



13 November 2020

FOOD ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE PRESS RELEASE

The 13th FAC Session was held via video conference on Thursday 12 November 2020 under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Mette Thygesen, Director, Department of Humanitarian Action, Migration and Civil Society, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Denmark).

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 of the current grains, rice and oilseeds situation, highlighting a global record production. Despite ample supplies, grains, rice and oilseeds prices experienced a recent spark – as evidenced by movements of the IGC GOI index, buoyed by strong demand, tightening inventories in major exporters and concerns about climatic conditions adversely affecting 2021/22 production prospects in the northern hemisphere. The presentation also highlighted how currency movements additionally increase volatility in global grains and rice markets and the relevance to the provision of food assistance

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.

Concerning other agenda items, the Committee approved the 2019 FAC Narrative report^[1]. The report highlights that in 2019, parties fulfilled or substantially exceeded their commitments and contributed a total of almost six billion US dollars to the improvement of worldwide food security.

Members also confirmed their intended minimum annual commitments for 2021.

The Committee appointed Ms. Tara Carney, Director, International Humanitarian Assistance Operations Division (Canada) as Chairperson for 2021 and Mr. Andreas Papaconstantinou, Director for “Neighbourhood and Middle East”, EU Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, European Commission, Brussels was appointed Vice Chairperson.

The FAC Session was followed on Friday 13th November by a seminar titled “How to ensure effective disability inclusion during a pandemic response”. The seminar consisted of contributions from Dr. Elham Youssefian (International Disability Alliance), Ms Kirsten Young (World Food Programme), Hon. Deqa Yasin Yusuf, former Minister of Women and Human Rights Development, Somalia, Mr Puay Tiak Lim (ASEAN Disability Forum), Ms Riikka Mikkola, (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland) followed by active and intensive discussion by participants recognising the additional challenges COVID-19 poses for people with disabilities, while highlighting the need to collaborate across various humanitarian aid sectors. The seminar was moderated by Ms. Catherine Gill, Humanitarian Counsellor, Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

[1] The 2019 FAC Narrative Report is available on the Food Assistance Convention website:
<https://www.foodassistanceconvention.org/en/reports.aspx>