



**Brussels, 18 March 2022**  
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#### **'I/A' ITEM NOTE**

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**From:** General Secretariat of the Council  
**To:** Permanent Representatives Committee/Council  
**On:** 18 March 2022

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**Subject:** Initiative to request a special emergency session of the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to examine the consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine on global food security and agriculture  
— *Approval*

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1. In Resolution A/RES-11/1 adopted at its 11th special emergency special session on 2 March 2022, the UN General Assembly expresses its concerns about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in and around Ukraine and the impact that the situation in Ukraine can have on food security globally, especially for vulnerable countries and populations.
2. With Ukraine and the Russian Federation among the major producers of agricultural commodities in the world, these concerns have been widely echoed across the international community, including by the G7 Agriculture Ministers at their extraordinary meeting held on 11 March 2022 with the participation of the Ukrainian Agriculture Minister and Director-General QU of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

3. Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO's mandate. It is critically important for the FAO members to assess FAO's ongoing actions to address the increasingly disruptive impact of the war in Ukraine on global food supply and to give further guidance to FAO's leadership to ensure that FAO can play its full role in these exceptional circumstances.
4. Under Rule XXV, paragraph 1, of FAO's General Rules, an emergency special session of the FAO Council can be called to examine and advise on any issues pertaining to or arising out of the world food and agriculture situation and related matters, especially any such issues of an urgent nature. For such an emergency special session to be convened, a request has to be submitted in writing to the Director-General by fifteen or more FAO Council Members.
5. On 17 March 2022, the Working Party on International Food and Agriculture Questions (FAO) discussed on the basis of the Presidency note set out in WK 3848/2022+ADD1 the following two proposals:
  - a) requesting the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda of the 33<sup>rd</sup> FAO Regional Conference for Europe (10-13 May 2022, Łódź – Poland), in order to address the implications on world food security and agriculture arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine;
  - b) starting Presidency-led outreach actions in Rome with a view to ensuring broad cross-regional support among the FAO member countries for requesting an extraordinary FAO Council session to address the implications of the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine on world food security and agriculture, with the following key objectives:
    - in line with the UNGA resolution A/RES/ES-11/1, express grave concerns about the impact of the Russian aggression on increased food insecurity globally;
    - take stock of the actions undertaken by FAO so far to address, within its mandate, the consequences of the conflict on agriculture and food security;
    - stress the role of FAO, in coordination with other UN entities, to address within its mandate the consequences of the conflict on agriculture and food security;

- request action by FAO with a particular focus on protecting the most vulnerable countries and populations, with a view to:
    - producing an immediate response plan to address the food security need of the Ukrainian population, including how to preserve the Ukrainian coming campaign and a medium-term recovery plan for Ukraine,
    - producing a response plan to bring assistance to the developing countries most affected by the impacts of this conflict on their food security,
  - instruct the FAO Director General to monitor the situation and its implications on world food security and agriculture, including food prices, make recommendations, organize monthly briefings open to all Members and report to the Council;
  - decide to add an item at its regular session in June 2022.
6. In concluding the discussion, the Presidency noted the Working Party's broad support for the above proposals and, in particular, the Working Party's agreement to mandate the Presidency and the Rome-based Delegation of the EU to start as soon as possible outreach actions in Rome aimed at seeking wide cross-regional support among FAO member nations for requesting an emergency special session of the FAO Council. In this regard, the Presidency committed to report back to the Working Party as soon as possible on the outcome of those outreach actions.
7. On 18 March 2022, the permanent representatives of the United States of America at the FAO requested the Rome-based representatives of the EU and its Member States to support the draft letter set out in the addendum to this note, aimed at requesting a special emergency session of the FAO Council to be held as soon as possible. For this draft letter, which includes in its annex a series of actions that the FAO Council would approve at its special emergency session, is still subject to consultations with other FAO member countries, in order to seek the largest possible support. Its content could therefore undergo modifications.

8. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited:
- to confirm the outcome of the Working Party discussions on the above Presidency proposals;
  - to recommend that the Council, as an « A » item at one of its forthcoming meetings:
    - approves the Presidency proposal to request the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda of the 33<sup>rd</sup> FAO Regional Conference for Europe (10-13 May 2022, Łódź – Poland), in order to address the implications on world food security and agriculture arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine;
    - approves the draft letter set out in the addendum to this note; this approval is without prejudice to any drafting changes that are in line with the principles and elements set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this note.
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