

FAO Council 169th session

8 April 2022

BELGIUM's intervention

- Belgium aligns itself with the Joint Statement delivered by France on behalf of the EU. Belgium **welcomes today's special session** of the Council to discuss the **impact** of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine **on global food security**. The unprovoked and unjustified Russian aggression against Ukraine violates the objectives and purposes of our Organization and **must stop immediately**.
- **Belgium cosponsored the request to hold this special session and fully endorses the draft decision** which is the basis of our discussions today. **We call on all Members of this Council to adopt this decision as a whole, en bloc, today.**
- The Russian invasion of Ukraine has indeed disastrous consequences on global food security, in Ukraine but also for **the most vulnerable countries**. This further **reverses development progress and makes it more difficult to attain food and nutrition security goals**. Global commodity prices were already on the rise before the Russian invasion, as economies are recovering from the COVID19 pandemic. Skyrocketing energy prices are now having a negative effect on the whole supply chain.
- The crisis in Ukraine underscores the need to accelerate the transition towards sustainable, resilient and fair food systems, to be better prepared for future crises. We stress the importance to support those people pushed into poverty and hunger because of the conflict.
- **Sanctions** imposed on the Russian Federation in response to its invasion of Ukraine **do not target the agricultural sector of the Russian Federation**. All these sanctions against Russia have one overarching purpose : to stop the war. The **negative impact on agricultural production in Ukraine and on global food security, prices or availability of commodities on world markets is only due to the Russian aggression against Ukraine**.
- We therefore **call for an immediate end to Russia's aggression. Only this cessation will help stabilize global food prices and improve global food security.**
- Let me turn now to how FAO can address the current situation:
 - We **call on FAO to continue monitoring the impacts** of the invasion of Ukraine on all the components of global food systems.
 - We also call on FAO to **share information** regularly and transparently with its Members on the developments in global agricultural markets, including the **evolution of commodity and fertilizer prices**.
 - Moreover, we **call on FAO to alleviate human suffering in Ukraine and to support Ukraine** so as to secure its agricultural contribution to the global markets, since the

devastation in Ukraine is almost beyond description and endangers this season's agricultural production.

- **We call on FAO to support the most vulnerable countries** suffering from an increased level of food insecurity deriving from the aggression by Russia.
- **The Committee on World Food Security** need to play a central and coordinating role of the policy responses to this crisis as it is well positioned to address the crisis in its multiple aspects.
- **Belgium will continue to provide support to FAO and WFP** to take actions addressing global food security impacts.
- Belgium is committed to **pursue its humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and its support to multilateral organizations. This year, more than 60% of Belgian humanitarian funding will be granted through flexible funds and core funding, which allows humanitarian organizations to respond quickly to sudden crises.** This is the way we operate our financial contributions to the **WFP Immediate Response Account** and the **FAO SFERA fund**.

Belgium has decided to allocate 3 million EUR in direct funding for the activities of the ICRC in Ukraine and 2 million EUR to OCHA's Ukrainian humanitarian fund, a Country Based Pooled Fund.

- Before closing let me express Belgium's **full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, and with the people in need worldwide because of the aggression by Russia.** The best remedy to prevent a global food crisis from developing is for the Russian Federation to immediately end its aggression against Ukraine.
- We need peace. Peace for the people of Ukraine. Peace for the world. **We need peace now.**