

WELCOMING REMARKS
Ambassador Kenneth Quinn
October 17, 2018 - 1:00 p.m.

Introduction

Morgan Day

Director of Planning, World Food Prize

Welcome, everyone. Welcome, happy to see a room full of friendly, familiar faces. My name is Morgan Day. I'm the Director of Planning here at the World Food Prize, and I think I've probably at this point maybe received an email from each and every one of you. So I'm very happy to see you all here for what we're sure is going to be three days full of interesting and very important discussions that we're going to be having around our theme of *Rising to the Challenge of Feeding the World by 2050*.

This is the 19th year of the Borlaug Dialog, and when we started, Ambassador Quinn would probably mentioned that I was a little bit younger than he would have enjoyed thinking about. But we started with 50 people, and now we welcome annually over 1500 individuals from all around the world to Des Moines, Iowa, to come and talk about the most pressing issues facing our world – hunger, climate change, poverty, and the ways that we're going to work together to solve all of these things.

So there are many challenges, but there are many opportunities as well. And over these next three days I hope that we not only discuss these opportunities and challenges but that we take from here these ideas and put them into action in the many cross-sectors that we all come from, to come together and cooperate to solve these great challenges.

One man who has done this for his whole career, as many of you know, is our president, Ambassador Kenneth Quinn. When he retired from Foreign Service, he thought – Hey, I'll go try something hard – and decided to take on his role as the president of the World Food Prize. And since he took it over with just him and one other staff member, you know, for the 50 people, it's risen to this, risen to prominence and the legacy of Dr. Borlaug. And he has built what we all know and see now to be the World Food Prize.

So I'd like to welcome our processional onto the stage. We can all give them a big round of applause.

Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn

President - World Food Prize Foundation

Morgan, thank you for that very nice introduction, and, hey, come here a second – you can't get away. So I just want to say Morgan and Paige Masimore, who's over here, and all my team that's been working so hard... (And I get emails from them at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. And what they know is they get them back from me at the same time, but it's just because I'm old and can't sleep.) But she's done a terrific job, so thank you for everything, Morgan. And you'll be seeing a lot of her during the event. So she *rose to the challenge*.

And so I want to introduce to you individuals here on the stage with me who also have fulfilled the theme of our symposium, *Rose to the Challenge*. John Ruan III – John, our Chairman of our Foundation – John, if you'd stand up. John convinced me to come home to Iowa, and he and his family have *risen to the challenge* time and time again. There wouldn't be a World Food Prize, as Dr. Borlaug would always say, except for the Ruan family. So, John, thank you so very much.

Our special guest of honor here all week, Her Excellency, the Vice President of Peru, Mercedes Araoz, Your Excellency. And she's here in two capacities, not only Vice President of Peru and leading initiatives there, but she has just become the Global Chair of the Food Forever Initiative. And so you'll be hearing tomorrow at our Symposium Luncheon – be there for the soy luncheon. She's going to give the symposium keynote address at that time and blending together these two important roles that she has.

Our World Food Prize Laureates, Lawrence Haddad and David Nabarro – I've gotten used to introducing them at the same time – are here.

You know, the symposium hasn't even started, and people are all telling me – "Oh, I heard them up at Iowa State on Monday night. They were fantastic! Oh, they were in the UNFAO side event this morning. So you guys are stars already here, and the symposium is just beginning. So thank you and we're so pleased and privileged to be honoring the two of you for your incredible accomplishments.

And then I want to introduce the new – announcing today – chairman of our Council of Advisors. John Ruan has stepped back – he's still Foundation Chairman, so still my boss. But Paul Schickler from our Council of Advisors has accepted the appointment and is now our new chair of our Council of Advisors. And, you know, Paul has this terrific background in leading DuPont Pioneer. He had a 40-year career at that company, and he and his wife Claudia have been incredibly generous – have now given close to a million dollars to our Iowa Youth Institute and Youth Program. He's greatly involved in that. We are so privileged, Paul, to have you as part of our advisory structure and now as our chairman. So thank you again for doing that.

