

REMARKS BY

AMBASSADOR KENNETH M. QUINN

PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE FOUNDATION

IN THE ANNOUNCING THE

RECIPIENT OF THE 2005 WORLD FOOD PRIZE

AT A CEREMONY IN THE

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DIPLOMATIC

RECEPTION ROOM

THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JUNE 10, 2005

The origins of the World Food Prize can be traced back to the mid 1960's when our founder Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, (from Cresco, Iowa) was asked by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to go to India and Pakistan as those two countries faced the prospect of severe food shortage. Working on the basis of equality and mutual respect, Dr. Borlaug partnered with senior officials and young scientists in both countries to put in place a new approach to agriculture which staved off a pandemic famine and lead to both countries becoming self-sufficient in wheat in very few years.

For this achievement, in 1970 Dr. Borlaug was presented the Nobel Peace Prize as the father of the "Green Revolution" But it bothered Dr. Borlaug that so many others, who were equally deserving of

recognition, were not honored in the same way. So when the Nobel Committee advised him that it could not accede to his proposal that they establish a new Nobel Prize for food or agriculture, Dr. Borlaug, in 1986, created the World Food Prize. And with the financial support of the Ruan family, represented today by John Ruan III, this award has been presented annually over the last 19 years to individuals who have made exceptional Nobel-like breakthrough achievements in increasing the quality, quantity and availability of food in the world. It was only fitting that the first World Food Prize in 1987 was presented to an Indian scientist, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan for his work in spreading the “Green Revolution” across India. Since then “the Prize” has been awarded to laureates from Bangladesh, China, Cuba, Denmark, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, the United Nations, the United Kingdom,

the United States, and on four other occasions, to individuals from India.

Today India is the home country of yet another World Food Prize Laureate. It is my privilege and honor to announce that the 2005 World Food Prize will be presented to Dr. Modadugu V. Gupta for his exceptional achievements in bringing enhanced nutrition and well-being to over 1 million poor farmers through innovative aquaculture and fish farming techniques. While working for over three decades at the World Fish Center, a part of the World Bank/CGIAR research system, Dr. Gupta has pioneered approaches in South and Southeast Asia and Africa which have permitted the poorest segments of those populations, to begin and sustain the raising of fish for both consumption and sale.

In addition Dr. Gupta has been a leader in developing international fish biodiversity protocols, which have permitted the transfer of germplasm between countries and the development of larger and more protein enriched breeds of fish.

Dr. Gupta will be presented the \$250,000 World Food Prize at a Ceremony at the magnificent Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines on October 13 of this year. Together with the Des Moines Area Community College, other events will be held that week to celebrate the culture and artistic achievements of India. Truly an international event, last year there were representatives of 62 countries present to witness this ceremony. At that same time, the World Food Prize will also host its International Symposium, which this year will

focus on the dual global challenges of combating malnutrition and hunger in developing countries, and over-nutrition and obesity in developed ones. We are told this is one of the first ever conferences to address both of these critical health issues at the same time. As a special feature, we will be also hosting the Open Forum of the Board of International Food and Agricultural Development, Chaired by Peter McPherson, the newest member of our World Food Prize Council of Advisors, which will focus on the role of Agriculture and Nutrition in Africa in countering HIV/AIDS. On behalf of Dr. Borlaug and the Ruan Family, I invite you all to carefully review the brochure you will be given when you depart this Ceremony and then visit our website at [www.worldfoodprize.org](http://www.worldfoodprize.org) to reserve a place at our Symposium and Laureate Ceremony. Finally, I wish to express our appreciation to Acting Under Secretary of Secretary of State

Tony Wayne, and USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios for welcoming us here today for this announcement, and to Dr. Francisco Reifschneider Director of the CGIAR at the World Bank, and Ambassador Raminder Jassal of the Embassy of India for being present to share in recognizing our Laureate, Dr. Gupta.

It is most fitting that thirty-five years after Dr. Borlaug was honored for helping spread the “Green Revolution” to India, that an Indian scientist will receive the World Food Prize for spreading the “Blue Revolution” to some of the poorest people in the world.

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