



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations

Subject: Partial summary record of the meeting of the **Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)** of the European Parliament, held in Brussels on 9 and 10 July 2012

– Items 4 and 15 on the agenda

The meeting was chaired by Mr Grootte (S&D, DE).

Item 4 on the agenda

Exchange of views with Stavros Malas (Cypriot Minister for Health)

ENVI/7/09460

Presentation of the Council Presidency's programme

Stavros Malas informed the Committee about the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency in the area of health. He said the Presidency's programme would focus on four major action lines:

1. Cross-border health threats in the EU and neighbouring countries with a focus on communicable diseases

The Minister referred to past experience that proved the need for further coordinated action in this area not only within the EU but also with neighbouring countries. The most recent discussion on the Commission's proposal on cross-border threats to health had created a good opportunity for a legal framework to be established.

An expert-level conference had been held in Cyprus the previous week where topics such as surveillance, early warning and effective control of communicable diseases had been discussed. The conclusions of this conference were presented at the Informal Health Council in Nicosia on 10 July 2012.

2. Organ donation and transplantation

The Minister said it was time to put more emphasis on raising awareness of this issue. Therefore, the Presidency planned to prepare and promote the adoption of respective Council conclusions on the matter, which would call for further coordinated action, especially in the light of the forthcoming mid-term evaluation of the action plan on organ donation and transplantation for 2009-2013.

3. Healthy ageing across the lifecycle

The third action line aimed to stress the importance of disease prevention and health promotion in every stage of life and across the lifecycle in order to ensure healthy ageing.

The Presidency's priority in this area would therefore be to focus on the discussion during a high-level Presidency conference on healthy ageing across the lifecycle at which stakeholders from various areas of the health sector would be represented. The objective would be to discuss existing evidence and best practices and agreeing on the way forward. The outcome of the conference would constitute the basis for preparing Council conclusions on healthy ageing.

4. Innovative approaches in health care

The key objective of the Presidency was to promote health care in a multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral approach. A conference would be held in Larnaca in October this year at which both companies developing innovative drugs and those interested in applying IT in the health care sector in innovative ways, as well as academics and experts in personalised medicine would be represented.

Minister Malas also presented the legislative files on which he expected to make progress during the Cyprus Presidency. He mentioned the following proposals:

- proposal for a regulation on establishing a health for growth programme in the field of health for the period 2014-2020;

- proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats to health;
- proposal on the revision of Directive 2001/20/EC on clinical trials;
- proposal on the revision of Directive 89/105/EEC relating to the transparency of measures regulating the prices of medicinal products for human use and their inclusion in the scope of national health insurance systems;
- revision of the regulatory framework on medical devices;
- proposal for a regulation on food intended for infants and young children and on food for special medical purposes;
- proposal on the "Breakfast Directive" (coffee, jam, milk, cocoa and chocolate).

In the subsequent debate a number of members of the committee intervened and raised *inter alia* the following issues:

- Clinical trials

Mr LIESE (EPP, DE), Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT (S&D, DE) and Mr PRODI (S&D, IT) spoke about the different aspects of clinical trials (such as the necessity for close cooperation between Member States, exchange of data and advice in Europe, and use of cell cultures).

The Minister explained that Europe would soon experience a severe lack of innovative drugs owing to the slow development process of such drugs. Since clinical trials represented an appropriate and innovative instrument to develop these drugs, the Presidency welcomed the revision of the Directive on clinical trials, which aimed at improving the harmonisation of assessment and authorisation.

The Minister stressed that the development of new, innovative drugs also created a considerable potential for economic growth which should not be forgotten.

- Transplantation/organ donation

Ms YANNAKOUDAKIS (ECR, UK), Mr PERELLO RODRIGUEZ (S&D, ES) and Mr PRODI (S&D, IT) noted that more emphasis should be put on the social and voluntary aspect of transplantation and organ donation. Mr LIESE (EPP, DE) on the other hand stressed the need to tackle the problem of organ trafficking.

