



17 November 2015

JOINT STATEMENT by MEMBERS of the FOOD ASSISTANCE CONVENTION
FOR THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT
Istanbul, 23-24 May 2016

Considering the intensity and range of current humanitarian crises and the unprecedented number of people in need of humanitarian assistance;

Recognising the need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance and to ensure that assistance is provided according to humanitarian principles, embracing a people centred approach where populations affected by food crises are at the heart of the system, where gender and protection concerns are reflected and where donors are held accountable;

Considering that the United Nations Secretary-General has called the first ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) that will take place on 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul and noting that the Summit is a unique opportunity to raise awareness about effective humanitarian food assistance, to discuss ways to innovate and improve aid delivery and to creating a momentum for others – both political and development actors, as well as food insecure countries themselves, to acknowledge their role in preventing and ending humanitarian crises, including hunger and food insecurity;

Affirming that the Parties to the Food Assistance Convention are committed to contributing to world food security and to improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of food assistance in preserving the lives and alleviating the suffering of the most vulnerable populations (Article 1 of the Food Assistance Convention);

Taking into account the relevance of the Food Assistance Convention as a reference policy forum for food assistance, where donors work together to contribute to the common goal of eradicating hunger (Zero Hunger Challenge), while respecting the need to preserve natural resources;

Considering that the annual minimum commitments of the Parties of the Food Assistance Convention are significant and amounted in 2015 to almost USD 3 billion dollars.

The Parties to the Food Assistance Convention consider it essential for the WHS to recognise the importance of the principles of effective and efficient Food Assistance and to take into account the following to ensure that the food assistance needs of the most vulnerable populations are addressed adhering to the following principles (Article 2 of the Food Assistance Convention):

- Assistance should be provided in the most effective and appropriate manner, fully respecting fundamental humanitarian principles, such that the food and nutrition needs of the most vulnerable populations are addressed;
- Assistance should be provided in a way that upholds the dignity, choice and flexibility for beneficiaries to meet their most basic needs, while at the same time guaranteeing greater efficiency, value for money and ultimately improved effectiveness for donors and taxpayers;
- Appropriate measures should be taken to strengthen the accountability and transparency of food assistance policies, programs, and operations, upholding the dignity of beneficiaries of food assistance;

- Assistance should be provided in a manner that protects livelihoods and strengthens self-reliance and resilience, thereby avoiding dependency;
- The role of local actors as key stakeholders in the food assistance response should be encouraged and promoted;
- Assistance should be provided in a way that adds value and fosters technical and policy innovations.

The Parties to the Food Assistance Convention consider it equally essential for the WHS to recognise the importance of the following operational considerations:

- Assistance should be targeted according to the food and nutrition needs of the most vulnerable populations;
- Beneficiaries should be involved in the assessment of their needs and in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of food assistance provided;
- Gender and protection considerations should be systematically mainstreamed into-needs assessment, programme design, and impact analysis of humanitarian food assistance responses;
- The local or regional purchase of food and other components of food assistance should be encouraged whenever possible and appropriate;
- The use of untied cash-based food assistance should be increased based on thorough feasibility and needs assessments;
- Assistance should be provided taking into account the locally driven rehabilitation and development objectives of beneficiary countries, including social safety nets, to support the broader goal of achieving food security;
- The fight against hunger and undernutrition should seek wider partnerships, such as with public and private actors.

The Parties to the Food Assistance Convention strive to ensure a humanitarian system that is fit for purpose. Food assistance, as a significant element of donors' humanitarian budgets, can be a catalyst to drive the system to capitalise on innovations to improve assistance for beneficiaries and donors alike.

Improved assistance is particularly critical in protracted crises, which currently receives the bulk of humanitarian funds. Humanitarian activities should strive to link to development initiatives, reducing the need for humanitarian assistance being provided in response to protracted and recurring crises. The Parties to the Food Assistance Convention see the WHS as an opportunity for humanitarian, development and other key actors to jointly develop solutions to improve planning and programming coherence as well as prevention and preparedness measures to comprehensively address longer-term challenges and root causes of vulnerability.

We look to the Summit to ensure constructive dialogue and concrete actions to address situations of protracted food insecurity and build the resilience of vulnerable populations.

FAC(2015)WHS