countries, it will be very difficult for the countries of the Third World to make much greater contributions to the world food situation. The efforts of the international organizations and well intentioned resolutions resulting from international conferences will continue to be frustrated.

The International Community has created mechanisms and institutions through which the transfer and equitable distribution of resources required for agriculture can be channelled. These organizations can only play their full role if the principle of equitable distribution of world resources is accepted and undertaken by all countries. It is evident from the failures of UNCTAD conferences that the human race is still far from uniting in the fight against what we in Zambia, guided by our Philosophy of Humanism, analyse as POVERTY and its off-shoots of hunger, ignorance, corruption, crime and exploitation of man by man. Yet the world would be so much happier in the end if all countries of the world produced enough to eat. The failure of these conferences is largely due to the resistance of Man to share what he has with his neighbour and the desire to hold on to and protect what one has. Not only the desire to hold and protect but also the tendency to acquire more even from those who do not have! All these weaknesses of the human race can be overcome with a conviction that we all have a right of access to the fundamental human right-food. There should be a conviction in all of us that those who do not have, those who go hungry, must be redeemed by the same human race.

That human race is not showing that conviction in action. Since 1974 the world has been talking about a new International Economic Order, an order of justice in the economic field for all humanity. The new International Economic Order is certainly an important initiative. There is total unanimity over its early implementation in the Third World. The world needs urgently a new basis for the sharing of trade and the sharing of resources and technology among all its peoples. Such a basis is the only meaningful staging point for its war against hunger. But instead of the debate progressing forward to fruitful conclusion, that debate is now caught up, trapped, ensnared and enmeshed in the politics rather than the economics of moving forward. Meanwhile the gap between the rich and the poor countries is widening as the terms of trade between the developing poor nations and the rich industrialized ones continue in favour of the developed countries. Our underdevelopment in the Third World is rooted in the World trade structure; the inequitable

international trade arrangements are very much at the core of our poverty. No meaningful assault can be made on the poverty of the developed countries without radical overhaul of the existing international trade structures. Stabilization of prices of the primary products of the developing countries and the discarding of protectionist policies by the industrialized countries are two of the most essential steps in the process leading to a New International Economic Order.

The peasants and workers of the Third World working in the coffee, tea, cocoa, sisal and rubber plantations or copper, iron, coal and tin mines are working hard, even though they can still work harder. Thus our poor development prospects are not just a matter of application but essentially a question of adverse terms of trade. The prices of manufactured goods from the rich industrialized countries increase by leaps and bounds all the time, while the prices of the primary exports of the developing countries remain static or fluctuate violently. On top of it all, we have to carry our exports to the doorsteps of our customers at our cost and buy their goods at their doorsteps and bring them all the way to our country again at our cost. Vital inputs in agriculture such as tractors, fertilisers and other chemicals are gradually getting beyond our reach, more so as the price of oil escalates. A tractor which was imported into Zambia five years ago at US \$5 000 now costs up to US \$15 000. Our oil import bill which was US \$20 million in 1974 is now US \$168 million. This is a very untenable situation, particularly so for countries with very scanty natural resources in the form of minerals and fertile land.

The New International Economic Order can become a reality in the not too distant future if the international community will look at the overall development of the world in a broader perspective. It is time we put greater emphasis on the long-term benefits of cooperation, whatever sacrifices that entails now, than on temporary expediency. The jungle law of the survival of the fittest spells doom for humanity. Exploitation of Man by Man at national level as well as at the international level breeds violence.

I believe that no country delights in being hungry, begging or prosecuting a deliberate policy of going hungry perpetually. Each nation has some plan of some sort to be self-sufficient in basic food stuffs. However, because of the very familiar gap between aspirations and practical means to fulfil those aspirations, the plans, no matter how well intentioned and formulated, are usually frustrated with consequent disillusionment. The truth of the matter is that without adequate human and financial resources, a national food production plan cannot succeed. Developing countries lack technologies necessary to maximise their production potential. Transfer of technology which is implied in the New International Economic Order is therefore necessary to enable developing countries to step up food production.

But the agricultural development process is not a one way process with the developed countries transferring resources and the developing countries receiving them. The internal policies of developing countries need to be harmonized. There should be proper direction of international resources. Priorities must be set to reflect the importance of improving agricultural production and the quality of life of the majority of the people. When priorities have been set and internal resources properly directed, this is the stage where external resources can have a meaningful impact.

