

Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States and OAS to Participate in Hemispheric Conference on Food Security

“Without a doubt, this joint IICA OAS meeting reiterates the critical need for achieving food security for peace and prosperity in the Americas.”—Ambassador Anthony Johnson



Ambassador Johnson speaks during OAS Permanent Council Session. (OAS photo)

Washington, D.C., September 21, 2009 (IICA) – “There is an urgent call for the region to build capacity in the agricultural sector as an important first step to enhancing production and productivity in order to increase food security and incomes in the rural areas,” said OAS Ambassador to the United States of America and Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), Ambassador Anthony Johnson.” He continued, “Increased investment in the sector must happen now in order for us to achieve these goals.”

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Organization of American States (OAS) are organizing a high level Food Security Conference scheduled for October 1, 2009 in Washington D.C. The theme of the conference is entitled ‘*Agriculture for Development and Food Security in the Americas.*’ The conference aims to: 1) Create a leadership platform for IICA and the OAS to bring attention to the needs and opportunities to invest in agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean; 2) Position the topic of Food Security at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the context of the Summit of the Americas Process, and the Fifteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) [to be held in Montego Bay, Jamaica later this year in October](#) and; 3) Raise the visibility of the importance of food security and agriculture for the region and to seek agreement to hold hemispheric workshops throughout 2010, thus leading to the creation of National Food Security Plans in the Member States.

Of the two panels to be chaired, Ambassador Johnson will moderate the panel 1 entitled, ‘*Creating an Enabling Environment for Investment in Agriculture.*’ Participants will include representatives from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Latin American Agribusiness Development Corporation (LAAD); and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Food security has long been considered a primary goal of sustainable agricultural development and is one of the most urgent issues of our times. Earlier this year, the global community increased its commitment to ending food insecurity. At the G-8 Summit, leaders of the eight largest countries agreed that food security is an international problem and they are committed to increase international assistance for agricultural development to \$20 billion over the next three years. Furthermore, President Obama recently asked Congress to double its commitment to global agricultural production in 2010.

Other confirmed participating organizations include, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture; The World Food Program (WFP); the International Markets Bureau-Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO); the University of California-Davis and Texas A&M University

ABOUT IICA

Established in 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the specialized agency for agriculture and the rural milieu of the Inter-American System, whose purpose is to provide innovative technical cooperation to the Member States, with a view to achieving their sustainable development in aid of the peoples of the Americas. Today, 34 IICA offices the length and breadth of the hemisphere are working to meet the needs of the countries in areas such as: trade and agribusiness development; sustainable rural development; agricultural health and food safety; technology and innovation; education and training; and information and communication.

For additional information on IICA, please go to: www.iica.int

About the OAS

The Organization of American States (OAS) is the world's oldest regional organization, dating back to the First International Conference of American States, held in Washington, D.C., from October 1889 to April 1890. The OAS is an international organization established in 1948 to achieve an order of peace and justice, promote solidarity, strengthen collaboration, and to defend sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence among its Member States. Today, it comprises the [35 independent States of the Americas](#) and constitutes the principal political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the Hemisphere.

For additional information on the OAS, please go to: www.oas.org

More information

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<http://www.iica.int/Eng/regiones/norte/USA/Pages/FoodSecurityConference.aspx>

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