



15 June 2007

FAC PRESS RELEASE

Members of the **Food Aid Committee** met in London on 1 June under the chairmanship of Mr William Whelan of the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Donors reviewed the food situation in developing countries, sharing information on current food emergencies, especially in Africa, and on how donors and international agencies were responding to them. Several members reported on their recent operations, many of them focused on the food crisis in Sudan/Darfur. The observer from the World Food Programme (WFP) informed the Committee of its major operations in Afghanistan, Chad, Congo (Dem Rep), Ethiopia, Kenya, Palestinian Territories, Somalia, Sudan and regionally in southern Africa.

With a view to better understanding the work being done by the African Union (AU), on behalf of food aid recipients, particularly in relation to Pillar 3 ("Increasing food supply, reducing hunger and improving responses to food emergency crises") of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), Dr Ibrahima Diallo, Senior Policy Officer of the AU, was invited to make a special presentation. He explained CAADP's approach to food security and the efforts being made to accelerate the Programme's implementation in order to achieve its goals.

On the basis of preliminary information provided by members, it was estimated that FAC food aid shipments in 2006/07 (July/June) would likely be somewhat lower than the previous year's 8.9m. tons*, but that most donors had again significantly exceeded their annual commitments under the Food Aid Convention, 1999.

Members considered the latest developments in the Doha negotiations on agriculture, as communicated by the WTO Secretariat, and agreed that the renegotiation of the Food Aid Convention would need to await the final outcome of the WTO negotiations. It was therefore agreed that the Food Aid Convention, 1999 would be extended by one year, to 30 June 2008.

Members also noted with interest the discussions which had taken place during the recent Berlin Conference on "Food aid: exploring the challenges" and the previous day's presentation by the Alliance for Food Aid, an informal group of 15 non-profit organisations that conduct humanitarian and development programmes in 130 countries.

Dr Hedwig Wögerbauer (Director, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria) was elected as the Committee's Chairperson for 2007/08. Members of the Committee thanked Mr Whelan for his inspired leadership during the past year.

Note for editors: For more background on the role and activities of the International Grains Council and the Food Aid Committee, and also the IGC Grains Conference, please see the IGC web site: www.igc.org.uk.

PR(06/07)2

* Wheat equivalent