

DEBATE

Jean-Michel Severino, President of Investisseurs & Partenaires, former Vice President of the World Bank for Asia, former CEO of France's International Development Agency (AFD)

We may have time for one or two short questions if there are any.

Arash Duero, Managing Director of UAE-based Big Picture Strategy LLC, Senior Advisor at Berlin Global Advisors

I would like to thank you all for the excellent remarks, I think it was a very comprehensive look at the subject. I must say I agree with all of you regarding food supply, over the last 10 years global food production has increased from 2.5 billion tons per year to 3.1 billion. That was about 2,800 calories per capita 10 years ago and it is about 3,000 now, a 7% increase. Mr. Abdallah touched on the point that it is the quality of the food, and we do not know if the quality is better. That is one issue. The second is availability and distribution, and it is just not evenly distributed. One aspect I think is missing regarding affordability is that commodities worldwide are mostly traded in US dollars, which has depreciated 25% over the last four years. This means that food prices have increased by 25% for many countries around the world. In geopolitical terms there is a lot of talk about de-dollarization, moving away from the dollar, bilateral trade, how do you think this affects affordability in the future?

Meir Sheetrit, former member of the Israeli Knesset

I am from Israel, and I just want to raise one of the nice things that happened in Israel in terms of food. There is a non-profit organization that goes everywhere there is a lot of food, things like white beans, etc., and collects it and distributes it to people in need. It works fantastically and they really use up large quantities of food that would otherwise be thrown in the garbage and use it to feed people who need it.

Jean-Michel Severino

Not a question, just information you would like to share. Would someone like to address the exchange rate issue.

Philippe Chalmin, Founder of Cercle Cyclope, Professor Emeritus at Paris-Dauphine University

The dollar issue is simple, all commodity markets, food, energy or metals, are currently quoted in dollars. I know that, for example, at the recent BRICS meeting in Kazan they said that they should eventually try to develop a new commodity market in Moscow so that they can quote products in another currency, but you would not quote them in rubles. For the moment, the minimum price that the Russian government is trying to use in the Black Sea is in dollars, so I

think it is a non-subject. All world markets are in dollars, and you sometimes profit from it, and you sometimes suffer, but you have to live with it. Normally you have a long-term correlation, so when the dollar rises commodity prices go down, and when the dollar goes down, commodity prices quoted in dollars go up. That works, even though right now the dollar is also a commodity currency because the US is exporting natural gas, energy products, etc., so the correlation is less effective. Do not dream, it will never happen. For example, wheat prices in Europe are quoted in euros but immediately translated into dollars.

Jean-Michel Severino

Before we get chunked off the stage, 10 seconds for you Bayu.

Bayu Krisnamurthi, Professor at the Bogor Agricultural University, former Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia

This panel has shown it is not only food security that is important but also nutrition food security. Second, trade and the private sector are very important for fighting hunger and trust is a key issue that is repeated in health as well as in food. To solve the problem of hunger, we need to build trust again.

Jean-Michel Severino

Máximo is back but I am afraid we must leave the room for the next session. We apologize for the technical issue and thank you for giving us your time from Rome. Great applause to our panelists who have done a great job. Thank you so much and thanks to the WPC for this session on agriculture.