

EURO-LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



RESOLUTION:

Food security from the EU-LAC perspective

on the basis of the report by the Committee on Economic, Financial and Commercial Affairs

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The Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation,
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled ‘A thematic strategy for food security: Advancing the food security agenda to achieve the MDGs’ (COM(2006)0021) adopted on 25 January 2006,
- having regard to the Panama Declaration on the Right to Food Security, adopted by the 25th Ordinary Assembly of the Latin American Parliament in 2009,
- having regard to the resolutions and the proposal of the Central American Parliament for a regional policy on strategic food reserves concerning the right to food,
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on ‘An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges’ (COM(2010)0127) adopted on 31 March 2010 and to the Council Conclusions adopted on 10 May 2010,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Development of the European Parliament of 19 July 2011 on an EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges,
- having regard to the report drawn up and presented to the Central American Parliament by the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP),
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on ‘Humanitarian Food Assistance’ (COM(2010) 126) adopted on 31 March 2010, and the Council conclusions adopted on 10 May 2010,
- having regard to the Economic Partnership Agreements concluded with the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries since 2009,
- having regard to the Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America, ratified by the European Parliament on 11 December 2012,
- having regard to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security adopted in 1996 at the World Food Summit organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO),
- having regard to the declaration adopted at the World Summit on Food Security in Rome in 2009,

- having regard to the 2011 FAO annual report on the State of Food Insecurity in the World,
 - having regard to the January-March 2012 edition of the Food and Nutrition Security Bulletin of the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean,
 - having regard to the Los Cabos Declaration by the G20 leaders of 19 June 2012 and the report by the G20 deputy agriculture ministers adopted in Mexico City on 18 May 2012,
 - having regard to the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) adopted at the 39th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in October 2012,
 - having regard to the report ‘We need a global food safety agency’ published by the Movement for a World Agriculture Organization (Momagri) on 29 April 2013,
 - having regard to the report ‘The challenge of hunger: Building resilience to achieve food and nutrition security – 2013 global hunger index’, published by ACTED,,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation adopted in Bali on 6 December 2013,
- A. whereas point 1 of Article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food in particular;
 - B. whereas the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as the situation where ‘all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’;
 - C. whereas at the World Food Summit (Rome, 1996) the leaders of 185 countries reaffirmed in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security their commitment to work towards food security, i.e. the situation where ‘all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’;
 - D. whereas 842 million people in the world are undernourished, 98 % of whom live in developing countries, and the 2006-2008 food crisis led to serious food emergencies in 39 African and Asian countries and several Latin American ones, which necessitated the provision of urgent outside support and which had major consequences for the most vulnerable members of society in all the countries concerned;
 - E. whereas the governments attending the October 2012 session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) approved by consensus the first Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF), which includes the right to food and a focus on human rights in the policies relating to food security and nutrition at global, regional and national level, as well as practical guidelines on these strategies;
 - F. whereas the EU is working actively to ensure coherence between its various policies (in the areas of trade, cooperation, humanitarian aid, etc.), and whereas human rights should

feature across these policies, and any policies which have a negative impact on human rights should be revised and brought into line with human rights requirements;

- G. whereas the number of food emergencies has doubled over the last 30 years and the trend could become worse in coming decades as a result of a combination of factors, including: climate change and more extreme weather phenomena; soil exhaustion; the increase in the global population and strong growth in emerging economies; changes to consumption habits and patterns in traditional societies; distortions in the functioning of the food supply and marketing chain; increased energy prices; more widespread use of biofuels; steep increases in world food prices and growing financial speculation on commodities;
- H. whereas, despite progress in recent decades, efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition have stagnated in most regions in the last five years, owing to, inter alia, commodity price inflation;
- I. whereas the problem of food insufficiency severely affects vulnerable members of society in particular and contributes to the increase in the numbers of people living below the poverty line, who see their purchasing power decline and poverty becoming more entrenched in their lives as a result; whereas malnutrition and under-nutrition in children and young people have a serious and permanent impact on physical and intellectual development, and therefore limit people's potential in the long term and increase the health problems associated with lack of food;
- J. Whereas the present economic and financial crisis in Europe has given rise to new cases of under-nutrition and malnutrition which call for new answers and social policies adapted to this new situation;
- K. whereas hunger and poverty in Latin America are particularly acute in rural areas, where small local producers practise subsistence agriculture on sub-standard and relatively unfertile land and whose incomes are dependent on any surplus crops they can produce and sell;
- L. whereas, despite its strong agricultural sector and status as a net exporter of commodities, Latin America as a whole has not benefited from the high commodity prices on international markets;
- M. whereas the sizeable flows of capital into Latin America exert monetary pressures that are detrimental to the competitiveness of the markets and prospects for growth in Latin America;
- N. whereas food insecurity is not only a serious humanitarian problem but a major threat to stability, peace and global security;
- O. whereas the recent natural disasters in the LAC countries (including the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 and landslide in Brazil in 2011) had an immediate and substantial adverse impact on production in the countries concerned;
- P. whereas the developments outlined above have increased global awareness of the problem in recent years, providing the impetus for enhanced cooperation and

