

Global Food Insecurity and Price Increase Update #4 July 1, 2008

HIGH LEVEL U.N. CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer and USAID Administrator Henrietta H. Fore led the U.S. delegation to the *High Level U.N. Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy*, hosted by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome from June 3 to 5. During the conference, the U.S. delegation participated in a number of bilateral and multilateral meetings, reaffirming the U.S. commitment to combat global food insecurity: An immediate and expanded humanitarian response that will target those countries most vulnerable to hunger as a result of rising food costs and measures to increase the future availability of key food staple commodities in targeted partner countries.

SECURITY IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL FOOD SHORTAGE

On June 9, the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) released a report underscoring the potential longer-term security ramifications from the current global food shortage. The World Bank has identified 33 countries, many of which are already politically unstable, that are vulnerable to social unrest. The map below is compiled from various public media reports and highlights the broad geographic range of countries that have experienced food-related riots and/or protests since January 2007. According to OSAC, the longer-term impact of the crisis may include an increase in families facing poverty, a spread of “food refugees” as populations move to seek food security, increased criminal activities, and inflationary costs in food importing countries as governments increasingly subsidize food inputs.

