



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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"I/A" ITEM NOTE

from : Coordination Working Party (FAO)
on : 9 October 2009
to : Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)/Council
Subject : Conclusions of the Council of the European Union
Food security and policy coherence – including FAO reform and the World
Summit on Food Security

1. On 9 October 2009, the Coordination Working Party (FAO) unanimously agreed the text of the Conclusions set out in Annex.
2. The Working Party therefore invites Coreper to confirm this agreement and to invite the Council to adopt the Conclusions set out in Annex, by including them as an "A" item on the provisional agenda of a forthcoming Council session.

Conclusions of the Council of the European Union

**Food security and policy coherence – including FAO reform
and the World Summit on Food Security**

1. The European Community and its Member States recognize that while agricultural commodity prices have decreased globally since their peak in mid-2008, they remain relatively high, especially in many developing countries, compared to the situation before 2005. The food crisis has had devastating effects on the poor and vulnerable, many of whom have been unable to secure access to adequate amounts of food. In addition, the financial and economic crisis as well as climate change have further aggravated the global food security situation. As a consequence, it is estimated that the number of hungry and malnourished people has increased by 150 million, and that the total number of hungry people in the world now surpasses one billion. We are further from achieving the first Millennium Development Goal and the eradication of hunger worldwide than ever before.

2. The European Community and its Member States are of the conviction that this situation is unacceptable and that it calls for strong coordinated and holistic action from the international community. For this reason, the EU promotes the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS).

3. The Council underlines the importance of Policy Coherence for Development and supports the steps taken to increase the effectiveness of the EU's overall approach to Policy Coherence for Development. It welcomes, in particular, the Commission's proposal to consider global food security as a priority area in the future work on policy coherence. The Council invites the Community and its Member States to pursue efforts to ensure a coherent approach of all policies so as to promote poverty reduction and food security, taking into account the recommendations of the 2009 EU PCD-report.

4. Since mid-2008 the international community has sought to respond to the global food security situation. The EC and its Member States welcome in particular:

- The creation of the United Nations High-Level Task Force and the Comprehensive Framework for Action;
- The wide-ranging realization that the fostering of sustainable agriculture in developing countries is key to achieving economic growth, poverty reduction and food security in realization of the right to food;
- The mobilization of resources for long-term agricultural development, food security and nutrition, while maintaining a strong commitment to ensuring adequate social protection and, where necessary, emergency food assistance, such as commitments made at the G8 meeting in L'Aquila and the G20 meetings in London and Pittsburgh;
- Efforts by the international community to mitigate the worst effects of the global economic downturn and reduce poverty, in recognition of the fact that most people are hungry because they are poor, not because there is not enough food to eat.

5. While recognizing that the responsibility for food security and progress towards the right to food¹ primarily rests with the governments of countries afflicted by food insecurity, as was also noted at the African Union Heads of State Summit in Sirte in July 2009, the Council recalls the conclusions of the European Council of June 2008 and the conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of November 2008 in which Member States and the Commission were called upon to increase significantly the share of agriculture in their official development assistance. In this context, the Council wishes to emphasize the Food Facility, created to boost EC assistance to and cooperation with developing countries in agriculture and rural development with the aim of mitigating the impact of the food crisis.

¹ As referred to in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food.

6. The EU will strive for a pro-active role of the development partners. Progress in sustainable development requires integrated national policies that are conducive to agriculture and rural development. An example in this regard is the Maputo Declaration which was adopted by African Heads of State and Government more than five years ago. They committed themselves to adopting sound policies for agriculture and rural development and to allocating at least 10% of national budgetary resources for their implementation. However, very few African countries have met that target.

