

Press release

EU response to the food crisis

Informal meeting of EU development Ministers

29-30 September 2008

The EU Development Ministers, gathered with the European Commission and members of the European Parliament, call for a rapid conclusion in the respect of the European Council Conclusions of June 2008 and the current Financial Perspectives, of the ongoing work based on the Commission's proposal.

They support the proposal for an additional EU response to the food crisis by raising €1 billion to tackle its impact on the poor in developing countries. They recognise the need to take action now, so that those vulnerable are given immediate support, so that the next years' harvests are not lost and so that there are sustainable improvements in agricultural productivity in future years, indispensable for facing increases in populations and consumption.

Moreover, long term concerted strategy must be defined to tackle the root causes of the crisis, relaunch sustainable food and small scale farming, support private sector development and investment, improve critical conditions in agricultural production, and to help developing countries be less vulnerable to volatile food prices and food shortages.

Plans will be prepared partner, as part of the global partnership for agriculture and food launched in Rome and agreed within the EU Agenda for Action on MDGs by the European Council of June 2008. The follow-up of this process will be ensured at the next November GAERC.

Ministers underlined the need to coordinate with the ongoing work of the UN Task Force, and the evaluation of needs by UN specialised agencies.

In order to move fast, it is needed to define by the end of 2008, the list of actions and notably the infrastructures required to revitalise agriculture, in collaboration between Member States, Commission, EIB, World Bank, Partner Countries and Regional Organisations, and in the case of Africa the AfDB and the African Union/NEPAD.