

2nd July 2026

FOOD ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE PRESS RELEASE

The 23rd FAC Session was held on Wednesday 1st July 2026 under the Chairpersonship of Mr. Max Lamesch, Director of Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Europe, Luxembourg.

Parties of the Convention, namely, Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Luxembourg, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America participated in the session.

The Committee reviewed the global situation regarding hunger and malnutrition and current food emergencies against the backdrop of recent developments including the outlook for world markets for grains, rice, oilseeds.

The IGC Secretariat provided members with an update on grains, rice and pulses supply forecasts for the coming season, and on the latest market developments. Although elevated fertiliser costs and a strong El Nino weather event pose downside risks for 2026/27 production prospects, most notably in the southern hemisphere and for Asia's rice crops, some offsetting pressure on FOB prices is coming from positive stock levels. Moreover, the IGC GOI index is currently well below recent peaks and at the same level as December 2014. The Council also provided an update on maritime freight markets and the latest situation at the Persian Gulf. Despite geopolitical tensions and elevated fuel values, maritime logistics are responding to global demand, with international trade in grains set to expand in 2025/26.

Members also provided information on responses to food emergencies in the most vulnerable regions and on planned operations and recent policy developments, with particular emphasis on food security. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Food Programme provided statements for the session and took part in an interactive discussion, responding to questions from Members.

The Chair updated members on the draft 2025 Narrative report. The final report will again highlight the contributions of all Parties to the Convention, with a particular emphasis on Innovation and new technologies to optimise Food assistance. Members also confirmed their intended minimum annual commitments for 2021.

The FAC Session was followed on the same day by a seminar titled "*Investing in Data: Safeguarding the Evidence Base for Effective Food Assistance*". Speakers, including representatives of IGC, WFP, and DG ECHO, focused on the importance of data and robust data infrastructure for food security analysis. They highlighted that these systems are currently under threat due to *inter alia* access constraints and the growing funding gap, and stressed that more accurate, high-frequency data is essential to improve regional analysis and better tailor food assistance to local needs. The investment in such data should be considered as part of the bases of Food assistance programmes. The seminar was moderated by Mr. Max Lamesch, Chair of the Food Assistance Committee.