

*For Immediate Release*

## ***Catherine Bertini Honored with Borlaug CAST Communication Award***

*Ag/science expert has focused on humanitarian efforts and women's issues*

**May 17, 2011....Ames, Iowa:** The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) will present the prestigious 2011 Borlaug CAST Communication Award to Catherine Bertini, a distinguished leader who has communicated the importance of agriculture and science through the many humanitarian programs she has organized in the United States and throughout the world.

Although she gained global recognition for her work with the United Nations, Bertini has been active on many fronts, and she is known for her efforts to improve the lives of needy families. She has taken leadership as a chief administrator, professor, committee chair, speechmaker, and advocate for the role women play in the world food distribution chain. The recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees, Bertini joins a long list of influential dignitaries who have won a communication award from CAST.

Established in 1986 by CAST, the annual award goes to a specialist who communicates the importance of food and agricultural science to the public, policymakers, and the news media. Bertini has been influencing others for decades. After receiving a fellowship from Harvard in 1986, she worked with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and then as an assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Agriculture where she eventually oversaw thirteen food assistance programs supporting America's poorest families. She also worked on various policies that helped women and children.

Catherine Bertini's career includes public service at all levels, and she was the driving force behind reform of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) from 1992 to 2002. Her management skills at the WFP earned her plenty of honors, but more importantly, her agency is credited with bettering the lives of millions who faced various humanitarian crises, both natural and man-made. She not only implemented program changes, she was willing to spend countless hours on the ground observing the crucial processes of food distribution. Bertini continues such efforts, and during the early months of 2011, she was in Tanzania and other countries, working with the Global Agricultural Development Initiative. As she points out, "There are almost a billion people, the vast majority in rural areas, who cannot survive if they are much poorer. Some don't survive already."

From Chicago to Kosovo and from Sudan to North Korea, Bertini's work has had positive effects. She used her 2003 World Food Prize proceeds to start the Catherine Bertini Trust Fund for Girls' Education at the Friends of the World Food Program, and she has been active with many other development programs including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Global Humanitarian Forum.

An award presentation will occur at a breakfast co-hosted by CropLife Foundation and CAST as a side event at the World Food Prize Symposium on October 12, 2011, in Des Moines, Iowa. The Borlaug CAST Communication Award honors the legacies of Nobel Prize winner Dr. Norman Borlaug and Dr. Charles A. Black, the first president of CAST. Catherine Bertini continues the tradition of communicating the importance of science and agriculture in a world dependent on safe, affordable food. As she said, we must all "support the needs of poor farmers throughout the developing world."

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