So you always have to have fresh blood in your organization. We have three new members I have to tell you about, to our Council of Advisors. I was pleased that we were able to introduce, when I was at Wageningen University, Dr. Zhangliang Chen. He is the Director General of IFPRI in Washington, DC. He is at another event. He may be in Rome, I think, at the U.N., but he had already accepted there, so he couldn't come here. Strive Masiyiwa, who is the Chairman of AGRA, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, one of the leading forces and innovators there and President Wendy Wintersteen of Iowa State University, and she's over here. So, Wendy, thank you so much for being here.

So while we have new people, we also have people who have departed. And I want to make special reference to His Excellency Kofi Annan, who passed away. I worked with Kofi Annan when he was an Under Secretary General in peacekeeping. Working in Cambodia, we had our first event, the World Food Prize that I ran. John, you'll remember we went to New York City in the middle of the U.N. Millennium Summit. And he had instituted the U.N. Development Goals, a critical initiative and achievement. He was here at the World Food Prize in 2010. I was with him in Ghana, gave him our Borlaug medallion. I wrote a tribute to him that I gave in Tegali when I was there a month ago. It's available on our website, and if you have a moment, I hope you might take a look at it and see my reflections on him.

Also, maybe not known to many of you internationally, but our former governor, Robert D. Ray, who was a great friend of the World Food Prize—there he is in Thailand, presenting our Borlaug medallion, the first one ever, to His Majesty, the King of Thailand, for his role in ensuring people, his citizens and subjects in Thailand, were adequately fed. Governor Ray is one of the great legendary figures in Iowa and nationally in what he did on behalf of refugees and taking Russian rushing food from Iowa to the victims of the Cambodian genocide. And so he passed away at age 89 just this summer.

So we have a lot of things that we are focusing on. One of them is—we've been celebrating World Food Day, and we had last night the world premiere of a light show on our building. We sent notices out. I hope many of you were there, kind of dazzling lights. You know, I'm always trying to outdo Graziano Da Silva, the director general in Rome. He's got Rome, and we're in Des Moines, so we've got to do something special. So, you know, I write to him and say, "Oh, I had a world premiere of a light show on our building, and I have 18 World Food Prize laureates here. So I think there's more life-saving achievement assembled here than any other location around the world. So I'm so pleased, and then we'll be celebrating that.

And we're also celebrating our Global Youth Institute that is here again. We have 480 students and teachers, 27 states, 10 countries sending students here. You're going to be bumping into them; they're coming around. One of the unique things about the World Food Prize, there are high school students rubbing shoulders with World Food Prize Laureates, and they're getting inspiration from brushing into all of you in that regard.

I want to particularly note, though, the Netherlands is here, because we just had this terrific event at Wageningen University & Research in August. Louise Fresco—there's Louise over here. Louise, stand up, for our Council of Advisors. And, you know, Wageningen, they're the number one agricultural research university in the world, and then Wendy Wintersteen will elbow her, and people from..., Ronnie Coffman from Cornell will say something, and Helene Dillard will say something from UC Davis. But Louise has been a fantastic member of our Council of Advisors, and she established the first Borlaug Youth Institute outside the United States. It was an incredible success, and we had students participating. And the Seaweed Team won the competition, and four of them are here in Des Moines for the Youth Institute. So, thank you, Louise the leadership you've done. You've shown everyone it can be done, and now we want to have Youth Institutes all around the globe.

We're also celebrating our Borlaug-Ruan Internship. In 1998 John's father, John Ruan Sr., and Norman Borlaug said—"You know, maybe we should send students for an experience." They called up the DGs IRRI, International Rice Research Institute, and at Isipa in Africa and said—"I've got two high school students I want to send to you, and could you give them an assignment for eight weeks?" And that was the start of one of the most incredible educational

experiments that's led to this fantastic program over the last 20 years. So these students get to go and have an amazing eight weeks. They're mentored at these centers. And we've invited... To say thanks, I wrote to the DGs of 18, actually 19 of the centers; 18 of them were able to send an individual, and at the Rice Research, they're having a big celebration in Los Baños and couldn't send someone. They sent a video. But I wanted the mentors to come as our guests to be here all week, just to say "thank you." I was with them this morning, and I said, "You are transforming lives. You are inspiring." And I thanked them on behalf of Norman Borlaug for what they are doing to inspire those students. So you'll see them, our Borlaug-Ruan interns. You'll see the mentors who are here, and we're so very, very proud of this accomplishment.

