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The Commission sides with the international community to celebrate the International day for the Eradication of Poverty and the World Food Day simultaneously. It pays tribute to the UN system for its commitment to eradicate poverty, and conveys its support to the FAO in its efforts to combat hunger. Alleviating poverty and malnutrition are key priorities in EU Development co-operation.

Since its inception in 1945 the FAO has worked to reduce poverty and hunger by promoting agricultural development and the pursuit of food security. FAO acts as an international forum for debate on food and agricultural issues, collects and disseminates information, provides policy and planning advice to individual governments and can also offer direct development assistance in areas within its competence. The EC is a member organisation of the FAO since 1991. In addition, since June 1993, the EC and FAO have successfully operated a co-operation agreement which allows FAO to provide technical assistance to developing countries. An important package programme in the field of food security is under implementation.

A new "Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement" between the EC and FAO was concluded in July of this year. This agreement will allow both parties to further strengthen co-operation in support of development efforts.

Yours sincerely,



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