



Brussels, 15th of March 2022

Dear President Metsola

Dear Committee Chairs van Overtveldt, Lins and Tobé

In view of the preparation of the upcoming plenary debate on the ***Need for an urgent EU Action Plan to ensure Food Security inside and outside the EU in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine***, we call upon you to allow for a detailed and technical exchange within the Parliament, for example by convening an extraordinary joint committee meeting of **BUDG/AGRI/DEVE in the presence of Commissioners Hahn, Wojciechowski and Lenarčič**.

It is crucial, that the Parliament coordinates ahead of the plenary debate in order to be united in political messages and has enough background in all policies. In order to be able to coordinate within the Parliament and on interinstitutional level, we also ask you to call the Commission to provide the Parliament with a regular and detailed briefing on their next steps, a concrete timeline and resources to be made available.

The unprecedented military aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation requires a coordinated response to support Ukraine, especially in terms of humanitarian assistance as well as providing EU corridors and offering shelter to all people fleeing the country. **The ongoing hostilities endanger the lives of civilians and affect their access to basic needs, especially access to health services and food supplies.**

The European Commission is coordinating the delivery of material assistance to Ukraine and all Member States have offered in-kind assistance including medical supplies and shelter items. While the EU financial humanitarian support has been estimated for now around €100 million, more needs to be done to support hundreds of thousands of people do not have access to basic services.

After receiving an official request for assistance from the Government of Ukraine, the World Food Programme has launched an emergency operation to provide food assistance for people fleeing the conflict both in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. On 7 March 2022, the Food and Agriculture Organisation also launched a Rapid Response Plan for Ukraine, seeking USD 50 million to assist 240 000 vulnerable rural people affected by the war. **According to the FAO, only 9% (USD 4.6 million) of the funding requested by the FAO has been provided, leaving a funding gap of USD 45.4 million (91%)¹.**

¹ <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9007en/cb9007en.pdf>

According to our information, food supplies have dangerously deteriorated in Ukraine, especially in cities under siege or areas particularly suffering from Russian bombings. The European Union should increase its financial assistance for access to food supplies in Ukraine and should coordinate with UN agencies and all partners on the ground to provide urgent food and livelihoods assistance to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

Securing food supply chains and safeguarding household-level production of nutritious foods (e.g. vegetables, livestock) will be critical to averting a food crisis. The war has already created significant problems in the logistics and on the food supply chains within Ukraine. While FAO's first priority is to ensure that rural households can continue to access food for the coming months, **the European Union has a duty to prevent increasing food shortages and starvation of the population.**

Beyond Ukraine, Putin's war will have serious consequences in other countries and regions already experiencing food insecurity and in countries that are vulnerable to supply shocks and price increases. Reductions of the global stocks of wheat and other grains and oilseeds from Ukraine and Russia could exacerbate ongoing crises in countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Ethiopia, and other developing countries. According to the United Nations, world food prices hit a record high in February, and have risen over 24% in a year.

In addition, in the coming weeks, Ukrainian farmers should start planting crops soon and the military intervention is jeopardizing wheat harvest. Farmers are also apparently struggling to obtain seeds, including for corn and sunflowers, further endangering other harvests. Fuel shortages are another critical problem for farmers, stopping them to use their equipment to plant crops.

It is vital that the European Parliament sees to that the European Commission addresses all the aforementioned challenges and steps up its efforts to support Ukraine and any other country or region affected.

Yours sincerely,

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