



Council of the  
European Union

008722/EU XXVI. GP  
Eingelangt am 22/01/18

Brussels, 22 January 2018  
(OR. en)

5536/18

COHAFA 3

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: **Indicative work programme of the Bulgarian Presidency for the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) - January – June 2018**

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Delegations will find attached document "Indicative work programme of the Bulgarian Presidency for the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) - January-June 2018.

## **Indicative work programme of the Bulgarian Presidency for the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA)**

**January – June 2018**

The overall approach of the Bulgarian Presidency will be to maintain the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid – following its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary – as the cornerstone of all of our humanitarian action, and to build on the initiatives from recent presidencies, in line with the current Trio Programme (EE-BG-AT)<sup>1</sup>. Efforts will focus on increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of existing resources which we collectively use to deliver humanitarian assistance in the face of the surge in complex and severe humanitarian crises worldwide. The Bulgarian Presidency will focus on the following priorities in the area of humanitarian aid and food aid:

### **1. Humanitarian-development nexus and mainstreaming resilience**

Building upon the Consensus, in May 2017 the Council adopted conclusions on operationalising the humanitarian-development nexus<sup>2</sup>. Given the growing frequency and impact of natural disasters and the increasing duration and intensity of the crises generated by armed conflict, it is more important than ever to improve the way we link our humanitarian and development work so as to maximise the impact of limited humanitarian resources.

The EU Global Strategy<sup>3</sup> calls for common action to help prevent fragile situations from turning into new humanitarian disasters. Where crises are driven by conflict, it is particularly important to be able to deploy the EU's collective humanitarian, development and diplomatic efforts to respond to the root causes of that conflict.

The Joint HRVP/Commission Communication on Resilience<sup>4</sup> and the subsequent November 2017 Council conclusions<sup>5</sup> provide a useful framework for addressing key issues, especially protracted humanitarian crises. From a humanitarian perspective, the operationalisation of the humanitarian-development nexus is a key instrument with which to strengthen the resilience of fragile and crisis-affected countries. The Bulgarian Presidency will follow up on the roll-out of the humanitarian development nexus in the chosen pilot countries (Chad, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sudan and Uganda).

### **2. Follow-up on the World Humanitarian Summit**

The commitments made and the initiatives launched at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) created a framework for more effective and efficient provision of humanitarian assistance. Taking into consideration the 2016 Council conclusions on the WHS<sup>6</sup>, and building on the work of the previous presidencies, the Bulgarian Presidency will continue to promote discussions on the progress in implementing EU and Member State commitments and initiatives.

The Presidency will pay special attention to aid effectiveness and the reform of the international humanitarian system and the actors in the WHS follow-up process.

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<sup>1</sup> 9934/17

<sup>2</sup> 9383/17

<sup>3</sup> 10715/16

<sup>4</sup> 10184/17

<sup>5</sup> 14173/17

<sup>6</sup> 8850/16

The Bulgarian Presidency will promote an exchange of information on the implementation of the Grand Bargain and its ten work streams. This will include sharing best practice on issues such as multi-year budgeting and the use of cash transfers. Cash-based humanitarian assistance can be the most appropriate response in terms of ensuring speed and the dignity of beneficiaries. It will be an integral part of discussions on aid effectiveness, notably in contexts such as the ESSN experience in Turkey.

### **3. Response to crises and forgotten crises**

Under the Bulgarian Presidency, COHAFA will continue to closely monitor needs and responses to man-made humanitarian crises and natural disasters. On forgotten crises, the Presidency will assist in the sharing of information on the envisaged funding and response among Member States and the Commission, with a view to better establishing our collective position with regard to assessed needs as well as contributions made by other donors worldwide.

In order to optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian response, options to better harness technological innovation and the technical skills available in the private sector will be explored. Leveraging additional finance by working with financial institutions and the private sector is another avenue that will be explored.

In addition to the above-mentioned priority areas, the Bulgarian Presidency will work on continuing to build on the results achieved under previous presidencies on the following issues:

#### **- Sensitivity to gender-related matters**

COHAFA will continue to advocate for gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance in emergencies. The Bulgarian Presidency considers such advocacy a horizontal issue which should be part of all activities related to the provision of humanitarian aid. As the EU is the current leader of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, Bulgaria will provide further support for the implementation of the Call to Action Road Map (2016-2020).

#### **- Food and nutrition assistance**

The Bulgarian Presidency will continue to work for appropriate, integrated and collective responses to prevent and mitigate hunger and malnutrition from a resilience-building and livelihood-protection perspective, in the spirit of the Council conclusions on addressing the risk of famine adopted in July 2017<sup>7</sup>. COHAFA will also continue to agree EU statements for the World Food Programme Executive Board meetings.

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<sup>7</sup> 11334/17

- Protection and respect for international humanitarian law (IHL)

At the World Humanitarian Summit, the EU and its Member States pledged to continue to place respect for IHL at the top of the international agenda, to strengthen dialogue and cooperation and to fully implement the EU guidelines on the promotion of compliance with IHL. The Presidency will promote the formulation of common messages in advocating for protection of civilians and respect for IHL in situations of armed conflict and humanitarian crises.

- Forced displacement

There are more than 65 million forcibly displaced people in the world today, fleeing conflict and persecution, including within their own countries. The Bulgarian Presidency will advocate for the needs of internally displaced people and refugees, as well as their respective host communities, to be duly taken into account in humanitarian responses.

**INDICATIVE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

			a.m.	p.m.
COHAFA	17 January	Brussels	X	X
	18 January	Brussels	X	
COHAFA	21 February	Brussels	X	X
Informal COHAFA	19 March	Borovets, Bulgaria	X	X
	20 March	Borovets, Bulgaria	X	
COHAFA	17 April	Brussels	X	X
	18 April	Brussels	X	
COHAFA	15 May	Brussels	X	X
	16 May	Brussels	X	
COHAFA	7 June	Brussels	X	X
	8 June	Brussels	X	

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