We also have a terrific set of symposium sessions. Some of our distinguished speakers who are here include Her Excellency Gerda Verburg, Assistant Secretary-General of the U.N. She was on this stage about six years ago as Minister of Agriculture of the Netherlands. We have Gordon Conway, who is giving his valedictory. Sent me a letter, said, "Oh, I'm getting old. I have to step back, and this will be my last time." And so I said, "Well, you have to come and speak about your life. So tomorrow morning, 8:30, be here. He's going to give his World Food Prize valedictory address "An Ecologist's Journey in Agriculture." And then to keep him honest, Ismail Serageldin is going to have a fireside conversation with him and ask him about what really happened. So this is going to be, Gordon, a wonderful for you. And then we just newly added Governor John Hickenlooper of Colorado is coming.

We have a panel on Friday that's terrific about how on nutrition the public and private sectors can collaborate, and so he'll be there, and Lawrence Haddad will be on that panel, along with an array of business leaders. And this will be an exciting panel, and it will follow two major keynote addresses tomorrow in addition to the one that Vice President Araoz is giving at luncheon. We have Jim Collins, the chief operating officer of Corteva, now with us as DuPont Pioneer and Dow AgroSciences is combined. And Liam Condon from the Board of Management, President of Crop Science Division Bayer, that is now merged with Monsanto. So here, arguably, two of the CEOs who are leading two of the most significant agribusiness companies in the world. They're both going to be here tomorrow as part of our symposium.

And then later in the afternoon, we have a Africa Food Prize panel. So President Olusegun Obasanjo is flying in from Lisbon. He's going to arrive here, and he will be here to chair that panel. He's the chairman of the selection committee without picks the African Food Prize Laureates, and we have two of them, my great friend and longtime collaborator, Ruth Oniang'o. Ruth, are you around? But Ruth is here, and she is the 2017 Africa Food Prize recipient, and then Dr. Nteranya Sanginga, who is the Director General of IITA. They were the winner of the Prize in 2018, so they're all going to be here, Africa Food Prize panel.

And then on Friday, President Wintersteen is bringing together three women, deans of agriculture, Kathryn VandenBosch, Kathryn Boor, Helene Dillard, and they are going to have a panel about women in agriculture, agriculture education and agricultural leadership in education. So everyone wants to be at that.

We've got an array of side events already going on. I want to mention two tomorrow, because I know the people involved. You'll have to decide which one you're going to. Nick Starling, Iraq veteran, is going to be here. He has something called "Skyscraper Farm." It looks like it's what you'd put on Mars, self-contained, 50-60 stories, how you produce food, water with light—really interesting. I don't know where his is—I'll have to look up and check where it's being held. But in the same time in the Council Bluffs a Feed the Future Innovation Lab for

Collaborative Research, Sustainable Intensification with Zach Stewart, former Borlaug-Ruan intern who's long associated with us, PhD from Kansas State has put together.

Speaking of young scientists and achieving things, tonight at the Hall of Laureates we will have our Borlaug Field Award Ceremony. Matt Rouse is going to be the recipient of that prize. He was nominated by the Chavonda Jacob Young, the administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service. He's here with his wife Alicia, and he'll be honored at that. So buses leave at 5:15, and the event will start at 6:30, the ceremony at 6:00, and we will have a reception following that. And then at 7:00 you can jump back on the buses and get back over here for all the side events that are going on tonight.

I want to especially acknowledge Farming First, our media partner, Liz Sharma, who is here. They're so wonderful collaborator. We couldn't do half of what we do without them in getting the word out. And I also want to recognize others who have *risen to the challenge*, and that is our sponsors, those companies, individuals, those organizations, government entities who provide sponsorship to us. (And I created that, yeah, and if you believe that I've got a bridge in Dubuque that I could sell to you.) We couldn't do this – we couldn't do this without our sponsors. We are so very, very, very grateful to them and our collaborators. So I want to make a special word of thanking them now and so I don't know how to do social media, but my staff tells me it's really important, so I have to talk about it. And so connect with us – Facebook and Twitter – but here's how you do it, and I know you know how important that is.

So that's what's going to happen. This is my end of my opening of this. I want to now invite the stage party, if you would leave the stage down on the same steps that you came up. There are seats reserved for you and now I want to invited Liz Schroyer.