



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

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Subject: Council Conclusions on an EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges

At the meeting on 10 May 2010, the Council adopted the Conclusions set out in the Annex to this note.

Council Conclusions on

**An EU policy framework to assist developing countries
in addressing food security challenges**

1. Food insecurity, which affects over 1 billion people, is challenging the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially in sub-Saharan Africa and in Least Developed Countries in other regions, and in particular in fragile situations. The recent global food and financial crises accentuated the challenges to food security. The EU remains committed to achieving the international goal of halving the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015. These Conclusions are part of the overall process of establishing the EU position for the MDG High-level Plenary Meeting to be held in New York in September 2010, which will further define the EU response to the most off track situations.

2. In this context the Council welcomes the Commission Communication and its proposal for an “EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges”. The Council supports a comprehensive approach aligned with the "Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security"¹ and fully endorses its objectives and priorities, built around the four pillars² of food security, to constitute the basis for a common framework for action for the EU and its Member States. Furthermore, the Council values the coherence and complementarity this Communication shares with the parallel Commission Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance.
3. The Council emphasises the potential of poor and smallholder producers to sustainably contribute to meeting future food demand, and doing so, substantially contribute to the achievement of MDG1, reducing rural poverty while reducing hunger. The Council also stresses the need to improve access to food for people who suffer from hunger or malnutrition due to poverty or other kinds of vulnerability and who lack resources for farming. The Council calls on the EU and its Member States to increase the support to agriculture, food security and nutrition, in accordance with the aid effectiveness principles, within the framework of existing financial and political commitments such as the Conclusions of the European Council of June 2008 and recalling the commitment made by African leaders in the Maputo Declaration of 2003.
4. The Council calls on the EU and its Member States to act together and focus instruments and tools of EU development assistance in food security on key priority areas, such as:
 - supporting intensification approaches for small scale farmers, particularly women, that are sustainable and ecologically efficient, respecting the diverse functions of agriculture and fostering equality in secure access to assets (in particular land and water) and services;

¹ Contained in the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security held at FAO in Rome in November 2009.

² 1) increasing availability of food; 2) improving access to food; 3) improving nutritional adequacy of food intake; and 4) enhancing crisis prevention and management.

- supporting pro-poor, demand-led agricultural research for development, extension and innovation with clear benefits for small-scale farmers and suited to their needs, in particular through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), as well as supporting agricultural education, especially for women;
- assisting developing countries in addressing climate change and its effects on food security and agricultural development through adaptation and mitigation measures;
- supporting the development and implementation of inclusive and participatory national and regional policies on agriculture, rural development, food security and nutrition, in particular in Africa through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), providing special attention to securing access to land and ensuring effective participation of farmers and farmer organisations;
- examining possibilities to deal with price volatility and policy options that address extreme volatility and the risks and impacts associated with it;
- contributing to employment and income creation, notably by improving the regulatory and institutional conditions for responsible private investments in all stages of the agricultural value chain and stimulating public-private partnerships;
- reinforcing information systems, primarily at regional and national levels, in support of agriculture, food security and nutrition policies, including those for early warning purposes;
- contributing to the integration of food security and nutrition objectives and targets into partner countries' sector policies in such areas as transport, infrastructure, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, water and sanitation, energy, trade, health and education;

- supporting national, regional and international initiatives for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, particularly the process of the elaboration of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Land Tenure and other Natural Resources, and for the development and implementation of principles and a code of conduct governing sustainable large-scale investments in land;
 - establishing and operating targeted and flexible productive safety nets and other social protection mechanisms adapted to local contexts, in particular for vulnerable population groups in both rural and urban areas, including in fragile situations and transition countries;
 - promoting compliance with "Linking relief, rehabilitation and development" (LRRD) principles, in particular local and regional purchases; and
 - accelerating progress on tackling hunger and improving nutrition by scaling-up EU funding for programmes on chronic and acute malnutrition. In this regard, the Council invites the Commission to present a Communication on Nutrition.
5. Recalling the primary responsibility of partner countries in achieving food security, it is important to reinforce all levels of food security governance, including the local level. This should be based on the Right to Food principles, implementing participatory planning, decision-making and budgeting in a transparent and accountable way. Similarly, governance is particularly important with respect to land issues. Involvement, capacity building and empowerment of key stakeholder groups, such as community development groups, farmer organisations and women's associations, should receive priority attention in this respect.

6. At the global level the EU and its Member States, without prejudice to respective competencies, shall foster the implementation of the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (GPAFSN) by improving the coherence of the international food security governance system through support to the Committee on World Food Security as a central component for food security governance, with support from its High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). This shall be done in close collaboration with the UN Secretary General, the Rome based UN agencies and the UN High Level Task Force on food security issues, and by encouraging collaboration and division of labour between the relevant UN agencies as well as other bilateral and multilateral institutions involved in agriculture, food security and nutrition, in accordance with their mandates and comparative advantages.
7. The Council supports a comprehensive, ambitious and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round which would be important to improving global food security.
8. The Council urges the EU and its Member States to deliver their support to food security and nutrition according to the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action, as well as the EU Code of Conduct on Division of Labour, focusing their support on national and regional policies and programmes, enhancing aid effectiveness and policy coherence for development.

9. To this end, the EU and its Member States will identify regions and countries where tasks may be divided, respectful of country ownership, on the basis of comparative advantage. Actions may be coordinated under the guidance of a lead donor or international organisation. The EU and its Member States will continue to financially support national and regional agriculture and food security policies and strategies, including through blending of resources, and encourage further regional integration. In Africa the EU and its Member States will support CAADP national and regional compacts and apply effective division of labour in all agriculture-based Sub-Saharan African countries by 2015.

10. The Council underlines the need for coordination within the EU and its Member States regarding different food security and nutrition initiatives including the operationalisation of this policy framework, and invites the Commission to propose an implementation plan before the end of 2010.