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## Summary of proceedings of the Conference on the public debate "The CAP post 2013",

**Brussels, 19-20 July 2010**

The Conference was opened by Commissioner Ciolos welcoming the great interest shown in the public debate. For the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament respectively, S. Laruelle indicated that the CAP post 2013 is an important priority for the Belgian Presidency, and P. Di Castro stressed that the CAP is not only a sectoral and territorial policy but concerns all EU citizens.

The debate kicked off with the views of EU citizens on agriculture and the CAP as expressed in Eurobarometer surveys and contributions to the public debate, followed by presentations from representatives of civil society, before opening the discussion to the floor.

In-depth discussions took place in four parallel workshops. The first day the focus was on future challenges, whereas on the second day the corresponding workshops dealt with proposals on how to manage the identified challenges:

- The participants in **Workshop 1 – Food security** agreed on the importance of food security; its definition proved nonetheless more problematic (quantity, quality and safety of food, consumers/producers, EU/global). Key issues for the future include the pressure on resources and effects of climate change on production, how to manage increased volatility in the markets, the need to innovate and improve competitiveness, and consumption patterns (e.g. demand for meat). A balanced approach was deemed necessary in relation to liberalization, the environment, and the role of trade in ensuring food security.
- **Workshop 5 – The future role of the CAP in maintaining food production capacity in the EU** considered that agricultural production is the CAP's core business, although lately much focus has been devoted to the discussion of food vs. non-food production, and looked in particular at areas of vulnerability (such as water, climate change, human capital). As regards possible adaptations to policy tools, the discussion centered around the importance of direct payments in

maintaining production capacity, the future role of insurance instruments and competition rules, and the need to better factor in consumer preferences.

- Starting with the different role of farmers / non-farmers and large / small farmers, the discussion in **Workshop 2 – Future of rural society** evolved to recognize the different situations in rural areas and the need for a territorial approach. Most important were considered the need to empower local communities, and to ensure equity in opportunities in terms of access to information, services and markets. To these ends rural development policy can have an innovative role. Building on this finding of rural diversity, **Workshop 6 – The future role of the CAP in maintaining the vitality and making the most of the diversity of rural society** emphasized the importance of a strategic approach with tangible area-specific targets that reflect the broader EU policy goals, as well as the need to simplify rules in order to improve access to funds, to better coordinate the different policies, and to promote rural/urban dialogue. All in all, diversity was deemed an asset for rural areas and the CAP.
- **Workshop 3 – Environment and provision of public goods by agriculture** focused on environmental public goods and the role of farmers as managers of ecosystems. Farmers must respect environmental legislation, but should also be given incentives for the delivery of environmental goods that go beyond mandatory requirements. Win-win approaches should be sought for modernizing farming towards environmentally friendly practices. For the participants in **Workshop 7 – The future role of the CAP in preserving the environment and ensuring sufficient provision of public goods by agriculture** the CAP has an obvious role to play, with both pillars delivering public goods in a complementary manner, though it was felt that we cannot rely solely on the CAP. What is necessary for the future is to set priorities, and to promote training, advice and capacity building.
- **Workshop 4 – Quality, diversity, health** spanned a wide range of topics. The participants saw quality as strongly linked to diversity, given the wide range of preferences of consumers. There were calls for a Common Food Policy to promote nutritious food (e.g. school fruit) and to better enforce safety rules, with divergent views on the level at which minimum mandatory standards should be set and on the extent to which the market alone can provide diversity. **Workshop 8 – The future role of the CAP in promoting the quality and diversity of food supply** considered that it should be possible to bring together "people, planet and profits". The CAP already has a variety of tools to promote quality products, such as GIs, organic, mountain etc.. The role of innovation was again highlighted, for instance seeing organic production as a laboratory. Promotion was seen as a question of educating all actors in the production chain and consumers and communicating on the added value of EU products also abroad. Finally, producer organizations were considered to enhance recognition of farmers as real partners in the chain and facilitate the contact with consumers.

The Conference rapporteurs (see attached conclusions of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) pointed out the high expectations of EU society for maintaining a strong CAP that responds to the need of food security and remunerates the public goods provided by EU agriculture operating in a global context (when, what and how to best pay for public goods were left as open questions). The rapporteurs also noted the growing importance attached to health issues and to the diversity of EU agriculture and regions, and stressed

the importance of finding new criteria for the distribution of direct payments, and continuing with agricultural adjustment and land and forestry management measures in rural areas. On this basis, agriculture and rural areas would enhance their positive contribution to Europe 2020.

Both in the plenary sessions and in the workshops there was lively participation from the floor contributing a wide range of perspectives on the challenges ahead and the objectives of the CAP post 2013, at times going beyond the remit of the Conference (for example discussing the rights of farm workers and the role of the EU in the world). There was a general recognition of and strong support for the important role of the CAP in the future.

Building on the common view of the future challenges emerging from the Conference, Commissioner Ciolos̃ pled in his closing speech for striking the right balance for a sustainable and competitive agriculture with an important territorial dimension. For the future he advocated a strong two-pillar CAP that is capable of meeting the challenges (globalization, food, environmental, economic, territorial), that is simple and understandable for EU citizens, and a policy that is anchored in the diversity of European agriculture and regions.

The public debate concluding with the Conference will now feed into the Communication on the CAP post 2013 to be presented in November 2010.