



Council of the
European Union

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(OR. en)

9526/17

COHAFA 42
DEVGEN 114
ALIM 6
ONU 71
FAO 15
COAFR 146
MAMA 95
MOG 39
COEST 105
COASI 60
PROCIV 49
RELEX 445

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 4 May 2017

Delegation will find attached the outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian
Aid and Food Aid held on 4 May 2017.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted (CM 2526/17). An AOB item was added on Sudan. The AOB item on the WFP Executive Board Annual Session was turned into a full agenda item.

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

The two groups discussed paragraph by paragraph the revised draft Council conclusions prepared on the basis of comments received from delegations on the initial draft. Based on delegations' further comments, the Presidency will prepare a revised draft for final agreement by silence procedure in order to submit the agreed final text to COREPER for endorsement on 17 May, with a view to adoption by the Council at the FAC/DEV on 19 May.

The Commission informed that, together with EEAS, it was organising an experts' meeting on the implementation of the development-led approach to forced displacement (19-20 June, Brussels).

3. Preparations for UNGA 72

The Commission presented the outline and rationale of the draft *fiche* setting out humanitarian EU priorities for UNGA 72. After a round of initial comments by delegations, the Presidency invited Member States to send written comments with a view to finalising the text by silence procedure.

4. Follow-up to World Humanitarian Summit Core Responsibility #5: Invest in Humanity

i) Informal exchange of views with VOICE

As part of an informal exchange of views, VOICE Director Kathrin Schick and Programme Coordinator Magali Mourlon briefed the group on the recent VOICE study entitled ‘Exploring EU humanitarian donors’ funding and conditions for working with NGOs: Building Evidence for Simplification’. Focusing on simplification and harmonisation of donor requirements for NGOs’ project proposals and reporting, as envisaged under the Grand Bargain commitments, they stressed the need for a reduction of red tape for humanitarian partners. To this end, it was necessary to establish a clear timeline highlighting the sequencing and interlinkages between the implementation proposals currently under discussion in the various work streams and also the links with the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative. The Presidency informed that the Grand Bargain would be further discussed at the informal COHAFA in St Julian's on 1-2 June.

ii) EU and Member States' commitments

The Commission informed that the majority of the 11 EU commitments made under this Core Responsibility Area concerned the Grand Bargain. In addition, plans were underway to implement new working methods to allow for more multi-year planning and financing under the new programming cycle; localisation was being supported through various strands such as the EU Aid Volunteers Initiative and funding under DG ECHO’s Enhanced Response Capacity; and DG ECHO was aiming to increase the share of assistance delivered in cash to 35%.

5. Follow-up to the " Supporting the future of Syria and the region" conference (Brussels, 4-5 April)

The Commission presented detailed statistics provided by OCHA on the pledges received at the conference, and welcomed the trend towards increased multi-year funding. The Commission said it intended to share with Member States a proposal for possible follow-up actions by donors, partners and other stakeholders in order to implement the “Operational Recommendations” agreed after the thematic event on “Humanitarian Aid Inside Syria – Needs, Challenges and the Way Forward”, organised by DG-ECHO at the Brussels Syria Conference.

6. WFP Executive Board Annual Session (Rome, 12-16 June)

The Commission gave an overview of the provisional agenda of this meeting and explained the rationale of their suggestion for making 4-5 statements on behalf of the EU and its Member States, on the following agenda items: 4) Annual Performance Report for 2016; 5a) Update on the Integrated Road Map; 5c) Implementation Plan of the Nutrition Policy; 8a) CSP Lebanon; 8b) Interim CSP Sudan. Delegations provided initial comments and were invited to finalise the selection of statements by written procedure. The Presidency informed that the texts of the statements would also be agreed by written procedure.

7. AOB

a) Yemen

The Swedish delegation debriefed on the high-level pledging event for Yemen (Geneva, 25 April), where a total of USD 1.1 billion worth of humanitarian assistance had been pledged. The Commission provided a brief update on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, and informed the group about the disastrous effects on the population of a potential attack on Hodeida port.

b) Field trip to the Sahrawi refugee camps (8-9 May)

The Commission and the Spanish delegation briefed on a field trip to the Sahrawi refugee camps they were organising on 8-9 May.

c) FAC/DEV (Brussels, 19 May)

The Presidency provided an overview of humanitarian-related agenda items at the **Foreign Affairs Council / Development** on 19 May: the adoption of the conclusions on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, and the discussion of humanitarian crises in the wider Horn of Africa region with a particular focus on South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen, Nigeria and possibly also Syria.

d) Workshop on "Addressing forgotten crises in today's global context: the case of Chad and Myanmar" (Brussels, 5 May)

The Presidency briefed on this workshop organised in partnership with DG ECHO and UNICEF, and announced that a summary report would be produced following the event.

e) Sudan

The Commission informed that the Sudanese authorities had eased restrictions on humanitarian assistance and that the previous system of travel permits had been replaced by a notification system. However, staffing restrictions for humanitarian partners remained and visa approvals continued to be delayed. At the same time humanitarian needs were on the increase, with between 180,000 and 240,000 South Sudanese refugees expected to flee to Sudan this year. With the rainy season ahead, the Commission stressed that it was important to scale up the humanitarian response.
