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COHAFA 88
DEVGEN 180
ALIM 11
ONU 94
FAO 47
COAFR 266
MAMA 168
MOG 74
COEST 212
COASI 255
COHOM 130
PROCIV 74
RELEX 912

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 11-12 October 2018.

Delegations will find attached the outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid held on 11-12 October 2018.

Outcome of Proceedings, COHAFA 11-12 October 2018

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in CM 4641/18 COR1.

2. Safe Schools Declaration (*COHOM delegates were invited to join COHAFA for this item*)

As part of an informal exchanges of views, Gisela Schmidt-Martin, Coordinator with the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, provided a briefing on the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD). The presentation showcased examples of how the SSD had been put into practice on the ground, making a tangible difference to the lives of children affected by conflict. Ms Schmidt-Martin called upon the EU and Member States to take a leadership role in the endorsement, promotion and implementation of the Declaration.

3. Response to crises

a) Indonesia

The group discussed the humanitarian needs following the earthquakes and the tsunami in the Sulawesi region. The Commission briefed the group on the international and EU response, including the activation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

b) Sudan

As part of a discussion on the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, the EEAS briefed the group on the political and economic background to the crisis. The Commission provided an analysis of the humanitarian situation, which was being exacerbated by an acute economic crisis, a steady influx of refugees from South Sudan, and the serious underfunding of the Humanitarian Response Plan for Sudan and for the South Sudanese Refugee crisis. Guaranteeing safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need, wherever they are, including conflict-affected areas of Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan, remains key.

c) Venezuela (*COLAC was invited to join COHAFA for this item*)

The groups discussed the humanitarian consequences of multi-faceted economic, political and social crisis in Venezuela. The Commission also briefed on the humanitarian situation of the more than 3 million Venezuelans who are estimated to have fled to neighbouring countries

d) Ukraine

COAHFA discussed the ongoing humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine. The Commission said that Ukraine should not remain a 'forgotten' crisis as the situation continued to deteriorate ahead of the winter with the destruction of buildings due to shelling, the presence of landmines, and the restricted access to non-government controlled-areas.

4. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (*incl. an informal exchange of views with FAO and WFP*)

As part of an informal exchange of views Yvonne Forsen from WFP and Luca Russo from FAO presented the 2018 edition of the report on "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" (SOFI). They reported a rise in hunger during the past two years, largely attributed to conflict as well as climate variability and climate extremes.

5. World Humanitarian Summit follow-up (Grand Bargain) (*incl. an informal exchange of views with VOICE, CARE Netherlands and NRC*)

As part of an informal exchange of views, VOICE Director Kathrin Schick briefed COHAFA about the VOICE project on NGO engagement in the Grand Bargain. Antonius van de Langenberg from CARE Netherlands presented the work of the Dutch Relief Alliance in cooperation with the Dutch foreign ministry, and Cecilia Roselli from the Norwegian Refugee Council presented the NRC's cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Both examples served to illustrate the way in which NGOs, together with Member States, are implementing the goals set out in the Grand Bargain.

6. AOB

a) Humanitarian side events at UNGA 73

The Commission and a number of delegations debriefed on the humanitarian side events during the UNGA 73 ministerial week, which saw a strong high-level participation from the EU and Member States. Recurring themes included combating sexual violence and ensuring respect for IHL, humanitarian principles and protection of civilians. The geographical focus was on Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and the Rohingya crisis.

b) Ebola preparedness

The Commission briefed on the recent increase of Ebola infections in the DRC which, worryingly, were coming from unknown transmission chains. A regional preparedness plan was being implemented focusing on a number of high-risk districts. It identified serious gaps around screening, prevention, control, burial management and the overall capacity of various actors.

c) Review of the methodology of OECD DAC peer reviews

The Commission drew Member States' attention to the fact that the OECD DAC Secretariat had prepared a new set of guidelines for the peer reviews, impacting also the parts pertaining to humanitarian aid.