international governance in the field;

- Q. whereas European farmers face more and more difficulties, such as the tendency towards giving up farming on account of excessive price volatility and a loss of competitiveness in international markets, among other factors;
- R. whereas international bilateral agreements can be beneficial to both parties, but some of the commercial side-effects of such agreements are jeopardising the viability of European and Latin American farms, which may cause more and more farmers to give up farming, with the main impact being on small producers, to the detriment of agro-industrial production linked to small-scale farmers;
- S. whereas the EU and various Latin American countries have signed free trade agreements, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food has drawn attention to the negative impact of trade liberalisation on the right to food;
- T. whereas farmers are subject to forced competition and stringent standards imposed by the EU and the WTO, despite the differences in size of holdings and asymmetric competitiveness; whereas exporting food products at prices lower than what it cost to produce them is destructive to local target markets, and undermines sovereignty and food security;
- U. whereas unfair trade practices cause imbalances in the food supply chain and primary producers tend to be the first victims of those imbalances;
- V. whereas the privatisation of the seeds market by means of certification mechanisms could lead to the disappearance of traditional seeds, criminalises farmers by preventing them from using thousand year old practices, and undermines sovereignty and food security;
- W. whereas only 6 % of farmers in the EU are currently under 35 years of age and more than 4.5 million farmers are planning to retire over the next 10 years;
- X. whereas the FAO has already warned about the possible consequences of excessive biofuel production from energy crops and the EU and the countries of Latin America have taken a very cautious approach to this issue;
- Y. whereas multilateralism is the only system enabling all countries, regardless of their size and influence, to participate in drawing up and implementing international trade rules, and the increase in the number of bilateral agreements cannot under any circumstances be viewed as a permanent arrangement;
- 1. Urges the EU and its Member States and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to continue their efforts towards the achievement of the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the aim of which is to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than USD 1 a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger; stresses the close link between lack of food and poverty, on the one hand, and related health risks, on the other, and is concerned that substantial progress still needs to be made with regard to the objective, given that more than a sixth of the global population is currently living in hunger and poverty;

