



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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"I/A" ITEM NOTE

from : Working Party on Development Cooperation
to : COREPER/Council

Subject : EU contribution to the High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All (Madrid,
26-27 January 2009)

On the occasion of the High Level Conference on World Food security recently organised by FAO (Rome, 3-5 June 2008), the President of the Spanish Government, Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, announced his commitment to host a High Level Meeting on Food Security for All. The meeting has been convened by Mr. Zapatero and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, in Madrid, on 26-27 January 2009.

On 13 January 2009, Presidency submitted draft Council conclusions on the EU contribution to the High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All.

On 15 January 2009, the Working Party on Development Cooperation agreed on the draft conclusions as set out in the Annex hereto.

On this basis, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to invite the Council to adopt the conclusions set out in the Annex as an "A" item on the agenda of a forthcoming meeting.

**Draft EU contribution to the
High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All
(Madrid, 26-27 January 2009)**

1. The EU welcomes the forthcoming High-Level meeting on Food Security for All (Madrid, 26-27 January 2009), which will enable the international community to draw lessons from the 2007-2008 food crisis, take stock of progress made since the Rome Conference last June, including monitoring the delivery of financial contributions which have been pledged, and move forward in the direction of ensuring world food security.

2. The EU commends the establishment by the United Nations Secretary-General of a High-Level Task Force (HLTF) mandated to propose responses to the global food security crisis. The EU welcomes the FAO's commitment to addressing high global food prices and the role played by the HLTF in the drawing up of the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). The CFA should now make it possible to strengthen coordination on the ground between donors, development agencies and partner countries.

3. Despite reduction in global food prices in late 2008, prices at country level remain high and nearly a billion people continue suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The current global economic and financial crisis and the challenge of climate change are aggravating vulnerability and food insecurity in many parts of the world. Hence, the EU calls on the international community to take this opportunity to take urgent action, to respond collectively to the food crisis and to promote a global and coordinated food security strategy, with a view to avoiding future food crisis, reducing hunger and eradicating poverty in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

4. The EU remains very concerned about the variability of food production and the volatility of food prices and reiterates the need to ensure food security worldwide, in particular as regards developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the food crisis and with a special emphasis on small holder and female farmers. The EU has already outlined a collective response to this challenge¹ and taken concrete steps to meet the most urgent needs². In particular, in accordance with the European Council mandate, the EU established in December 2008 a € 1 billion facility to support agriculture and food security in developing countries in 2008-2010³. The EU reaffirms ODA's commitments made by its members to reverse the historic trend in under-investment in food security and agriculture.
5. The EU underlines the need to continue taking actions to help the populations most affected and vulnerable, to safeguard the next years' harvests by supporting agricultural production ahead of the upcoming campaigns, to address the structural causes of the crisis in order to boost food producing agriculture in a sustainable way and to ensure that developing countries are less vulnerable to the volatility in food prices.
6. The EU also underlines the need to continue taking actions to help the populations most affected and vulnerable, to improve their access to affordable food of good quality, including by improving access to social protection, such as safety nets, as well as other livelihood options. The importance of land tenure and land use policies is equally stressed.

¹ Council conclusions of May 2008 (9907/08), November 2008 (15285/08) and European Council conclusions of June 2008 (11018/1/08 REV 1).

² The Commission undertook to allocate 800 million € in 2008 and 2009, notably through food aid, emergency aid and redeployment of funds, and it has recently released 200 million € through the European Development Fund (EDF) as a response to the food crisis in ACP countries. Thanks to increased contributions by Member States, the EU contribution to the World Food Programme (WFP) has reached nearly 700 million €.

³ Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council No. 1337/2008 of 16.12.2008 establishing a facility for rapid response to soaring food prices in developing countries, OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p.62

7. The EU urges developing countries to address these challenges resolutely, *inter alia* by prioritising food security and nutrition needs, agriculture and sustainable rural development within their national poverty reduction strategies, mindful of the potential impact of such policies on the environment.
8. The EU wishes to harness the Madrid Conference to urge the donor community to engage in a joint, coordinated and coherent response, in synergy and partnership with the private sector and civil society. In this context, the EU underlines its commitment to support to the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA), in which the three UN Rome based agencies will be actively involved.
9. At the same time, the EU invites on the Madrid Conference to launch a consultation process between all stakeholders of the global food system, developing countries, donor countries, international organizations, private sector, NGOs and civil societies, leading to the formation of a Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS), built on existing UN and other international institutions. The Global Partnership will allow all stakeholders to work together with a renewed commitment to achieve a comprehensive and coherent long term response to hunger and malnutrition in the world. It should be also based on aid effectiveness principles stated in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.
10. The EU welcomes the ongoing reform process of the FAO, which will allow it, in particular, to play its full part in the implementation of the GPAFS.
11. The EU is determined to contribute to a comprehensive response to the global food security challenge taking into account the specific situations, policies and strategies of developing countries, including the "Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security" and as clearly laid out in the CFA.

12. The EU calls on all donors to increase significantly the share of agriculture in their ODA. In line with the CFA, the EU encourages developing countries to prioritise agriculture and rural development within their policy agenda and increase the share of national budgets allocated to this sector, as laid down also in the Maputo Declaration, and donor countries to increase food assistance, other types of nutritional support and safety net programmes.
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