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PRESS RELEASE

Putting agriculture first in development policies

Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

Directorate-General for Communication
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL CRISIS

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Putting agriculture first in development policies

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The current crisis is of an "exceptional nature" and ACP countries are amongst those being hit hardest by its effects, says the ACP-EU JPA in a resolution on the social impact of the global crisis. The Assembly calls for an adjustment of the development model to ensure its effectiveness and transparency. EU and ACP countries should also place agriculture and food security among their priorities in development policies.

The resolution urges countries, donors and international institutions to encourage investment in agriculture, especially small-scale and urban agriculture. The text underlines that the recent food crisis has proved that agriculture has been neglected for too long. The Official Development Aid (ODA) towards the agricultural sector has been reduced in the last 20 years and nowadays it only represents the 5% of the whole ODA.

The European Commission is called to make agriculture and food security focal sectors when drawing up strategy papers for the development and cooperation instrument and the European funds for development.

The Assembly also underlines that the recent food crisis has proved that agriculture has been neglected for too long and that malnutrition urgently needs to be tackled by long-term measures.

Global financial transaction tax and other measures

The ACP-EU JPA urges donor countries to explore the possibility of introducing a global financial transaction tax as an additional source to finance development. Furthermore, EU Member States are called to increase Official Development Aid to 0.56% of GNI by 2010 and to 0.7% by 2015. These commitments should be enshrined in national binding legislation.

The resolution also calls on EU and ACP governments to fight jointly to eradicate tax havens, tax evasion and illicit capital flows from developing countries. In addition, the text insists on the need to reduce the cost of remittances transactions, especially at a time when migrants suffer severely from the crisis and cannot transfer as much to their country of origin.

Brain drain is an "alarming reality to the development prospects of least developed countries", says the Assembly, pointing out that the promotion of circular migration can help undertake this issue.

The number of people in the world suffering from hunger has reached one billion and the total has increased by 100 million due to the global crisis.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60_19/default_en.htm

Link to website of the ACP/EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

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