2. Considers it legitimate for the two regions – the EU and Latin America – to frame and pursue, in a manner respecting World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, public policies which guarantee the food security of their peoples in terms of quality and quantity;
3. Urges the EU Member States and the LAC countries to press ahead with their efforts to achieve coherence among the policies promoted by both regions in their relations, putting human rights at the centre of these relations;
4. Is concerned at the excessive volatility of food prices, the main causes of which are financial speculation and the monetary and agriculture policies of countries with systemic influence;
5. Is aware of the growing consensus around the structural, rather than cyclical, nature of the fundamental changes to food supply and demand at global level that are leading to increased food price inflation; is aware of the fact that these developments are not sufficient to explain the high volatility and the increase of food prices in recent years; considers it should be borne in mind that this imbalance is rooted in a wide variety of phenomena, both real and financial for this reason urges countries to strengthen their policies aimed at developing strategies which include the creation of strategic agrifood reserves;
6. Is concerned about the continual financialisation of commodity markets as well as the rising number of speculative assets in these markets and is aware that this increases the volatility of commodity prices in an environment which is already experiencing price increases and high volatility due to climate changes, the reallocation of agricultural areas to produce energy crops instead of food, strong pressure exerted on peasants by energy crop producing companies, the reallocation of huge areas of farmland to such crops, and rising food demand;
7. Agrees to the adoption of further measures to tackle food speculation by introducing efficient position limits to commodity derivatives in order to restore the main function of commodity futures markets, namely to protect those producing, distributing or processing food from commercial risk;
8. Encourages the respective European and Latin American authorities to establish regular exchanges between the authorities responsible for the surveillance and regulation of the financial and agricultural product markets, in order to monitor the evolution and influence of financial markets on food supply and price development; calls on these respective bodies to ensure that agricultural future markets as well as agricultural spot markets are not misused for speculative issues;
9. Emphasises that a social market economy can be suitable way to ensure fair, transparent and well-fitting distribution and production of food;
10. Shares the serious concern expressed by many international organisations at the increasingly close links between the agrifood and financial markets, owing to their deregulation; also shares the conviction that financial speculation, the major investments made by investment and pension funds and vulture funds in the commodity derivatives markets have been a key factor in market instability and distortion in recent years;

11. Notes that, although it is difficult to put a precise figure on the amount of land involved, the number of large-scale purchases of agricultural land has increased exponentially in Latin America in recent years, facilitated by a boom in food prices and the prospect of higher profits; emphasises that whilst these types of deals can be profitable for both buyers and sellers, the difference in bargaining power between the parties is detrimental to small producers and small-scale landowners and often leads to indigenous communities losing their land and to the concentration and monopolisation of land ownership among fewer people, often foreigners, thereby posing a threat to food security;
12. Urges the EU and its Member States and the countries of Latin America to continue to work together in multilateral governance bodies to address the issue of food sufficiency and to use bilateral dialogue forums to align and coordinate their positions; recommends that, in their search for global solutions, both regions consult all sectors of civil society and, in particular, agricultural producer and consumer organisations, trade unions, local populations and indigenous communities (in line with ILO Convention No 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and with the Commission communication on Europe's engagement with civil society);
13. Advocates sustainable and long-term solutions to the food insufficiency problem; acknowledges, at the same time, the need to strengthen the food aid and fund transfer programmes in order to deal with food emergencies; reiterates its firm commitment, therefore, to the United Nations World Food Programme on account of its effectiveness in ensuring that vulnerable people receive food promptly during food emergencies; calls also for the establishment as a matter of urgency of emergency food reserves, which should be coupled with effective transport and information systems and strategically located to minimise response times;
14. Calls for efforts to be focused on the search for ways to boost rural development that are tailored to local needs with the aim of guaranteeing food security for every country; emphasises the importance of improving production methods and land conditions (as long as they do not pollute the environment), and of research into and protection of traditional seeds and ancestral knowledge; emphasises the need to regulate trade in food with a view to achieving food sovereignty, restricting exports at dumping prices and imports of food that can be produced locally; stresses the need to invest in training for farmers through specific capacity-building programmes and in rural infrastructure that improve business opportunities for small farmers and help to revitalise local markets;
15. Recommends that particular emphasis be placed on policies designed to change patterns of commodity production and consumption, favouring the cultivation of varieties which are best suited to the food needs of local people, to weather and soil conditions, and to ancestral practices; also stresses the need to avoid unsustainable practices that contribute to land degradation, and emphasises the risk that genetically modified products pose, not only to human health but also as regards the degradation of farmland and neighbouring crops; emphasises the value of implementing crop diversification policies as an alternative to monocultures, which are vulnerable to weather-related risks, pests and price fluctuation; takes the view that such measures, along with efforts to ensure that more people are food-aware, would safeguard traditional food crops, thereby broadening the food base and improving people's diets;
16. Calls on governments to take specific measures to support family farming, especially

measures to develop effective risk management systems and to facilitate access to loans; emphasises that, in general, family farming has not benefited from the recovery in food prices, owing to the reduced level of competition in the markets, high prices for inputs and unpredictable income levels, but, rather, has been very badly affected by excessive price volatility and importation of products which can be locally produced, which has made it difficult for farmers to plan their activities, dissuaded them from investment and limited their access to credit;

