

President Lula's speech at the Meeting of the Board of Champions of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

Complete speech by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the Meeting of the Board of Champions of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, October 13, 2025, Rome, Italy

It is a great pleasure to close the 2nd Meeting of the Board of Champions of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

I want to congratulate everyone for the work over this year. The commitment of this Board has allowed us to get here.

We live in a hyper-connected world, with artificial intelligence, scientific advances, and even plans to inhabit the moon.

But the persistence of hunger and poverty is the most painful proof that we have failed as a global community.

It was with this sense of urgency that Brazil, upon assuming the G20 presidency, proposed creating this Global Alliance.

The formula is simple:

- 1) Bring together public policies that have worked
- 2) Connect these policies with resources and knowledge
- 3) Bet on cooperation without conditionalities, and
- 4) Ensure that the adaptation and implementation of programs is led by recipient countries.

The goal is to double down on achieving Goals 1 and 2 of the 2030 Agenda.

In just one year of the Alliance's operation, we have reached 200 members: 103 countries, 53 foundations and NGOs, 30 international organizations, and 14 financial institutions.

Spain has been a partner in leading this Forum.

Today we take a decisive step: we inaugurate the Alliance's Support Mechanism, with its headquarters, secretariat, and leadership.

With contributions from Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Brazil, we have secured part of the resources needed for the Mechanism to function through 2030.

FAO will be our technical arm.

We already have 9 pilot projects ready.

In Palestine, where malnutrition has been cruelly used as a weapon of war, we will support special care programs focused on women and children.

Together with Haiti and Zambia, we will implement income transfer initiatives.

In Kenya, our focus will be access to safe drinking water.

Ethiopia was chosen due to the urgent need to strengthen family farming.

In Benin, we will support the expansion of the school meals system.

In Rwanda, we will work for socioeconomic inclusion.

Recognizing both the vulnerabilities and the transformative power of women, Tanzania wants to dedicate special attention to them and to children.

We also have studies for projects in Mozambique, Indonesia, Cambodia, Bangladesh, and the Dominican Republic.

But let us be clear: without financial resources there will be no transformation.

Last year, official development assistance fell by 23% compared to pre-pandemic levels.

This pullback hits the poorest and most indebted countries hardest, especially in Africa, where food insecurity has grown alarmingly.

If we do not act with urgency, in 2030 we will still have nearly 9% of the world's population living in extreme poverty.

Therefore, I make two urgent appeals.

First, to multilateral banks and donor countries:

Priorities must be reviewed.

Fiscal adjustment programs are not an end in themselves that justify reducing investment in human and social development.

There is no better stimulus for the global economy than fighting hunger and poverty.

Available resources must be mobilized to face humanity's real challenges.

When that happens, consumption rises, markets heat up, and new cycles of development bloom.

My second appeal is to national governments.

It is time to put the poor in the budget.

Social inclusion cannot be just a promise—it must be reflected in fiscal architecture, in public investment, and in productive transformation plans.

Brazil has once again left FAO's Hunger Map because of integrated policies of income transfers, strengthening family farming, school meals, job creation, and increases to the minimum wage.

We have also established a National Care Plan, which should lift the burden of unpaid domestic work from women.

This month, the Chamber of Deputies approved an income tax exemption for those earning up to approximately one thousand dollars per month, and a 10% increase for those earning more than one hundred thousand dollars per year.

This tax progressivity will expand resources for financing essential public policies.

My friends,

I want to thank the government of Qatar, in the person of Emir Tamim ibn Hamad Al Thani, for hosting the first Leaders' Meeting of the Alliance on November 3, on the sidelines of the UN's Second World Social Development Summit.

Due to its proximity to the COP Leaders' Summit, I will unfortunately not be able to attend.

But Vice President Geraldo Alckmin and Minister Wellington Dias [Social Development and Assistance, Family and the Fight Against Hunger] will represent Brazil.

We will show that the Alliance is a concrete and real response.

At COP30, in Belém, we want to adopt a Declaration on Hunger, Poverty, and Climate.

Food security must be at the center of climate action.

Nationally Determined Contributions must include social protection, smallholder resilience, and solutions that generate income and preserve biodiversity.

Only a new model of just and sustainable development can secure a future for the next generations.

In that future,

- No woman or man will have to work without eating
- No child should study while hungry
- No farmer should suffer from a lack of credit or technical assistance
- No one should live without access to water

Let us proceed with seriousness and courage.

With a view to finding solutions to reduce hunger and poverty in the world, I want to make one thing very clear to you. Hunger and the fight against hunger will not be solved if we treat it as charity. It is important to be clear that combating hunger means holding the governments of all countries responsible for ensuring the poor are in the national budget.

It is not a welfare policy, nor a provisional policy to be done when one can. It is a government's determination to stop treating the poor as invisible on planet Earth. They must be seen, and to be seen they must be in the country's budget, in the state budget, in the city budget.

And their money must be as much a priority as any other money. It is unacceptable that we, who are fighting for equality, for an end to prejudice, for an end to inequality, watch the rich world spend 2.7 trillion dollars on weapons and not allocate the same amount to fight hunger and misery in the world. There is no explanation for that.

I think the great work we have to do is to work to create indignation in humanity. The key word is to lead humanity to be indignant about hunger. In a world that produces enough food, in a world that does not have a problem producing food. There is no explanation for 670 million people still not having enough to eat. There is no explanation.

While rich countries spend money. The European Union has just approved almost 800 billion dollars to strengthen itself for wars. The United Kingdom the same. The United States the same. When in fact what will end war is not more weapons; it is more food, more work, more harmony, and more peace. That is what will end war.

Right now, there is an agreement regarding the Gaza Strip. But the 70,000 women and children who died will not be brought back. And how much did that cost? Possibly the money used for this war could have ended hunger. So it is important that we be clear.

And this, obviously, is not your role—you who are here on a council trying to help us. This is the role of the political class. The world's political leaders must make choices. They must decide whom they want to govern for. What is the priority of the State? What is the priority of the

government? Because if the poor are only to be addressed when there is money left over, there will never be money left over. Because the rich take control of the money first.

This is the concrete and objective reality we are facing. Therefore, I want to conclude, my dear FAO Director-General, by saying that our task is to try to lead humanity to indignation against hunger.

Before COVID, I went to speak with Pope Francis and visited the World Council of Churches. And my conversation with both was to say that we needed to lead humanity to indignation against hunger and poverty and inequality. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we spent two years locked at home and did nothing. But now we need to resume this campaign.

I am very grateful to the countries that participated in the G20 and proposed the Global Alliance Against Hunger. Because hunger, until then, was treated as something only to be discussed in scientists' books—or during election season. During elections, the poor are the candidates' top priority. After elections, the poor become the candidates' secondary concern.

So it is important that we be clear that a global campaign is needed to stir the indignation of those who could help end hunger. It does not cost much. It does not cost much.

And I want to say to my dear Director-General that you can count on Brazil. When we took office in 2003, Brazil had 54 million people in food insecurity. In 2014, we ended hunger in Brazil. I returned in 2023. We found 33 million people in food insecurity. What does that mean? A lack of money? No. A lack of food production? No. A lack of character and commitment from those who govern countries. This is the concrete and objective fact.

So our struggle is for public leaders to assume their role: that the poor are people too. That the poor deserve respect. And that the poor deserve to have lunch, breakfast, dinner. And to have access to goods legally produced in the country.

Therefore, my dear Director-General, count on me in this fight to combat hunger.