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B6-0217/2008 }  
B6-0221/2008 }  
B6-0222/2008 }  
B6-0225/2008 }  
B6-0229/2008 }  
B6-0232/2008 } RC1

## **JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

pursuant to Rule 103(4) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- John Bowis, Mairead McGuinness and Maria Martens, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Hannes Swoboda and Alain Hutchinson, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Thierry Cornillet, Danutė Budreikaitė and Niels Busk, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Ryszard Czarnecki, Eoin Ryan, Adam Bielan and Sergio Berlato, on behalf of the UEN Group
- Luisa Morgantini and Gabriele Zimmer, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PSE (B6-0217/2008)
- Verts/ALE (B6-0221/2008)
- PPE-DE (B6-0222/2008)
- UEN (B6-0225/2008)
- GUE/NGL (B6-0229)
- ALDE (B6-0232/2008)

on rising food prices in the EU and the developing countries

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## **European Parliament resolution on rising food prices in the EU and the developing countries**

*The European Parliament,*

- whereas this year marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25(1) of which concerns the right to food,
  - having regard to the Conclusions of the 1996 World Food Summit and the objective of reducing by half the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015,
  - having regard to the obligations contained in the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, particularly Article 11 thereof on the right to food, to which all European Union Member States are State parties,
  - having regard to the Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council on ‘The negative impact on the realisation of the right to food of the worsening of the world food crisis, caused inter alia by soaring food prices’, to be held on 22 May in Geneva,
  - having regard to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid of 18 December 2007,
  - having regard to Article 33 of the EC Treaty,
  - having regard to the ongoing ‘CAP health check’,
  - having regard to the recent recommendations of the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) on global food production, initiated and carried out with support from the United Nations Development Programme, the FAO, the World Bank and other bodies of the international community,
  - having regard to the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),
  - having regard to the current negotiations on the Doha Development Round,
  - having regard to the Kigali Declaration of 22 November 2007 for development-friendly Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,
  - having regard to its resolution of 25 October 2007 on rising feed and food prices<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas following years of static or falling commodity prices, increases in world wheat prices reached 181% over the 36 months leading to February 2008, rice prices have increased by 141% since January and overall global food prices have increased by 83%,

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<sup>1</sup> P6\_TA-PROV(2007)0480.

- B. whereas the increase in prices has put back the objectives of poverty reduction by 7 years, and whereas, according to World Bank calculations, over 100 million people in the developing world could be pushed into deeper poverty with spiralling food prices,
- C. whereas 854 million people in the world are hungry or malnourished (food insecurity), with 4 million more joining their ranks annually; whereas 170 million children are undernourished and 5.6 million children die each year as a result of malnutrition,
- D. whereas the current food crisis is also the consequence of increased speculation in agricultural and food commodities,
- E. whereas, according to the FAO, food represents 60-80% of consumer spending in developing countries and about 10-20% in industrialised nations; whereas the rise in food prices impacts most heavily on low-income households,
- F. whereas the price rises are exacerbating problems of accessibility, particularly for those on low or non-existent incomes,
- G. whereas demand for food is rising, especially in emerging countries such as China and India, as the world's population increases; recalling that the planet, which according to the FAO can feed 12 billion people, is not short of food in overall terms; recalling that the wheat harvest and the rice harvest were very good in 2007; whereas only 1 01 billion tonnes of the 2007 harvest is likely to be used to feed people, while a large proportion will be used to feed animals (760 million tonnes) and some 100 million tonnes to produce agrofuels; whereas the latest estimates suggest that world cereal production should increase in 2008 by 2.6% to a record 2 164 million tonnes; whereas, however, these estimates are dependent on favourable climatic conditions,
- H. whereas many developing countries are not realising their food production potential; whereas lack of investment in agriculture, rural development and training of farmers in developing countries and by international financial institutions have exposed small farmers in particular to unfair competition, which has increased their poverty and vulnerability and decreased their capacity to produce enough food,
- I. whereas one serious obstacle to increased agricultural output in developing countries is that small farmers often lack access to loans or microcredits for investment in improved seeds, fertilisers and irrigation mechanisms and the necessary range of crop protection tools to protect their harvests from pests and diseases, sometimes owing to the fact that they do not own their land and therefore do not have any collateral for loans,
- J. whereas the World Food Programme has indicated that only 260 million of the 750 million US dollars needed to cover 2008 requirements have so far been firmly pledged,
- K. whereas rising food prices are intensifying the need for an integrated political response and a comprehensive strategy to tackle food problems,

