



Council of the
European Union

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5750/19

COHAFA 9
DEVGEN 11
ALIM 1
ONU 5
FAO 1
COAFR 15
MAMA 21
MOG 10
COEST 12
COASI 8
COLAC 9
PROCIV 6
RELEX 60

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Outcome of proceeding of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and
Food Aid on 6-7 December 2018

Delegations will find attached the outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Humanitarian
Aid and Food Aid held on 6-7 December 2018.

Outcome of Proceedings COHAFA 6-7 December 2018

1 - Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted (CM 5546/18). AOB items were added on the EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security, and on Syria.

2 - Humanitarian aid and the Women, Peace and Security agenda (*incl. an informal exchange of views with UN Women*)

As part of an informal exchange of views, Ms Alia El-Yassir, UN Women Regional Director, Europe and Central Asia, briefed COHAFA on UN Women's humanitarian involvement, including on programmes such as the Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection (LEAP) and the Gender Inequality of Risk and promoting Community Resilience to Natural Hazards in a Changing Climate (GIR). Ms Ghita El Khyari, Policy Specialist Peace and Security at the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund Secretariat, briefed COHAFA on the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund and explained how it tied in with the humanitarian work of other UN organisations.

3 - Gender aspects of humanitarian assistance

The Commission briefed the group on three issues related to gender in humanitarian assistance: 1) the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence (implementation of the EU commitments and key results of the EU leadership of the Call); 2) the implementation of the humanitarian chapter of the EU Gender Action Plan II; and 3) the key findings of its first Gender Age Marker Report.

4 - Response to crises

a) Ethiopia

COHAFA discussed the humanitarian emergency faced by refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in Ethiopia. With regard to IDPs in Gedeo and Guji, the Commission reported that the security situation was not yet ripe for returns due to the ongoing interethnic violence. The discussion also focused on the needs of more than 400,000 refugees from South Sudan and an increasing number of refugees from Eritrea. The EEAS briefed the group on the political and economic background against which the humanitarian crisis was unfolding.

b) Venezuela (*incl. an informal exchange of views with UNHCR - COLAC had been invited to join COHAFA for this item*)

As part of an informal exchange of views, Isabel Marquez, UNHCR Deputy Director for the Americas, briefed COHAFA on the challenges faced by millions of Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia and Brazil; the strategic process for coordination between hosting countries; and the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for 2019. She also presented the findings from a recent joint donor mission to Ecuador, Colombia and Peru. In closed format, the groups discussed the challenges faced by the Venezuelans within the country in view of current political and economic developments.

c) Central African Republic / spill-over to neighbouring countries

The group discussed the CAR regional crisis, now listed by the Commission as a forgotten humanitarian crisis. The Commission reported that almost two-thirds of the population in the CAR were expected to be in need of humanitarian assistance next year due to a lack of access to food, basic healthcare and clean water as well as the ongoing violence in the country. The EEAS briefed the group about the worsening security situation in the country.

5 - Global Compact on Refugees

As part of an informal exchange of views, the Chair of the CONUN Working Party briefed COHAFA on the process towards the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees and provided an assessment of its contents. She commended the EU for displaying a high degree of unity during the negotiation process.

6 - World Disasters Report 2018

As part of an informal exchange of views, Kirsten Hagon, Senior Analyst, Humanitarian Policy at the IFRC, presented the 2018 edition of the IFRC World Disasters Report, "Leaving No One Behind". She provided examples of vulnerable groups whose needs remained unaddressed because they had been "out of sight", "out of reach", or "left out of the loop"; because organisations had run "out of money"; or because the type of humanitarian crisis was entirely "out of scope" of humanitarian organisations and donors. The ensuing discussion focused on solutions to address these issues in order to reach all populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

7 - Response to crises: Yemen *(incl. an informal exchange of views with UNICEF - MOG had been invited to join COHAFA for this item)*

As part of an informal exchange of views, Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, provided a briefing on catastrophic humanitarian situation in Yemen. Almost 18 million Yemenis were food-insecure, with around two million children acutely malnourished and 400,000 facing life-threatening malnutrition. Children were also facing a lack of access to quality education, recruitment to armed groups, and continued exposure to the violent conflict. In closed format, the EEAS briefed the groups on the political efforts to resolve the conflict. The Commission stressed it was important to continue addressing the key drivers of the current humanitarian crisis, which included attacks on civilians, the closure of ports to humanitarian and economic imports, the fact that civil-servant salaries were not being paid, the devaluation of the currency, and the obstruction of humanitarian work.

8 - Member States' humanitarian priorities for 2019

Delegations informed about their humanitarian priorities for 2019.

9 - AOB

a) EDRIS

The Commission debriefed on the meeting of the EDRIS working group held with a number of delegates from interested Member States on 6 December. The group had discussed the development of new functionalities such as encoding multi-annual funding decisions as well as the mutual compatibility of data formats between EDRIS, IATI and the OCHA Financial Tracking Service.

b) COHAFA priorities of the Romanian Presidency

The incoming Romanian Presidency informed about their priorities for the period January-June 2019. These include the continuation of topics such as the Humanitarian-Development Nexus (with an open perspective to the inclusion of the Peace element); follow-up to the Commission communication and Council conclusions on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises; the responses to ongoing, emerging, protracted and forgotten humanitarian crises; and, as relevant, the negotiations on the European Solidarity Corps; additional priorities would include Disaster Risk Reduction and innovation/disruptive technologies.

c) EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security

The EEAS briefed COHAFA on the new EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security, which had been prepared in close consultation with Member States, civil-society organisations, and across EU institutions.

d) Syria

The Spanish delegation highlighted the importance of joint EU humanitarian advocacy and messaging.