Mere transfer of adequate resources to developing countries cannot feed the hungry. Hunger can only be ended when these resources have been invested in meaningful programmes which will lead to increased food production and availability. Sometimes these resources are used to create bureaucrats and consumption oriented elites and do not reach the target group, the poor, let alone help the recipient countries to enhance their productive capacities. Clearly, if resource transfers from developed countries to developing countries do not reach the target group, mainly the small scale farmer i.e. the peasant, a century from now the status quo will still apply and the developing countries will still be talking the way we are talking today. This may please some because it perpetuates the donor-recipient situation. But it will not be in the interests of humanity. Certainly, it will put off for even longer the day when the world can talk about food trade and about world food security on an equal footing and as one people.

Developing countries need to realise that their production patterns have to be different from those in developed countries where the number of those involved in agriculture and those dependent for their livelihood on agriculture is decreasing rapidly all the time. This is not the case with developing countries where the majority of the people are peasants and their livelihood is on the land. What needs to be enhanced is the productivity of these people. If this is not done, the alternative will be a few large-scale highly mechanized farmers who can produce total national requirements. This can not eliminate hunger and malnutrition and will not raise the standard of living of the peasants as the peasants would have to buy this food, buying it with no money. Their incomes are very low and often non-existent. There is danger in that way. That way is the way by which some countries create an artificial surplus of food while the majority of the people are hungry. They cannot afford to buy the food.

This situation exists to a large extent in the world today. There are countries which are food surplus countries but where food is available to the hungry only at a very high price. The hungry cannot afford to buy this food and continue to be hungry.

Mr. Director-General, we are all aware of the negotiations that have gone on on the New International Grains Agreement and its quest for greater stability in grain prices. Unfortunately this grains negotiating conference failed to agree and adjourned indefinitely. It is with pleasure therefore that I note the Five Point Action Plan of this Organization for the establishment of national food reserves and stocks as well as assistance to developing countries in order to make the international community better prepared today than it was when the last food crisis broke in 1973/74.

When MacDougall conceived this Organization he hardly could have been aware of the many problems that would lie in the way of the fulfilment of the noble idea of food for every human being. At that time, man was groping uncertainly for peace, confident only in his ability to destroy rather than to build peace. At that time also the full dimension of the problem of hunger was yet to be known. The majority of the countries of the Third World were still colonial dependencies with no voice of their own to articulate the hunger and deprivations which they suffered. It was still a world when the few determined the destiny of the many, much more so than is the case today.

It is testimony of the enduring nature of Frank MacDougall's message to mankind that that hope of a world resurrected from hunger is still the cherished goal of mankind. But if MacDougall were to return today he would be appalled and appalled into sickness by the way mankind has misunderstood peace to mean an opportunity for the equal expansion of arms and not an opportunity for the elimination of hunger. The world may indeed experience some temporary peace in the even and equal expansion of the weapons of death by those who have the resources. But permanent peace will only be possible when, in the words of Martin Luther King Jr. 'justice rolls down the mountain.' That justice implies above all else, food for every one of the people of this world. The human race may sign, and pray God that it will, many more Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties. But until it signs and implements a global Strategic Hunger Elimination Treaty that peace will continue to evade it. In this year, the International Year of the Child we as a people must rededicate ourselves to this quest for real and genuine peace. For while the horrors of war are real and terrible, let us pray that our vision does not fail and that we see in war the even more terrible horrors of hunger which are the real cause of wars here on earth.

In writing to Sir John Orr who was to become the first Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization MacDougall said, 'Brother Orr, we have this day lighted such a candle, by God's grace, in Geneva, as we trust shall never be put out.' MacDougall was, of course, referring to the success which he and his associates had achieved in convincing the League of Nations of the need to associate health with agriculture. But that lighted candle is also the hope that this Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, gives to humanity. Humanity today has a vast reservoir of science and technology. Humanity today has vast tracts of land still to be cultivated. If we as the human race do not banish poverty and squalor from the face of this earth, it will not be for lack of means. It will be for lack of will. This Organization has the necessary expertise and leadership to ensure that the candle is lighted for the whole of humanity. I have no doubt, indeed I know, that it will respond to the challenge before us.