

**REPORT TO THE DEPUTY
PRESIDENT – THABO MBEKI**

**FAWU'S POSITION ON FOOD
SECURITY & THE
JOB SUMMIT**

07299
6/2/0
Company
No.5

POLITICAL QUESTIONS: THE FOOD SECTOR

- The current economic dispensation has created a dilemma: economic liberalisation has meant that consumers have access to food at lower prices. However, employment has suffered as local producers have been unable to compete, and been pushed out of the market. We are left with trying to balance the concerns of consumers and producers – something that has not yet been addressed in any systematic way. In trying to achieve this balance, closer attention must be paid to the achievement of household food security.
- The achievement of household food security places several macro-economic and micro-economic processes under scrutiny. As currently implemented, GEAR has failed to achieve its own economic targets, thereby reinforcing poverty. The "Poverty and Inequality" report has identified food security as an important factor to eradicate poverty. What is now required is an implementation forum that deals with the recommendations of that report.

ACHIEVING HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

- Household food security consists of three interrelated requirements:
 1. The affordability of food
 2. The accessibility to food
 3. The availability of food
- These factors, in turn, are affected by many other factors. These include physical factors such as infrastructural development, cultural factors such as sustainable farming practices, and politico-economic factors such as the provision of support and extension services.
- The rest of this document itemises the three factors that contribute to food security mentioned above. In doing so, possible intervention points to help achieve household food security are identified. It must be noted at this point that we are not trying to suggest intervention points. Rather, we're identifying the elements that must be considered before intervention takes place.

ELEMENTS OF AFFORDABILITY

Food Security: Factor Number I. Affordability

1. Food prices. Affected by:
 - a) The efficiency of domestic producers and processors
 - b) Trade policy
 - c) Industrial policy
 - d) Competitiveness of wholesale and retail markets
 - e) The use of subsidies
 - f) Taxes

ELEMENTS OF AFFORDABILITY (Continuation)

2. Consumer incomes. Affected by:

a) Economic growth and job creation

b) A living wage policy

c) Social policy and redistribution

* Targeted aid

⇒ Direct Cash Payments

⇒ Food Stamps

⇒ Food for Work

⇒ School Feeding Schemes

ELEMENTS OF AFFORDABILITY (Continuation)

* Welfare

⇒ Pensions

⇒ Unemployment Benefits

c) Subsistence Farming

* Support

⇒ Financial

⇒ Technical

* Land Redistribution

ELEMENTS OF ACCESSIBILITY

Food Security: Factor Number II. Accessibility

1. Infrastructure
2. Transport
3. Markets

ELEMENTS OF AVAILABILITY

Food Security: Factor Number III. Availability

1. GDP Growth
2. Trade
3. Sustainable Farming Techniques
4. Environmental Considerations

CONCLUSION

- This document has sought to delineate the concept of household food security as a way of illuminating various options available for its implementation. It is a concept that has its roots in many areas, and requires a dedicated effort on the part of all stakeholders, including Government, labour, business and other civil society groups.
- As FAWU, we welcome the move of our democratic Government to initiate the Job Summit. We believe it is a vital and necessary step to addressing the problems we currently face which, in turn, have their roots in the structural characteristics embedded by Apartheid.
- We would like to see further forums created for the purpose of discussing methods of implementing some of the interventions we've identified in this document. This could be achieved through, for example, a process of addressing the recommendations of the "Poverty and Inequality" report.