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*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*

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**2010/2100(INI)**

16.11.2010

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on Development

on an EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges  
(2010/2100(INI))

Rapporteur: Marc Tarabella



## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the Commission communication on an EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges; considers, however, that the world food crisis represents, in addition to a humanitarian disaster on an unprecedented scale, a major threat to peace and security worldwide, and that, even though credit should be given to the Commission's commitment to seeking out solutions that could lift a billion people out of extreme poverty, the European Union and the Member States must, as a matter of urgency, make new investments in agriculture and rural development, above all in view of the new CAP text, introducing dedicated mechanisms for building sufficiently large world stocks of basic foodstuffs, removing their own barriers to trade, and reducing the debt of the countries most affected; believes that the Commission should take greater account of the question of food security in some countries when calculating development aid;
2. Recalls that the European Union should ensure maximum consistency between its cooperation and development policies and its trade policies, taking account of the needs and concerns both of the EU Member States and of the developing countries;
3. Emphasises that political stability is the prerequisite for improved food security, and therefore calls on all the parties involved to show the political will needed to guarantee that stability;
4. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and other development aid donors, including NGOs, to target their investment more closely on the agricultural sector in order to provide local people with a reason not to move elsewhere;
5. Recalls that agricultural development must be grounded in the right to food and the right to produce food; insists that the EU must recognise and defend the necessity for developing countries to achieve food security (both in quantitative and qualitative terms), and their right to be as self-sufficient as possible; underlines in this regard the EU commitment to gradually phase out export subsidies, in parallel with similar measures being taken by WTO partners; stresses in parallel the need for ensuring equal access of local populations to food in these countries;
6. Reiterates the importance of promoting agriculture in the developing world and the importance of allocating an appropriate share of EU overseas development assistance (ODA) to the agriculture sector; regrets that there has been a dramatic reduction in the level of development aid allocated to agriculture since the 1980s and welcomes the recognition of the need to reverse this trend; calls on the Commission to prioritise agriculture in its development aid, including assistance to farmers in accessing markets;
7. Believes that the European Union should take steps to restore world food stocks, which after reaching record lows in 2007 have contributed to speculation which has been

affecting the prices of agricultural products at world level, with alarming effects on developing countries;

8. Recalls that since less-favoured communities tend to derive their subsistence from agriculture, the development of sustainable agriculture and serious consideration of the assessments in the IAASTD is a necessary condition for realising Millennium Development Goal 1; believes that small farming in particular can offer a response to the challenge of food security by means of strengthening the vital role played by women, via on-the-spot processing and the widespread use of loans and microcredits, and involving small producers' cooperatives as key players in the definition of effective agricultural and commercial policies;
9. Takes the view that, in the light of FAO population projections indicating that, by 2025, more than half of the developing world's population (some 3.5 thousand million people) will be living in urban areas, a policy of support for urban horticulture could offer a pathway out of poverty, given the low start-up costs, short production cycles and high yields per unit of time, land and water, and could make the new cities greener;
10. Recalls the importance of an approach to food security governance which entails a global framework that refocuses on food policy beyond food aid, inter-donor and donor recipient cooperation with enhanced local partnership, as well as the crucial role of recipient country policies in committing to provide basic public goods such as internal peace and investment in rural infrastructure;
11. Believes that the EU should support regional integration and the sustainable development of local agrofood markets in developing countries and especially regional commercial agreements promoting the development of viable and sustainable production and processing capacities at local level, and dedicate a substantial part of its development aid to this purpose;
12. Believes that financial speculation and increased liberalisation of financial markets and trade in agricultural products greatly contribute to price volatility and that regulatory mechanisms are needed to ensure a degree of market stability; considers that market transparency should be improved to ensure fair remuneration for farmers and a viable sector that will deliver food security; calls in particular for clear identification of actors involved in the food trade and for an in-depth analysis of transmission mechanisms of speculation on food products on local and world markets;
13. Considers, in view of the growing global population and increasing pressure on natural resources, that it is essential to establish more sustainable, energy-saving and efficient forms of production at world level; demands that the allocation of aid by the EU and Member States be tied to the development of sustainable and energy self-sufficient agricultural production systems, and that a part of this aid contribute to the setting up of facilities for generating renewable energy (for example based on wind and sun) and good water management;
14. Stresses that in the context of the UN Climate Change Fund negotiations the EU should push to ensure that a substantial part of the monies allocated to developing countries is effectively used to reinforce local agricultural policies, with due regard for sustainable

social and environmental development;

15. Believes that food security should not be jeopardised by the development of agrofuels; calls therefore for a balanced approach that gives priority to the new generation of agrofuels using farm and forestry waste (straw and other crop waste, animal manure, biogas, etc.) instead of food crops, to avoid a situation of competition between food and energy production; considers also that the EU should make sure that agrofuel imports from developing countries respect sustainability criteria;
16. Stresses that the land should be accessible to all and that it is necessary to protect the land, tenancy and land use rights of small local farmers and the access of local communities to natural resources, in order to prevent further land takeovers, as is already happening to an alarming extent in certain regions of the world, especially Africa;
17. Considers it necessary to ensure that local communities and institutions have the negotiating powers and capacities enabling them to develop local farming; proposes drawing up a code of conduct to urge investors to focus their efforts on raising agricultural productivity and improving the livelihoods of local communities;
18. Points out that the development of the farming sector requires long-term investment throughout the entire value chain, from producer to consumer, which means providing the necessary infrastructure, such as roads, market linkages and information on the markets themselves and on the scope for product diversification;
19. Considers that the EU should contribute to promoting the use of seeds from local varieties which are adapted to climatic conditions in developing countries and which can be easily stored, traded and supplied to farmers, as they are free of intellectual property rights;
20. Believes that the Commission should support protein crops in the European Union so as to give the Union greater autonomy, thus contributing to the diversification of agriculture in the developing countries, which often have agricultural policies operating purely on the basis of exports and access to external markets, to the detriment of the wellbeing and needs of local communities;
21. Believes that a support strategy for developing countries must include a plan for education and training, oriented towards job creation, which will enable young people to study sustainable agricultural science with a view to developing better-quality, specialised and sustainable forms of production, thus containing the drift from the countryside and reducing poverty;
22. Emphasises, in that connection, how important it is that farmers, in addition to meeting their own food needs, should generate the income they need for education and investment;
23. Stresses that it is crucial to involve local agricultural organisations in the different stages of implementing an agricultural policy in the developing countries, and that the European Union should therefore strive to strengthen local associations, so as to ensure that the interests of local communities are protected;
24. Insists on the need to reinforce research on a basis of public funding and to transmit

know-how in the field of sustainable agriculture, promoting activities which strengthen the position of smallholder farmers in optimising agri-outputs, adapting to the challenges posed by climate change and the increased demand on resources;

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	15.11.2010
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 26 -: 1 0: 2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	John Stuart Agnew, Liam Aylward, Christophe Béchu, José Bové, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Herbert Dorfmann, Lorenzo Fontana, Béla Glattfelder, Martin Häusling, Esther Herranz García, Peter Jahr, Elisabeth Jeggle, Elisabeth Köstinger, George Lyon, Mairead McGuinness, Rareş-Lucian Niculescu, Georgios Papastamkos, Marit Paulsen, Britta Reimers, Ulrike Rodust, Alfreds Rubiks, Giancarlo Scottà, Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris, Alyn Smith, Marc Tarabella
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Luís Paulo Alves, Esther de Lange, Sandra Kalniete, Maria do Céu Patrão Neves, Milan Zver