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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 21 June 2017

Delegations will find attached the outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid held on 21 June 2017.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in CM 3200/17 REV1, with AOB items added on Mali, the Philippines, a Commission workshop on cash guidance to partners, and the Second Implementation Plan of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

2. Protection, forced displacement and migration (*incl. an informal exchange of views with ICRC*)

As part of an informal exchange of views, Pierre Apraxine, ICRC Deputy Head of Delegation in Brussels, briefed on ICRC's protection response for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants. On IDPs, he outlined ICRC efforts to prevent displacement and elaborated on the organisation's all-victims approach covering also host communities, those left behind, and those at risk of displacement. Regarding migration, he stressed that the key criterion for ICRC's action is ensuring migrants' protection and providing them with assistance along the entire migration route according to their humanitarian needs, regardless of their motivation for migrating. Also under this item, the Commission provided a debriefing on the ad-hoc expert consultation with Member States on Forced Displacement and Development held in Brussels on 19-20 June.

3. German Chairmanship of the ICRC Support Group

The German delegation debriefed the group on their work during the past 12 months under their Chairmanship of the ICRC Donor Support Group, a forum in which the ICRC's major government donors can exchange views on ICRC's policies and programming. The overarching theme of the Chairmanship was "protracted is the new norm", with subtopics on localisation, working with first responders, working with RCRC Societies, humanitarian financing, and broadening the donor base.

4. Follow-up to the FAC/DEV (19 May)

The group agreed to prepare draft Council conclusions on 'Addressing the risk of famine'. The incoming Estonian Presidency announced that the draft text would be discussed at the first formal COHAFA meeting under their Presidency on 6-7 July.

5. Response to crises

a) Central African Republic

The Commission provided an update on the recent escalation of violence in CAR which had brought the country towards the brink of a new large-scale humanitarian crisis. In total, more than 1 million people (25% of the population) had been displaced and half of CAR's population was in need of humanitarian assistance, while the Humanitarian Response Plan was only 30% funded.

b) Sahrawi refugees

The Commission debriefed Member States on the field trip to the Sahrawi refugee camps in south-west Algeria organised on 8-9 May, which had confirmed continued humanitarian needs in particular with regard to food and water. Growing youth radicalisation was another issue of key concern, as was the importance of conducting a vulnerability assessment to prioritise aid for those most in need. There also was a need for broadening the donor base and diversifying aid instruments.

6. AOB

a) Yemen

The Commission updated on the humanitarian situation in the country focusing on the recent cholera outbreak, stressing that the worst-case scenario of 300,000 affected people was likely to be exceeded. The fact that public-health officials had not received their salaries for eight months now was an issue of grave concern. The HRP was only 29% funded, with particularly low figures for the health, sanitation and food security sections.

b) Iraq

The Commission updated on the humanitarian situation in the country. Key priorities included protection of civilians during and after the conduct of hostilities in West Mosul Old City, also in view of forthcoming operations in Telafar, Hawija and West Anbar, and stabilisation and early recovery of liberated areas by restoring basic services and livelihoods. There had been recent reports of severe violations of IHL and IHRL by various armed forces (illegal detention, torture, summary executions). Protection and assistance should cover support to people trapped by conflict, remainees and those newly displaced. On 13 July, the "High-level Coordination meeting on Mosul IDP Requirements and 2017 Iraq Appeal Shortfalls" would be held in Washington, in the margins of a Coalition meeting, to update on the cost of displacement for another three, six or nine months.

c) Debriefing WFP Executive Board Annual Session (Rome, 12-16 June)

The Commission provided a debriefing on the WFP Executive Board Annual Session, at which four statements on behalf of the EU and its Member States had been made.

d) ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (Geneva, 21-23 June)

The Commission provided an outlook on this event.

e) Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

The Commission briefed on the event entitled 'Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action – One year after, a state of play' organised by the European Parliament on 31 May to mark the first anniversary of the Charter.

f) Debriefing Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Cancún, 22-26 May)

The Commission briefed on this global conference, at which Commissioner Stylianides had delivered a statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

g) Priorities for COHAFA under the Estonian Presidency

The incoming Estonian Presidency informed delegations about their priorities for COHAFA during the period July-December 2017. These include response to humanitarian crises, resilience, protracted forced displacement, implementation of the humanitarian-development nexus, World Humanitarian Summit follow-up, as well as food security, gender, and protection.

h) ECHO Workshop on Cash Guidance to partners funded by EU/ECHO to deliver medium to large-scale cash transfers (Brussels, 7 June)

The Commission debriefed on this workshop, which had brought together 70 participants chiefly from UN agencies and INGOs but also from the private sector as well as some Member States and representatives from Canada and the US.

i) Mali

The Commission briefed on the increase in violence in the north of Mali which was spreading to the centre and also to neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso. The Commission stressed it was important to ensure response to needs both in Mali and in neighbouring countries affected by this crisis, as Malian refugees would be unable to return to their home country in the near future.

j) Philippines

The Commission briefed on the humanitarian crisis in Mindanao, where the occupation of the town of Marawi by an armed group had led to the displacement of more than 320,000 people. Some 20,000 people hosted in evacuation centres were in need of WASH, protection, shelter, food. Few international aid organisations were present and the area was not accessible.

k) Second Implementation Plan (IP) of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid

The Commission informed that the actions foreseen under the second IP were being duly covered through the implementation of the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit, and that the selection of the three pilot countries had in hindsight proved to be less practicable than at first envisaged. For these reasons there was no intention to produce a new implementation plan. There might however be a need for further reporting by the Commission on the second IP.