The Minister replied that, while there was a medical aspect of organ donation, the social aspect should also be given more consideration as it was equally important. He said that mobilisation and awareness-raising, as well as information campaigns, could help to get broader acceptance and a higher number of voluntary organ donors in Europe. Mr Malas also emphasised the need for closer cooperation at EU level in order to provide those in need with easier access to organs.

With regard to organ trafficking he believed that appropriate legislation and the implementation of EU law could greatly contribute to minimising the problem.

Item 15 on the agenda

Exchange of views with Sofoclis Aletraris (Cypriot Minister for Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment)

ENVI/7/09093

Presentation of the Council Presidency's programme

Sofoclis Aletraris informed the committee about the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency for the second half of 2012. In his presentation he highlighted in particular the following points:

(a) Sustainable growth

The Cyprus Presidency was highly committed to working toward sustainable growth which did not inflict further damage to the environment. With this in mind, the Presidency's intention was to send a strong political message from the Environment Council to the Spring European Council of 2013, aimed at "greening" the European Semester, based on the Annual Development Review to be presented by the European Commission in November. The agenda of the Environment Council in December would include a policy debate on this issue.

(b) Protection of natural resources and tackling climate change

Mr Aletraris stressed that the participation of the European Union in international fora provided a good opportunity to tackle the problem of protection of natural resources, especially the protection of water, and to deal with climate change issues. In the field of water protection Council conclusions were planned to be tabled at the December Council to be preceded by a conference to be held in Nicosia in November.

Concerning climate change the Cyprus Presidency focused on preparing the Doha Climate Change Conference (November 2012) ahead of which Council conclusions would be adopted on the EU's negotiating position (October 2012). The Minister also referred to the revision of greenhouse gases monitoring and reporting (MMR) system, which was a priority for the Cyprus Presidency. The aim would be to reach a first-reading agreement or, if that proved not to be possible, a political agreement at the December Council would be sought.

Finally, the subject of adaptation to climate change would also form part of the Cyprus Presidency's priorities.

(c) Protection and management of biodiversity

The Presidency would focus on ensuring an efficient preparation and follow up to upcoming international meetings, in particular to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012 and to the meetings related to the Biosafety Protocol.

(d) LIFE regulation

The Cyprus Presidency's intention would be to take forward discussions on this regulation as far as possible, to obtain a mandate to begin trilogues with the European Parliament and to reach a first-reading agreement.

(e) Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP)

Following the June Council Conclusions, the Cyprus Presidency would like to make progress on this issue when the presentation of the seventh EAP would take place (expected in November). The seventh EAP would be discussed at the Council in December 2012, in terms of a progress report or presentation of the Commission's proposal.

Following the presentation of the priorities, members raised *inter alia* the following issues:

– Rio+20 Sustainable Development Summit

Several speakers touched upon the outcome of the Conference of Rio+20 (Mr LEINEN (S&D, DE), Mr ARSENIS (S&D, EL), Mr GEBRANDY (ALDE, NL) and Ms BÉLIER (Greens/EFA, FR)), with some of them being critical of its results.

The Minister acknowledged that the outcome of the conference had not been as ambitious as expected and added that it could have been an opportunity to adopt practical measures. At the same time Mr Aletraris also believed that a reasonable and satisfactory overall compromise could be reached and certain targets could be adopted such as the recognition of greening as an instrument of financial mobilisation.

With regard to current and future work he indicated that the Council's Working Party was examining the outcome of the conference and first results were expected in September. He intended to include this item in the agenda of the October Summit so that it could be ensured that already existing agreements were applied. An information item at the December Summit was also be planned.

The Minister emphasised that while sustainable development remained a high priority for the Cyprus Presidency, it could deliver good results only if it were dealt with in an international framework.

– Greening of the first pillar of the common agricultural policy

Mr EICKHOUT (Greens/EFA, NL) asked the Minister how he intended to maintain the 30 % allocated to greening in view of the opposition against this measures by several Member States. Ms KLASS (EPP, DE) on the other hand stressed the need to have a proportionate rate for greening in the CAP.

The Minister said that he was in favour of attributing a more significant role to farmers when it came to agriculture and environmental protection. He said that overexploitation of resources had to be avoided not only in the agricultural policy but also in the common fisheries policy, where he also attached great importance to the protection of the marine habitat.