### **The right to food**

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1. Stresses the fundamental nature of the right to food and the need to improve access for all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life; underlines that States have the obligation to protect, respect and fulfil this fundamental human right; points out that the fact that 2 billion people still live in dire poverty and 850 million human beings are hungry daily demonstrates systematic violations of the right to food, as enshrined in international human rights law; calls therefore for adequate measures to implement the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the right to food; urges the Council to ensure coherence of all food-related national and international policies with obligations under the right to food;
2. Calls on the Council, therefore, to step up its commitments to the Millennium Development Goals by reaffirming funding commitments and adopting an EU MDG Agenda for Action at the June European Council; considers that this EU Agenda for Action should identify specific milestones and actions within timeframes in key areas such as education, health, water, agriculture, growth and infrastructure that will contribute to ensuring the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 with a view, among other objectives, to eradicating hunger by 2015;
3. Is concerned by the effects of speculation in food commodities, including commodity hedge funds, on hunger and poverty; invites the Commission to analyse the effect of speculation on food prices and to come up with appropriate measures on the basis of this analysis;
4. Recalls that those suffering the most from this crisis are the less-favoured layers of the population and therefore stresses the need for appropriate social policies to empower poor or deprived populations and mitigate the effects of the current food crisis;

### **Sustainable food production**

5. Emphasises that the supply of food to all people across the globe should take precedence over any other goal; stresses that food should be available at reasonable prices, as stated in Article 33 of the EC Treaty;
6. Recalls the need to ensure internal and global regulation of agricultural markets in the interest of consumers, farmers' incomes, the processing industries and a sustainable EU food policy;
7. Emphasises that the raw material cost is a relatively minor component in the total cost of many food products; calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse the discrepancies between farmgate prices and those charged by the major retailers;
8. Calls, therefore, for an impact assessment of the role of retailers in the food chain, as retail food prices have risen disproportionately compared with the cost of living; calls on retailers to pass on a fair price to producers, while at the same time providing consumers with reasonably priced food;
9. Points out that current EU cereal stocks would last only 30 days, and questions whether our food stocks are at the right level, especially in view of possible crises; asks the Commission

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to develop strategies to set up food stocks to prevent future crises;

10. Calls for better forecasting of agricultural output so as to be able to identify prevailing trends in world food supply much earlier;
11. Demands that the promotion of sustainable agricultural policies be included in all enlargement and neighbourhood instruments;
12. Stresses that priority needs to be given to food over fuels, and that biofuel production should be linked to strong sustainability criteria; notes that in achieving the proposed biofuels target these criteria must be met;