7. Increased resources for agricultural development will in themselves not be sufficient to resolve the food security situation in many parts of the world. What is needed is a truly coherent and integrated approach where the development, humanitarian and food security consequences of policy decisions, in all policy areas, are duly taken into account. In such an approach, partners from the public and private sector and civil society should work together. The Council recognizes that such an ambition requires action on the part of the EU, especially in the following areas:
 - The Common Agricultural Policy – The EU, through successive reforms, has made its policies more market-oriented and more development-friendly, while maintaining a safety net for the producers. The future development of the CAP must be treated as highly relevant with regard to global food security for the EU to be seen as an even more coherent, credible and leading partner to developing countries.

 - The Doha-Round of WTO negotiations – Open trade flows and efficient markets constitute important tools for integrating developing countries in the global economy, creating economic growth and improving food security. Special provisions for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are needed. The Council therefore reiterates its calls for an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

- Climate change – Climate change is seriously undermining efforts to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty and is becoming a major threat to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by reversing progress made. The Council stresses the urgent need for decisive and coordinated action to ensure that developing countries are adequately assisted in their efforts to strengthen adaptation and mitigation capacities. While the potential of agriculture in mitigating climate change should be recognised, adaptation to climate change is of particular importance for the poorest and most vulnerable developing countries, particularly in light of the forecasts for the substantial associated costs. The Council therefore underlines the EU's willingness to support developing countries, particularly LDCs, small island developing states (SIDS) and African countries at risk of floods, drought and desertification, in their ongoing adaptation efforts, in particular through long term, cross-sectoral and participatory local level approaches.
- Agricultural productivity in developing countries - Substantial agricultural productivity gains in developing countries will be needed to secure food for the world's growing population. This calls for continuous support, and strategies, designed to pursue this goal in a sustainable manner. Such support should be developed and provided, where possible, in the context of appropriate rural development and agricultural policy frameworks, like CAADP in Africa, which emphasise a country-led approach based on Paris and Accra Principles.
- Capacity building – Capacity building is crucial for enhancing production potential, access to food, quality of food and developing proximity production, aiming at long-term sustainable development, poverty reduction and food security.

FAO Reform

8. The European Community and its Member States are convinced that the multilateral system has a key role to play in the fight against global poverty and hunger. We need our multilateral institutions to be effective as well as efficient. In this context the Council supports the ongoing institutional reform of FAO.

9. The Council attaches particular attention to the ongoing reform of FAO's Committee on World Food Security (CFS). The revitalization of CFS, as a platform where all relevant food security stakeholders will be represented, constitutes a unique opportunity not only for FAO but for the international community as a whole to follow up on its response to the global food crisis. While formally remaining within the FAO committee structure, it is however of utmost importance that all those stakeholders involved, including the multilateral agencies, NGOs/CSOs, the Bretton Woods Institutions as well as representatives of farmers, consumers, and the private sector, share ownership of this new platform for dialogue.

10. Furthermore, the Council encourages FAO to further intensify coordination with WFP, IFAD and other UN agencies and to actively cooperate with them to increase the effectiveness of the UN development response, under the overall framework of UN system-wide coherence and reforms and especially "Delivering as One" at country level.

11. The European Community and its member states will continue to be a driving force in the reform of FAO.

The World Summit on Food Security in November 2009

12. The European Community and its Member States have participated actively in the preparatory work for the World Summit on Food Security to be held in Rome on 16 - 18 November 2009. We believe that Heads of State and Government at this Summit will commit to a range of actions including the launch of a Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS) as a new system of governance of world food security in order to contribute substantially towards reducing and eventually eliminating global food insecurity.

13. The Council underlines the importance of achieving a forward-looking and action-oriented outcome at the Summit. By reaffirming and supporting the decision concerning a reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), including the setting-up of a High-Level Panel of Experts, the Summit would launch a central component of the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS). The Global Partnership must build on existing structures, be inclusive with regards to participation, be characterized by a genuine bottom-up approach, i.e. based on field-level experiences and developments, and be capable of holding all partners to account in terms of their commitments and their actions.

14. In the context of the Summit, the Council furthermore stresses the importance of working towards realizing already agreed targets and objectives, such as the Millennium Development Goals.