17. Calls for the reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to guarantee the lasting stability which will encourage farmers to continue working the land, to support young farmers, to ensure effective risk management in accordance with rural development provisions, and to promote investment in production methods which boost agricultural productivity;
18. Calls on the EU and its Member States to continue their efforts in the field of development cooperation, even at this time of budgetary austerity; also notes that the EU and its Member States account for more than half of official development aid at global level and that a substantial proportion of that aid is used for food sufficiency programmes, particularly in countries which are considered to be most vulnerable in terms of food resources, notably Honduras, Nicaragua, Cuba and Haiti; highlights the effectiveness of the Food Facility (EUR 1 billion) with which the EU responded to the 2006-2008 food crisis; points to the need for efficient and regular checks to verify the sound management and proper use of funds;
19. Welcomes the adoption, in June 2011, of the Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture by the Ministers for Agriculture of the G20 countries and, in particular, the implementation of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS); in this respect, recognises the important role that better information and market transparency play in reducing volatility in the commodities markets;
20. Calls on the governments to rapidly adopt the measures needed to combat excessive speculation, abuse and manipulation in the commodities markets; stresses that, to be effective, efforts to regulate the financial markets must be pursued at the global level; in this regard, endorses the recommendation of the G20 that improvements need to be made to the regulation and supervision of commodity derivatives markets, and supports the Principles for the Regulation and Supervision of Commodity Derivatives Markets presented by the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) in September 2011; calls on IOSCO to ensure that recommendations are drawn up promptly on how those principles could be applied;
21. Recognises that each country needs to have its own food sufficiency strategies, and that in order to make progress towards food sufficiency and increased agricultural productivity, it is essential to have a trade system that is stable, predictable, free from distortion and transparent
22. Calls on the national governments, in line with the FAO's recommendations, to avoid adopting restrictive trade policies when dealing with internal food insufficiency problems, given that such practices lead to an escalation in prices and to volatility in international markets; calls on the governments, therefore, to endorse, analyse or discuss the agreement concluded at the G20 to eliminate once and for all restrictions on the

export of foodstuffs and the special duties imposed on food acquired for humanitarian and non-trade purposes by the World Food Programme; likewise calls on the governments to continue negotiations to transform that agreement into a binding global commitment under the auspices of the WTO;

23. Calls on the governments to incorporate food sufficiency and quality into their policies and to ensure coherence between their agricultural, trade, energy and development policies, so that any policies detrimental to the human right to food can be revised and amended to comply with the exercise of this right; recommends, therefore, that the most developed EU-LAC economies give careful thought to the measures they could take in order to guarantee in the future a secure, high-quality food supply, more stable incomes for farmers, and fair prices for consumers;
24. Warns that the rolling back of support for EU farmers could have disastrous consequences for farming in the Union, given that this support is needed to prevent huge numbers of farmers leaving the land and to avert an increase in food dependency, which could have a negative impact on food prices, hitting the poorest people in the EU hardest;
25. Urges that the current reform of the CAP should make it easier for young people to take up farming, by means of measures under the direct support scheme and rural development policy;
26. Calls on the European Commission, when negotiating bilateral agreements between the EU and Latin American countries, to ensure that both parties make balanced concessions which do not undermine the livelihoods of farmers in either region and which provide for greater reciprocity when it comes to environmental, food security, animal welfare, and minimum social and labour standards, in line with ILO labour law standards;
27. Stresses the need to prioritise achieving food security and, secondly, to limit the development of agrifuels made from raw materials, so that, as is the case with 'second generation' agrifuels, it does not interfere with food production and markets, and does not lead to the degradation of agricultural land;
28. Advocates the introduction in the EU of measures to improve the negotiating position of farmers in the food supply chain and calls for rules to be established to put an end to unfair trade practices and for suitable, regular and mandatory checks in this respect;

29. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the Presidency of the EU-LAC Summit, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, and to the parliaments of the Member States of the European Union and all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Latin American Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the Andean Parliament and the Mercosur Parliament, the Secretariat of the Andean Community, the Committee of Permanent Representatives of Mercosur, the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System and the Secretaries-General of the Organization of American States and the Union of South American Nations.