### **Better development policies**

13. Considers that a genuine fight against hunger requires a global sustainable development policy in order to enable developing countries to produce and supply their population with sufficient water and food;
14. Supports developing countries in their endeavours to secure access to food for their local populations; believes that viable policy space must be further strengthened to allow for national rules and measures for the development of this sector; considers Malawi to be a positive example of a developing country where food production has been doubled in the last three years, and underlines that the EU is playing a role in supporting this development; calls on the European Union to provide assistance with making this phenomenon known, so that it can be taken as an example in other developing countries;
15. Calls on the EU Member States and the international community to meet the extraordinary emergency appeal of the World Food Programme as a matter of urgency and to assist it in facing up to the new challenges in the fight against hunger; considers, nevertheless, that dependence on food aid operations needs to be reduced, and stresses, therefore, the need for mid- and long-term action to prevent more damaging consequences and to tackle the root causes of this crisis;
16. Calls for an urgent and substantial increase in investment in agriculture, aquaculture, rural development and agribusinesses in developing countries, focused on poor farmers and small-scale farming based on agro-ecological food production systems; recalls that 75% of the world's poor population lives in rural areas, but that only 4% of official development assistance (ODA) is dedicated to agriculture; calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to address the issue of agriculture more effectively in their development policies, to promote the adjustment of the programming of the 10th EDF in close cooperation with developing countries and to readdress the country strategy papers in order to give higher priority to agriculture; underlines the role of NGOs and local authorities in finding innovative agricultural solutions in partnership with the populations of developing countries, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to support and promote their projects;
17. Stresses the need to give small farmers in poor countries, who are mainly women, access to land, financial services and credit, high-yield seeds, irrigation systems and fertilisers; stresses

that investment in the agricultural sector needs to focus more on irrigation, rural roads, research and local knowledge, training and exchange of best practice with a view to developing sustainable, efficient crop systems, clean drinking water and education, as well as on enhancing local production and market exchanges; calls on the Commission, therefore, to reinforce these areas in its actions and to support producer organisations, microcredit and other financial service programmes and increased investment in agriculture;

18. Calls on the EIB to investigate possibilities for the immediate setting up of a guarantee fund in support of national microcredit and loan schemes and risk-hedging schemes that operate close to the needs of local food producers, especially in poorer developing countries;
19. Stresses the need for cooperation on climate change between the EU and the developing countries, particularly the need for technology transfer and capacity building; emphasises that climate change must be mainstreamed into all EU development cooperation, underlines that some simple safeguards would help farmers protect crops from droughts and other disasters, and calls on the Commission to explore them; calls on the international community to intensify its efforts to combat desertification, land degradation and drought so as to improve food security and access to water, especially in poor countries;

#### **Fair international trade**

20. Considers that the opening up of agricultural markets needs to be progressive, in accordance with the development progress of each individual developing country and based on socially fair and environmentally sound trade rules; notes that sensitive products that are basic needs for people in the developing countries or of particular importance to food security and rural development in developing countries should be excluded from full liberalisation in order to prevent irreversible damages to local producers; stresses that the EU must promote a preferential and asymmetric system in trade negotiations with developing countries in order to allow them to keep certain supply-management and other development tools in their markets; points out that the least-developed countries have quota- and tariff-free market access to the EU, under the 'Everything But Arms' (EBA) agreement;
21. Stresses that, in current Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations, the Commission's priority must be to respond to the development needs expressed by ACP countries; recalls that, in order to meet this challenge, EPAs must be accompanied by the promised new funding for Aid for Trade (€2bn a year by 2010) and by the promotion of regional integration;
22. Stresses the need for a successful, balanced and fair outcome of the Doha Development Round; stresses that the results of the Doha Round should give positive incentives to the developing countries to invest in their agriculture and food production; invites the Commission to support proposals to include an action on staple food prices in the current WTO negotiation round;
23. Renews its call on the Commission and the Council to promote Fair Trade and other ethical schemes that contribute to raising social and environmental standards by supporting small

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and marginalised producers in developing countries, decreasing volatility and guaranteeing fairer prices and income, and encourages public authorities in the European Union to integrate Fair Trade and sustainability criteria into their public tenders and purchasing policies;

### **Promotion of democracy**

24. Underlines that the current food crisis demonstrates the need to promote political stability, regional integration, democracy and human rights, not only within the EU, but also worldwide; calls, therefore, on all relevant stakeholders to promote human and democratic values and the rule of the law when addressing the current food crisis and tackling long-term food security problems;
25. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the World Bank, the G8, the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations General Assembly, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).