



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 3 May 2017
(OR. en)

8763/17

COHAFA 35
DEVGEN 76
ALIM 5
ONU 66
FAO 12
COAFR 124
MAMA 86
MOG 29
COEST 93
COASI 55
PROCIV 40
RELEX 365

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and
Food Aid on 6 and 7 April 2017

Delegation will find attached the outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian
Aid and Food Aid held on 6 and 7 April 2017.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted (CM 2218/2017 REV1). AOB items were added on Iraq, on worsening working conditions for INGOs in Turkey, and on the Mexico City policy.

2. Draft Council conclusions on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus (COHAFA joined CODEV for this item)

The two groups discussed the draft conclusions prepared by the Presidency. Based on delegations' comments, the Presidency will prepare a revised draft for discussion at another joint session during the COHAFA meeting on 4 May 2017.

3. Gender in humanitarian action

a) The role of women's organisations in humanitarian aid *(incl. an informal exchange of views with CARE International)*

As part of an informal exchange of views, Eman Ismail, Deputy Country Director Jordan, CARE International, presented key findings of the recent CARE report 'She is a humanitarian' and provided an overview of actions taken by CARE in Jordan in order to advance gender considerations in the humanitarian response. She also highlighted the remaining gaps, challenges and weaknesses in the collective response, stressing that policy commitments do not translate fast enough into action on the ground. More concerted pressure from donors and bodies like the EU were necessary to push partners to implement humanitarian gender policies on the ground. Ms Ismail's recommendations included introducing indicators into the EU Compact with Jordan to assess the impact on women and girls; to make sure that the voice of refugees (in particular women refugees) is heard in the humanitarian response; and to address the gender-specific dimension in all humanitarian innovation and new working methods.

b) Update on humanitarian actions under the Gender Action Plan

The Commission reported about contributions by DG ECHO to reporting on the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan¹, in particular on indicators under objective 9 on protection from gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies. In 2016, ECHO had funded 84 different projects for GBV response with a total of €18 million, reaching 3.4 million beneficiaries. In 2017, DG ECHO will be taking over the leadership for the global initiative Call to Action on Protection from GBV in emergencies.

With regard to the implementation of the series of eight UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, the EEAS stressed that a number of those resolutions, including the latest one, 2242 (2015), had a strong humanitarian character. Since 2008, the EU had taken a comprehensive approach to embedding WPS resolutions in EU policy, with multi-year reporting. The next such report will be based on a list of indicators updated by the Council in September 2016.²

4. Countries at risk of famine (*incl. an informal exchange of views with Action Contre La Faim*)

As part of an informal exchange of views, Ms Isabelle Moussard Carlsen, Director of Operations, Action Contre La Faim, briefed the group on current food-insecurity levels in Yemen, north-eastern Nigeria, South Sudan and Somalia. She examined the factors common to these crises (such as violent conflict, a lack of respect for IHL and targeting of humanitarian aid workers), and provided details specific to each country. She encouraged donors to scale up funding for response; to help facilitate humanitarian access and protecting the humanitarian space; and to step up diplomatic dialogue in order to tackle the root causes and ensure increased access to basic services as well as better support for small-scale agriculture. Delegations expressed their concern at the levels of malnutrition in the four countries and confirmed that response to these crises was a collective priority. Several delegations reported about recent funding increases made in order to step up the humanitarian response to these crises, and stressed the need for increased efforts to resolve the conflicts that exacerbate the food insecurity and to improve access to affected populations.

¹ ST 12249/15

² see ST 12525/16

5. Follow-up to World Humanitarian Summit Core Responsibility #4: Working differently to end need

The Commission gave an overview of key deliverables from among the EU's WHS commitments in this area. The 2017 Global Report on Food Crises, launched on 31 March, represents a joint effort by the Commission, WFP, FAO and other partners to consolidate and qualify data on global food insecurity from various sources. The Global Network Against Food Crises is a process of dialogue launched at the WHS in order to better coordinate food crisis response. The Commission also said it had signed up to the Urban Crisis Charter and become a member of the Global Alliance for Urban Crises, of which it hosted the Annual All Members' Meeting in March. Lastly, the Commission gave a presentation on its new Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre, which provides access to information and networks on disaster risk reduction and management worldwide.

6. EU Aid Volunteers

The group was briefed by the Commission on the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, touching upon calls for proposals for deployment and capacity building and technical assistance; the certification process; global outreach with regard to participating organisations; the online platform; the Brussels network workshop on 13-14 February; and the forthcoming mid-term evaluation.

7. AOB

a) Syria

The Commission debriefed on the Brussels Conference (4-5 April 2017), at which \$6 billion had been pledged for humanitarian response in Syria and the region for 2017. The humanitarian thematic session had focused on access, protection, and health, and resulted in a set of specific operational conclusions. Delegations commended the organisers of the conference and welcomed the outcome, stressing that it now was essential to implement the pledges swiftly. The Presidency undertook to provide an opportunity for follow-up to the outcome of the humanitarian segment of the Brussels conference at the COHAFA meeting on 4 May.

b) Yemen

The Commission updated on the humanitarian situation with a specific focus on Hodeida. In view of the continued blockage of the port and the expected retake of the city the UN had tested other routes for getting aid into Yemen (from KSA, the port of Aden, and Oman). All of these proved to be unreliable and/or too expensive, leading the Humanitarian Country Team to state that there could be no substitute for using Hodeida port. The Swedish delegation recalled that the 2017 HRP was funded below 10% and encouraged all donors to attend the forthcoming pledging conference (Geneva, 25 April) at ministerial level and pledge generously.

c) Peru

The Commission briefed on the EU response to the worst rains and floods which Peru had seen in 30 years, severely affecting an estimated 950,000 people. €250,000 had been mobilised and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism had been activated. A draft UN Flash Appeal would soon be released.

d) Iraq

The Commission debriefed on Commissioner Stylianides' visit to the country on 6-8 March and updated on the humanitarian situation in west Mosul, where the fighting is taking place in densely populated areas, ISIL fighters mingle with the civilian population and directly target those attempting to flee and the military campaign seemed more aggressive than it had been in the eastern part of the city. The use of heavier artillery and greater number of airstrikes meant more casualties and displaced people, which in turn gave rise to graver protection concerns.

e) Turkey

At the suggestion of the Danish delegation, Member States exchanged views on the working conditions of humanitarian organisations in Turkey, with several of them reporting that their humanitarian partners were facing various obstacles there (delayed issuance of work permits; fines; office closure as well as detention and expulsion of foreign staff).

f) Mexico City policy

At the suggestion of the Danish delegation, Member States exchanged views on the possible effects on NGO partners providing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services following the recent decision of the US administration to block US federal funding to organisations providing SRHR services.
