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'I' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
dated: 4 December 2025
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: Attendance of third parties at the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid meetings during the Cyprus Presidency
(1 January - 31 July 2026)
- Approval

1. The Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) discusses the EU's humanitarian strategies and policies, as well as its response to humanitarian crises. Its work is guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). COHAFA monitors humanitarian needs resulting from man-made and natural disasters outside the EU, ensures the coherence and coordination of the EU's collective response to these crises, discusses international, horizontal and sectorial humanitarian policies, and promotes the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the humanitarian principles and IHL.

2. To adequately fulfil its tasks in this framework, COHAFA needs to be able to rely on the operational input from and exchanges of information and views with third parties, in particular with relevant humanitarian partners, which can be either international organisations and bodies or non-governmental organisations, as well as think tanks and academia, working and researching in the field of humanitarian affairs. It is important that information exchange with partners covers all aspects of the work, such as strategy, accountability and results.
3. Taking the above into account, and within the limits of its mandate, it may be justified for COHAFA to invite third parties to its meetings and in the margins of such meetings subject to the conditions set out below.
4. These third parties are divided into the following categories:
 - a) representatives of international organisations and bodies that are well-established and recognised partners of the EU, such as International Committee of the Red Cross, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Bank Group, United Nations and its agencies (e.g. UN OCHA, IASC, UNICEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFCCC, UNDRR, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNMAS, UNOPS, UNRWA, IOM, UN PBSO, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, WFP, Global Protection Cluster), and others;
 - b) representatives of third countries, where the EU is involved in humanitarian aid, such as Ukraine, Lebanon, Jordan, the occupied Palestinian territory, Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region or where it is necessary to exchange information with a given third country in order for COHAFA to receive the information it needs to fulfil its mandate;
 - c) think tanks, news organisations and academia, such as Center on International Cooperation at NYU, Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), Centre for Humanitarian Action, Chatham House, Egmont Institute, European Centre for Development Policy Management – ECDPM, European Institute for Peace, Institute for Statelessness and Inclusion, Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI, NOHA, SIPRI, The New Humanitarian, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), and others;

d) representatives of non-governmental organisations, movements, networks, alliances, charities, foundations and private sector, active in the field of humanitarian assistance, such as ActionAid Denmark, Action Against Hunger, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Denmark, AIDA, Alianza por la Solidaridad, Alliance 2015, ALNAP, Ard El Insan Palestinian Association, Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz, AVSI, AWDA, CARE International, CARE Denmark, Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Denmark, Caritas Europa, Caritas Cyprus, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Convergence, Cyprus Red Cross Society (CRCS), Cyprus Refugee Council (CyRC), Danish Refugee Council, Danish Red Cross, DanChurchAid, Diakonia, Doctors Without Borders Denmark, Educo, Entreculturas, GCPEA, Geneva Call, Global Focus, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction, Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation, Grand Bargain, Ground Truth Solutions, Grundfos Foundation, Halo Trust, H2H Network, HIAS, Hungarian Interchurch Aid, ITAKA Foundation, ICVA, IFRC, INSO, InterAction, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Cyprus, IRC, Islamic Relief, Impact Fund Denmark, Jesuit Refugee Service, La Strada Foundation, Medicus Mundi International, Lebanon Humanitarian and Development NGOs Forum, Lego Foundation, Médecins du Monde, Médecins Sans Frontières, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, Mission East, Movimiento por la Paz, NEAR, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, NovoNordisk Foundation, Oxfam Denmark, Partnership for Transparency Fund, Peace Direct, People in Need, Plan International, Plan International Denmark, Première Urgence Internationale, Risk-informed Early Action Partnership, Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition, Save the Children, START Network, SIDE BY SIDE WITH AFGHAN PEOPLE (DACAAR), The Share Trust, VOICE, ACTED, Solidarité Internationale, SOS Village d'Enfants, Terre des Hommes, The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, World Vision, War Child International, Search For Common Ground, Humanity & Inclusion, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières, Non Violent Peaceforce, Frontline Negotiations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, ACODEV, NGO Federatie, Fiabel, Dutch Relief Alliance, Concord, We Robotics – The Power of Local, ACAPS.

5. The attendance of these third parties in COHAFA meetings and in the margins of such meetings for the purposes of their operational input and the exchange of information and views between them and the members of COHAFA are in the interest of the Council, as they support the objectives laid down in COHAFA mandate: to promote the exchange of information on humanitarian crisis situations, in particular the assessment of humanitarian needs and adequate and timely provision of humanitarian aid.
6. When invited, those third parties may state their view or inform COHAFA concerning a subject at issue under a given agenda item. They may answer the questions of COHAFA delegates. However, they cannot be allowed to intervene during the deliberations, unless their views on the operational or technical dimension of different policy options are expressly sought during the relevant meeting on such very specific aspects. Proceedings will be organised so that the representatives of those third parties do not participate in the drafting of written documents in the course of the decision-making process, including with drafting suggestions or detailed comments. Whenever possible, the meetings will be organised in different parts so that the representatives of third parties can be requested to leave the room for the deliberation and discussion phases.
7. In view of the above, the Committee of the Permanent Representatives is invited to approve the attendance of the representatives of the above mentioned third parties at COHAFA meetings and in the margins of such meetings to be organised during the Cyprus Presidency until 31 July 2026 and for the purposes outlined in paragraphs 2 and 5 above.
8. The Council Secretariat will produce an information note to the Permanent Representatives Committee specifying the guests, who have attended COHAFA meetings and in the margins of such meetings at the end of the Cyprus Presidency.
