

DRAFT

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE AD HOC
COPA-COGECA WORKING PARTY “FOOD CHAIN”
ON 5 JUNE 2013**

PRESENT: Messrs/Mrs Kendall (Chairman), Rosiers, Finardi, Suau, Guérin, Matoušek, Chaloupka, Gotting, Nielsen, Endrodi, Kicinski, Valentini, Basto, Fuentes, Corbalan, Krüger, Martin, Wagner, Sarmir

SECRETARIAT: Mr Gouveia

APOLOGIES:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

Item 1: Approval of the agenda

→ The ad hoc WP Food Chain met under the Chairmanship of Mr Peter Kendall and approved the agenda FC(13)4346 (rev.1).

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

→ The minutes of the previous meeting FC(13)3436 (rev.1) were approved without amendments.

Item 3: Information update on the HLF for a better functioning food supply chain – re-start of activities; Copa-Cogeca initiatives in the framework of the green paper on Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in Business to Business (B2B) relations in the food and non-food supply chain; the EESC own initiative opinion on “The current state of commercial relations between food suppliers and the large retail sector” (Igor Šarmir)

- On item 3.1 the Secretariat informed the members on the composition of the HLF with the official letter accompanied by the list of representatives being available in Agri Info. The tentative date for the first Sherpa meeting was also indicated.
- On item 3.2 the Secretariat reported on the initiatives taken related to the green paper on UTPs in B2B relations in the food and non-food supply chain. In particular meetings with the new head of unit in DG Markt (Ms Maria Rehbinder) and MEP De Jong were planned. An event at the EP later in the year is also being planned.
- On item 3.3 NON(13)1564 (rev.1) (EESC opinion) the Secretariat briefly informed on the EESC own initiative report by Mr Sarmir (member of the WP) highlighting the main points.

Item 4: “Voluntary framework for the implementation and enforcement of the principles of good practice for vertical relationships in the food supply chain

- On item 4.1 the Chairman welcomed Mr Rodrigo Gouveia (EuroCoop, representing the stakeholders agreeing to the voluntary initiative) and gave him the floor to present the state of play of the implementation of the initiative (see ppt). The Chairman opened a debate with interventions from DBV, Cooperativas Agroalimentarias, Boerenbond, Coldiretti, raising concerns on the voluntary approach and the critical elements for Copa-Cogeca. Mr Rodrigo Gouveia replied to the different questions and defended the voluntary only approach. The Chairman thanked him for his participation.
- On item 4.2 [CAFI(13)361 (rev.2), CAFI(11)6844 (rev.2), CAFI(13)2837 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2838 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2839 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2840 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2841 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2911 (rev.1), CAFI(13)2912 (rev.1)] – this item was addressed jointly with item 6.

Item 5: Presentation of the results of the survey on Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in the agri-food sector by Dedicated Research

→ The Chairman welcomed Mr Dumoulin (Dedicated Research) and gave him the floor to present the main outcomes of the survey carried out to assess the impact of UTPs in the agro-food sector [see FC(13)3056 (rev.1)]. Following the presentation some delegations (DBV, Cooperativas Agroalimentarias and Coldiretti) asked questions for clarification. The Chairman concluded stressing the main conclusion of the survey where the economical impact of UTPs on the reduction of turnover is estimated at 10.9 billion Euros per year.

Item 6: Debate on the proposed Copa-Cogeca strategy and orientation vis-à-vis the multi-stakeholder dialogue, the setting-up of the “Voluntary framework” as detailed at agenda point 4, and the forthcoming European Parliament activities related to the green paper detailed at agenda point 3.2

→ On item 4.2.: The Chairman gave the floor to Mr Rosiers to briefly outline recent developments regarding the discussions with the other stakeholders regarding the voluntary initiative. He indicated that no progress has been made in what regards anonymity, sanctions and an independent third party adjudicator with the other stakeholders (with the exception of Clitravi/Assica) refusing any reference to legislation. Further to developments in the Commission and EP he also indicated the developments in Belgium. In view of this the Chairman proposed to the WP to maintain the Copa-Cogeca position since there were no tangible developments and opened a debate. Following various interventions the WP supported the proposal.

→ On item 6: The Chairman proposed to maintain a twin track approach; working with other like-minded organisations; develop contacts with the Commission including the possibility of bringing some farmers to present their cases; approaching selected MEPs. We concluded stating that we need more time and to reiterate and clarify our position in terms of communication. The Secretariat presented the timeline associated with these developments. Following an exchange of views the Chairman summarised the proposed twin-track approach. The WP agreed with the proposal presented.

Item 7: Any other business

→ The Chairman gave the floor to Mr Finardi to briefly provide an update on a report from the Italian antitrust authority on the functioning of the retail sector.

→ The Chairman thanked the members for attending, the interpreters for their work and closed the meeting indicating that the Working Party would meet again on 17th October in the afternoon.