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**World Affairs Council of Charlotte Hosted Dr. M S Swaminathan, Father of the Indian Green Revolution” and World Food Prize Winner; He Discussed the Worldwide Food Shortage and Hunger Crisis.**

Charlotte, NC, June 10, 2008 – Dr. M S Swaminathan, “Father of Green Revolution in India,” World Food Prize Winner in 1987 and world-renowned agricultural geneticist spoke at the World Affairs Council Voyager’s Club program on Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. Special guests, C.L. Vishin, President of the Indian Association in Charlotte and Dr. Jayaraman Raja, newly named Senior Associate Provost of UNC Charlotte attended the event.

Swaminathan addressed the current food shortage and global hunger crisis faced in the poorest of nations around the world. He pointed out that despite the growth of wealth around the world; developing nations are struggling to keep up with food prices combined with the rising cost of energy resulting in political and economic instability in countries like Haiti and Bangladesh.

According to the U.N., over 800 million people suffer from hunger and malnutrition, and many millions more are at risk. Swaminathan is certain that practical solutions to a growing hunger crisis are available. “We don’t have to wait for new bio-technology advances. The technology is here. We don’t have to wait to develop it,” he said. He indicated that genetically modified crops and hybrids will continue to play a key role in helping poor farmers grow more food; though there is some global opposition to that option.

He proposed that governments need to provide a localized response to meet both the economic and agricultural demands of the average farmer; particularly in countries where agriculture is a prominent form of industry. This could mean fertilizer and seed provisions in addition to irrigation and economic aid to the poorest of farmers in order to meet local food demands

In addition, a global response is an absolute necessity as the cost of wheat, corn, and rice has increased exponentially impacting the poor. The role of developed nations is essential to deal with the current food shortages around the world. Swaminathan believes wealthiest of governments need to rethink the way they grant crop subsidies, cuts to agricultural programs, and the diversion of food crops like corn (for bio-diesel).

He concluded by saying that the international community needs to take urgent action to addresses issues of malnutrition and hunger caused by rising food costs.

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**About the Speaker:**

Dr. M S Swaminathan has been acclaimed by the TIME magazine as one of the twenty most influential Asians of the 20th century and one of the only three from India, the other two being Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. The India Today, a leading journal of India, has described him as one of the 60 most eminent Indians. He has been described by the United Nations Environment Programme as "the Father of Economic Ecology" because of his leadership of the ever-green revolution movement in agriculture and by Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations, as "a living legend who will go into the annals of history as a world scientist of rare distinction".

A plant geneticist by training, Dr. Swaminathan's contributions to the agricultural renaissance of India have led to his being widely referred to as the scientific leader of the green revolution movement. His advocacy of sustainable agriculture leading to an ever-green revolution makes him an acknowledged world leader in the field of sustainable food security. The International Association of Women and Development conferred on him the first international award for significant contributions to promoting the knowledge, skill, and technological empowerment of women in agriculture and for his pioneering role in mainstreaming gender considerations in agriculture and rural development. Dr. Swaminathan was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1971, the Albert Einstein World Science Award in 1986, the first World Food Prize in 1987, and Volvo and Tyler Prize for Environment, the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development in 2000 and the Franklin D Roosevelt Four Freedoms Medal, the Mahatma Gandhi Prize of UNESCO in 2000 and the Lal Bahadur Sastri National Award (2007).

**ABOUT WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF CHARLOTTE** - The World Affairs Council of Charlotte is a non-profit, non-partisan organization supported by funding from individual and corporate member dues, foundations and contributions. By serving as a regional center for education and discussion of world affairs, WACC seeks to provide leadership for global thinking, believing that a broad perspective is necessary for effective competition in the global economy and for responsible citizenship in an increasingly interdependent political world. Please contact our office at [704-687-7762](tel:704-687-7762) or e-mail [cklopp@worldaffairscharlotte.org](mailto:cklopp@worldaffairscharlotte.org) for more information about the council.

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