



**PRESS RELEASE**

**4th Session of the Food Assistance Committee**

London, 18 November 2014

The Food Assistance Committee (FAC) convened for its 4th formal Session on 18 November 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 (Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Switzerland and the United States of America). Representatives from Brazil, Iraq, South Africa, Spain, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Trans-Atlantic Dialogue on Food Assistance (TAFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and World Vision were present as observers.

The Committee reviewed the global situation regarding hunger and malnutrition and current food emergencies against the backdrop of recent developments in world markets for grains, rice and oilseeds. Members also provided information on responses to food emergencies, planned operations and policy developments, with particular emphasis on the impact of the Ebola virus, as well as ongoing responses in South Sudan and Syria. Other items discussed included changes to the template for annual reporting and respective commitments for 2015. Efforts to expand membership were considered, including a proposed messaging document, highlighting the activities, objectives and membership benefits of the FAC.

The Committee elected Dr Florika Fink-Hooijer (Director, Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection) as Chairperson for 2015, representing the European Union.

The Session was preceded on 17 November by a seminar exploring how the FAC is building resilience, aimed at fostering long-term solutions that address the underlying causes of vulnerability and crisis. There were presentations from the following panellists: Dr Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director, Strategy, Policy and International Cooperation, Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), European Union, Mr Matthew Nims, Deputy Director, Office of Food for Peace, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, US Agency for International Development, USA, Ms Kristina Gill, Adviser (Development Cooperation), Australian Embassy, Italy, Ms Philippa Young, Emergency Food Security and Vulnerable Livelihoods Team Leader, Humanitarian Department, Oxfam GB, UK, and Mr Calum McLean, ECHO, Global Food Security Thematic Coordinator, Nairobi. The seminar and panel discussions were moderated by Mr Matthew Nims, USA.

Members and observers exchanged information on policy developments and provided examples of work being undertaken to build resilience, together with the opportunities and challenges associated with the design and implementation of respective programmes. There was widespread recognition and acceptance that resilience building is now an important component of modern humanitarian and development assistance, and that the FAC could play a crucial role in its promotion through cooperation and the exchange of information on best practices.

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