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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 24 March 2025  
High-level conference “Common Agricultural Policy for food security” (Warsaw, 5 March 2025)  
*- Information from the Presidency*

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On 5 March 2025, an international high-level conference entitled ‘The Common Agricultural Policy for Food Security’, organised by the Polish Presidency, was held in Warsaw. The event brought together nearly 200 participants, including government representatives and experts and officials from Member States, parliamentarians, representatives of EU institutions and bodies, international organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, as well as representatives of academia, agricultural institutions, agricultural organisations and non-governmental organisations.

The discussion at the conference focused on the topic of food security and the role of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in this area. The conference provided a forum for the exchange of views on the effectiveness of this policy and its necessary changes in the context of the operation of the common market, agricultural development, climate change, the geopolitical situation and other challenges to maintaining food security.

The discussion was also framed by the European Commission's Communication 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food', adopted on 19 February 2025, which sets out its reflections on the future of agriculture and food in Europe and opens the debate ahead of, among other things, the preparation of legal proposals for the CAP after 2027.

The main discussion of the conference participants took place during three panel sessions. The panels were moderated by scientific representatives. The introduction to each session was also presented by two scientific representatives with experience in the panel topics. The discussants were representatives of selected Member States and the European Commission. Below are the most relevant findings from each of the panel sessions.

**Panel one entitled Environment, climate, agriculture. What are the environmental and climate challenges facing agriculture and what changes in the sector are involved?**

- The transformation of agriculture must take into account the specific characteristics of individual countries, their specific climatic conditions and their farm structure.
- The effect of absolute emission reductions in agriculture can be a significant drop in production, price increases and the risk of carbon leakage.
- Agriculture will never fully eliminate emissions; it can offset them through carbon sequestration activities.
- The high costs of adapting to climate change make it necessary to simplify regulations, reduce administrative burdens and adapt climate policy to economic realities.
- The development of risk management mechanisms can effectively support farmers in adapting to climate change.
- Agriculture plays a key role in delivering public goods such as environmental protection and sustainable development. Farmers should be fairly rewarded for their contribution to these activities. Voluntary instruments, incentives and financial support that not only accelerate the implementation of sustainable practices, but also provide farmers with income stability, are proving to be more effective than restrictive regulations.

- Support for the bioeconomy and modern technologies, such as precision agriculture, can help optimise production while minimising its environmental impact.
- Accessible agricultural advice and a simplified support system will help small and medium-sized farms to successfully make the transition to sustainable agriculture.

### **Second panel on Access to food through fair and sustainable market chains**

- The EU's food security is not under threat, but needs constant attention. Changing production conditions, geopolitical instability and unforeseen crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can affect the stability of the EU food supply.
- The Common Agricultural Policy is a key tool for ensuring a fair and sustainable food system. It should strengthen regulatory mechanisms against unfair trading practices and ensure that farmers are fairly remunerated.
- Empowering farmers in the supply chain is essential for a fair market. This should be done through producer organisations, transparent contracting of supplies and mechanisms to facilitate farmer cooperation.
- Dialogue and cooperation between all actors in the supply chain is essential. Agricultural policy alone is not enough to solve the problems - extensive cooperation between farmers, processors, distributors and consumers is needed.
- Food waste is one of the key challenges to food security. Building public awareness and supporting initiatives to reduce food waste throughout the supply chain (including at the consumer level) is essential for its sustainability.
- Sustainability should be an integral part of the food system. CAP support should include environmental measures and closed-loop economy initiatives to minimise the negative environmental impact of food production.
- Policy solutions must take into account the specificities of EU countries and regions. While food security challenges are common to all EU countries, policies implemented should be tailored to the production conditions and market realities of individual regions.

### **Third panel on Investment as a way to build competitiveness and resilience in agriculture**

- Current and anticipated challenges (geopolitical, market, climate and structural) point to the need for investments in solutions to improve the resilience and competitiveness of the agricultural sector.
- Investments are responsible for building a sustainable future for food producers and consumers. They must find an important place in the future EU Common Agricultural Policy.
- The Common Agricultural Policy is part of a specific financial assembly of investments. Investments should be made from the financial surplus of the farm, the resources of the private sector (e.g. the banking sector) and the agricultural policy.
- The first two sources are uncertain, as fluctuations in the profitability of production do not guarantee a sufficient surplus to finance the investment or its subsequent servicing (repayment of loans), and the specifics of the agricultural sector do not create incentives for private investors due to the high investment risk, low rate of return, lack of credit guarantees.
- Thinking about food security in the long term, it is necessary to maintain investment support policies at a level that will guarantee the renewal and development of fixed capital stocks on farms.
- Investment support mechanisms should be geared towards innovation. The role of innovation should be twofold. Firstly, the implementation of modern technologies makes it possible to combine the production and income stability of farms with care for the environment and climate. Secondly, they encourage young people to run and continue farming.
- An essential element of the CAP must be investment in human capital. The possibility, for example, of using digital farming solutions is conditioned by the knowledge and skills of the users of these solutions.
- The CAP, by supporting investment, should create a bridge between research, science and farming. The entire EU policy system must ensure that innovation is transferred to agriculture for future sustainability in guaranteeing food security.

**The conclusions reached during the three thematic panels point to the need for strategic action at EU and national level. They also provide an important voice in the emerging discussion on the ‘Vision for Agriculture and Food’.**

Europe's population must have access to adequate, healthy and affordable food at all times, also in the future. The impact of geopolitical changes and climate change lend weight to the discussion on the future of the CAP, which plays a key role in ensuring food security.

The conclusions of the conference indicate that the future CAP needs to be more flexible, adapted to the real needs of farmers and oriented towards long-term investment and support for the transformation of the agricultural sector towards sustainable production. It is essential to simplify regulation, strengthen fair supply chains and ensure adequate funding for investment. In the face of dynamic geopolitical and economic change, Europe cannot afford to destabilise the agricultural sector. Food security is the foundation of social and economic stability for the whole EU. In the light of those conclusions, the Polish Presidency calls for action for a stronger CAP supporting the construction of a more resilient and sustainable agriculture that will guarantee food security for present and future generations.