



Food Assistance
Convention

Food Assistance Committee
Comité de l'assistance alimentaire

PressRelease

30 May 2014

PRESS RELEASE

3rd Session of the Food Assistance Committee London, 30 May 2014

The Food Assistance Committee convened for its 3rd formal Session on 30 May 2014 at the Secretariat of the International Grains Council in London, under the Chairmanship of Mr Roger Mireles, Assistant Deputy Administrator, United States Department of Agriculture, USA.

The meeting was attended by Parties of the Convention (Canada, European Union, Finland, Japan, Luxembourg, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Switzerland and the United States of America). Representatives from Brazil, Cuba, France, Kenya, Spain, the Trans-Atlantic Dialogue on Food Assistance (TAFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) attended as observers.

The Committee reviewed the current and prospective food situation in developing countries against the background of recent developments in world markets for grains, rice and oilseeds. Members also provided detailed information on responses to food emergencies, together with planned operations and policy developments. Other items discussed at the meeting were the release of its first annual report and steps to expand membership.

The Session was preceded on 29 May by a seminar on cash transfer programming in food assistance aimed at exchanging information on activities and experiences and discussing opportunities and challenges associated with this transfer modality. There were presentations from the following invited panellists: Ms Sara Almer, Coordinator, Humanitarian Department, Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP), UK, Ms Maureen Philippon, ECHO, Lebanon, Mr Tahir Nour, Cash for Change Unit, World Food Programme, Italy, and Mr André Dürr, Cash & Voucher Programme Coordinator, Swiss secondment to World Food Programme, Sudan. This was followed by presentations from the European Union, the US and Canada. The seminar also included a panel discussion moderated by Ms Jenny Hill, International Humanitarian Assistance Directorate, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada.

The discussion centred on the benefits of cash transfer programmes including, the potential increased choice and maintenance of dignity for beneficiaries, improved efficiency and effectiveness of activities and the potential to reinvigorate local markets. However, the inherent risk present in a cash transfer programme, as with any emergency or development food assistance activity, were also discussed. This includes the method of transfer, the capacity of markets and the importance of good targeting.

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