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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Task Force for Rural Africa – strengthening our partnership in food and farming
- Information from the Commission

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Commission on the above mentioned subject to be raised under "Any other business" at the session of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 19 February 2018.

Task Force for Rural Africa – strengthening our partnership in food and farming

1. Background

The Commission Communication on the Future of Food and Farming, published on 29th November 2017, emphasizes that "the future CAP must play a larger role in implementing the outcome of the Valetta Summit, addressing the root causes of migration". It highlights the importance of knowledge transfer to regions of origin, most notably Africa, through sharing of good practices and enhancing strategic policy cooperation and dialogue with the Africa Union (AU) on issues related to agriculture, agri-food economy and rural development.

In this context, the Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development in cooperation with the Directorate for Development Cooperation will set up a Task Force for Rural Africa ('TFRA') as a group of experts to assist the Commission with expertise, advice and possible recommendations in relation to strengthening the EU-Africa partnership in food and farming and in enhancing the role of the EU in African job-creating economic development in agriculture, agri-business and agro-industries.

The TFRA's tasks shall be:

- To provide advice about how to accelerate impact (improve delivery) based on a better coordination with existing initiatives (in particular the EIP, the SB4A, the Abidjan Action Plan, and other types of development assistance, trade and investment agreements and instruments, cooperation in multilateral fora), focusing on boosting public and private investments in African sustainable agriculture, agribusiness and agro-industrial development.
- To examine possibilities to share the knowledge and know-how gained from European agriculture and rural development policies to develop employment opportunities and revenue-generating activities in African rural areas.

- To identify strategies to promote and prioritise agricultural policy and regulatory reform in African countries in line with the CAADP Malabo Declaration and, in this context, facilitate EU responsible private investments in African agriculture, agri-business and agro-industries aiming at boosting intra-African trade and exports of agricultural products from African countries.
- To identify strategies to support youth embarking on a career in agriculture, agribusiness and agroindustry.

The TFRA shall be guided by the orientations and commitments contained in the AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Conference of July 2017 and the outcome of the AU EU Summit of 29-30 November 2017, to the extent that these instruments apply to the area of agriculture, agri-business and agro-industries. The work of the group shall contribute to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

A call for application for the selection of members of the Task Force Rural Africa will soon be published. The aim is to constitute the Task Force in May and for it to report back at the beginning of 2019.