

---

**IPM**  
**26 February, 2009, New York**  
**Session on Africa**

**IFAP Intervention**  
*by Ms. Nora Ourabah Haddad*

Madam. Chair,

The farmers group supports a truly sustainable green revolution in Africa based on a people's centred and knowledge based agricultural model. We would like to endorse the Windhoek declaration which recognises the central role of African farmers as also stated in the joint call for action "farming first" jointly supported by three of the major groups namely Science and Technology, Farmers and Business and Industry. I also would like to pay tribute to the distinguished representative of the Dutch government for clearly highlighting the central role of farmers and their organisations in policy making.

Before laying down some of the underlying factors to achieve the "farming first model" in Africa, let me emphasise some major constraints that hinder the development of agriculture on the African continent. These include: production constraints, poor land tenure rights, lack of access to rural financing and profitability, poor access to markets, lack of dissemination of knowledge, inadequate infrastructure and finally environmental concerns, which include the need for adaptation measures to face the adverse effects of climate change and the growing costs of desertification and land degradation as well as water scarcity.

What will it take for Africa to get out of the devastating cycle of poverty? There is a need to recognise agriculture as an engine for economic growth after more than 20 years of neglect of this sector by public policy makers. Less than 4% of national budgets in many African countries were dedicated to agriculture. This trend must be reversed even though we recognise that some African countries have already successfully started the process.

Thus, long term investments in agriculture should be an effective channel for this development (as rightly recognised by the 2008 World Development Report of the World Bank ) For this, all African governments need to honour their commitment to dedicate at least 10% of their national budgets to the development of agriculture. I refer here to the Maputo declaration.

For a sustainable future, public policy makers worldwide need to re-engage with African farmers and other stakeholders to build an integrated approach to agricultural and rural development which would be:

- Farmer-driven and socially acceptable
- Environmentally friendly and sustainable
- Economically effective and affordable

Technically feasible and transferable

More specifically, Measures to best support the efforts of farmers including women farmers to improve African agriculture should be based on

- Good governance
- Capacity building for farmers and their organisations including the establishment of effective and well functioning markets to enable them to make a decent living out of their agricultural activity.
- Establishment of stewardship mechanisms to reward farmers for the Environmental services they render to nature.

We hope that you are able to support these proposals in which farmers seek to engage better with Governments on developing policies and budgets in order to move forward in reducing poverty and conserving natural resources on the African continent and avoiding another food crisis to hit.

Thank you for your attention.