



**An Address
by
the President of Iceland
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson
to
the The World Congress of
World Association of Chefs Societies
4 May 2012**

Delivered by video in Deajeor, Korea

Distinguished delegates,

It is both a pleasure and a privilege to address you today and pay tribute to the World Association of Chefs Societies for your vision and good work.

The people of Iceland are very proud of the trust you have shown our nation by electing my good friend Gissur Gudmundsson and his Icelandic colleagues to lead your organisation.

In my discussions with Icelandic chefs I have witnessed how the World Association hopes to make a profound contribution towards a better life for all: for people on every continent, in every country.

We share this planet, Mother Earth, and it is the only one we have. Soon we will have to share it with almost ten billion people.

How will they all be fed? How will we secure materials for their daily diet? How will we give each and every one the pleasure of a healthy meal?

This is perhaps the most important challenge of the 21st century. Especially since climate change is fast transforming fertile fields into burning deserts; the stocks of the oceans are being depleted and many species of birds and other animals are no longer in abundance.

The splendid harmony between life and nature is now in danger.

Therefore we all face a fundamental moral question: Will our children and grandchildren be able to enjoy the fruits of the earth and the richness of the oceans as we have done in our lifetime?

Food security – how to feed the planet – is at the core of this challenge.

Your decision to put it on the global agenda is of historic importance and constitutes a powerful and urgent message.

Chefs are both loved and respected for their expertise in all matters relating to food.

Your leadership is therefore of profound importance. It confirms your vision and your moral responsibilities and is an example to others.

We have only one planet. There is no other Mother Earth.

How will it feed us? This is the question children of every colour, every religion, every continent will keep on asking.

You are better placed than many others to provide the answer.

My nation, indeed all nations, will be grateful for your action.