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World Summit of FAO on Food Security - eradicate hunger from earth

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

*Tabled by José Bové, Martin Häusling, Ska Keller, Bas Eickhout, Judith Sargentini, Alyn Smith
On behalf of the Greens/EFA Group*

The European Parliament

- Having regard to the declaration of the First World Summit on Food Security, organised by FAO from 13 to 17 November 1999;
- Having regard to the declaration of the World Summit on Food Security, adopted by the members of FAO on 16. November 2009;
- Having regard to the United Nations' International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), which was initiated by FAO and the World Bank and carried by UNDP, UNEP WHO and UNESCO, which made detailed recommendations to governments of how to strengthen sustainable agricultural systems and to end hunger and poverty;
- Having regard to the recent publication in "Nature" of eminent scientists on "A safe operating space for humanity", which quantifies planetary boundaries for unsustainable production systems including consequences of climate change, biodiversity loss, nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, as well as water management;
- Having regard to Implications of Global Trends in Eating Habits on Climate Change, public Health, and global food security as stated in the Parliament's Natural Resources Study (IP/A/STOA/IC/2008-180);
- Having regard to the EU's commitment to policy coherence for development meaning that no measures in other policy fields shall run counter to development objectives (European Consensus on Development, 2005; Lisbon Treaty);

A. Recalling that the representatives from 185 countries committed themselves at the World Food Summit in 1996 to cut by half the number of hungry people by 2015; whereas more than 40 million people die from starvation every year; whereas family farmers, herders and rural workers represent more than half of the world population and are the primary victims of hunger;

B. Whereas the number of hungry people in the world, instead of having decreased, is now estimated by FAO to have passed one billion in 2009, with a world population of 6 billion people, while the planet, according to FAO, could currently feed 12 billion people;

C. Whereas the final declaration of the World Summit 2009 on Food does neither sufficiently analyse the reasons for failure in eradicating hunger nor does it make concrete proposals how to improve the fight against hunger, but instead simply postpones its goal to eradicate hunger by 2025;

D. Whereas global decrease of public investments in agriculture and rural development in the past decade has weakened a stable global supply with food, while commercial investments in export oriented production were often undertaken in developing countries at the expense of domestic food supply;

E. Whereas export subsidies and food aid from the EU and the United States have been one major reason for destroyed rural livelihoods and small scale subsistence farms in developing countries and, as a consequence, left millions of families landless and without reliable access to food or sufficient income to feed themselves;

F. Whereas an increased part of deforested land and agricultural resources is used for the production of animal feed, meat and biomass for agro-fuels which has considerably contributed to food price volatility and has encouraged world wide speculation on agricultural commodities;

G. Whereas over the past decades, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation have imposed trade liberalisation measures in developing countries, which has intensified unfair competition in the field of agriculture at the expense of local food supply and sustainable farming systems;

H. Whereas the IPCC report foresees a deterioration of agricultural capacities and production in most of sub-Saharan countries;

I. Whereas climate change has a serious impact on farming, for example reduction in crop yields due to water shortages, aggravating agricultural activities especially in poorest countries;

1. Reaffirms, that access to sufficient and wholesome food is a basic human right which is part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and must be fulfilled through common action of governments, international bodies and corporate entities; stresses that withholding or denying this right must be considered as violation of this universal human right;

2. Considers that a genuine fight against hunger requires the establishment of comprehensive policies which enhance sustainable farming and food supply systems, including agriculture, rural development and fisheries so as to enhance developing countries' capacity to feed their population instead of jeopardizing their domestic food supply with cheap imports, increasing when necessary their import tariffs or limiting export of agricultural commodities, without negatively impacting food importing countries;

3. Believes that the fight against hunger must be based on the recognition of the right to food sovereignty, defined as the capacity of a country or a region to democratically implement its own policies, priorities and strategies to protect their populations' livelihoods and social, economic and cultural rights and that these principles should prevail over trade liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation, without negatively impacting food importing countries;

4. Welcomes the Food Summits' general agreement that small farmers are the key to fighting hunger and poverty and requests this conclusion to be properly reflected in future development, agriculture, fisheries and trade policies of the EU; insists also that small-scale fish-workers have the potential to contribute to

food security in coastal zones;

5. Welcomes the ongoing reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and urges the EU Commission and member states to fully engage in a renewed and fully inclusive cooperation of all stakeholders to overcome hunger and poverty;

6. Expresses its deep concern about the current farmland acquisition by foreign investors, particularly in Africa, which is often secretly backed by governments and which risks to undermine local food security; points at the far reaching consequences in terms of unsustainable land management and denied access to domestic food resources; is also concerned about the extent to which the EU and other distant-water fishing nations acquire access to fish stocks in the waters of developing countries, potentially leading to overfishing, which can seriously compromise fish supplies in the markets of those countries;

7. Urges the FAO and member states to avoid these adverse impacts of farm land acquisition, such as expropriation of small farmers, unsustainable use of land and water, food riots due to shortage of food, and to work towards common rules and legislative initiatives, recognising the right of the domestic population to control farm land and other vital natural resources for their food security;

8. Calls on the Commission to carry out a full impact assessment including the implications outside the EU of policies and programmes in the fields of Common Agriculture Policy, Common Fisheries Policy, Development and Trade Policy, and the "facility for rapid response to soaring food prices in developing countries[1]", in order to establish a coherent sustainable policy approach to global food security and to increase policy coherence for development ;

9. Urges the Commission and Member States to include equitable financial mechanisms and concepts of burden sharing of climate adaptation in the upcoming negotiations in Copenhagen with special attention to making the inevitable support for climate friendly agricultural practices a coherent tool of fighting hunger by concentrating on the needs of small and subsistence farmers in the South;

10. Urge the Commission and Council to abandon all visible and invisible forms of export subsidies, which have been proven to contribute to increased hunger and poverty;

11. Urges the Commission and Member States to refrain from development aid which increases farmers dependence on fossil fuels, agrochemical inputs such as artificial fertilizers and pesticides as well as on seed varieties which require such inputs and exclusive intellectual property rights; suggests instead to stabilize local and regional farming systems which are based on sustainable farming practices and provide strategic food reserves in the developing countries themselves;

12. Urges the Commission and Member States to increase the share of development aid allocated to rural development and agriculture; urges the Commission and Member States to combat financial speculation on food commodities;

13. Emphasizes the need for a new common effort to combine the fight against hunger with the necessary efforts to mitigate climate gas emissions as well as adapt to climate change; to take coordinated measures against further loss of soil fertility and biodiversity as essential parts of food production systems; to increase overall efficiency and reduce waste in global food chains; and to foster agro-ecological approaches of low input agriculture and climate friendly agro-forestry and to improve local market access;

14. Calls upon the FAO, its member governments and the EU-Commission to follow the recommendations made in the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) to reverse top-down transfer-of-technology concepts of science and replace it with bottom-up participatory, farmer oriented innovation concepts;

15. Decides to establish a High Level Standing Working Group within the European Parliament on the EU's contribution to achieve global food security, in order to elaborate common action points on the major challenges as defined by the EU Commission for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and rural development, being climate change, loss of biodiversity, sustainable management of water and soils and renewable energy;

16. Deplores that with one exception heads of Member States did not participate in the recent Food Summit and instructs its President to inform all participants of the recent Food Summit about this regret and to encourage Council and FAO member states to take coherent action against hunger and poverty.

[1] Regulation (EC) N° 1337/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L354, 31.12.2008, p 62

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