



**COUNCIL**

**Council**

**PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK ON FOOD SAFETY 2001-2002**

**(Note by the Secretary-General)**

*This Addendum on the issue of the proposed High-Level Meeting has been prepared in the light of the informal meeting of Members of the Council held under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General on 1 March 2001.*

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1. The meeting was held to explore how to advance on the issue of the high-level meeting proposed within the programme of work on food safety, on which a decision is urgently needed if there is to be a substantive response in 2001 to the mandate from Ministers to continue analytical work and policy dialogue.

2. No delegation opposed the possibility of a high-level meeting on food safety at some time in the future but it was not possible to reach agreement on the scope and logistics of a meeting at this stage. Delegates suggested a number of alternative ways to launch the analytical activities, including linking early discussions amongst OECD members to one of the various meetings proposed on food safety in other fora.

3. In particular, interest was expressed in the possibility of an OECD consultation in conjunction with FAO/WHO food safety meetings, in particular the proposed back-to-back meetings of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators in July 2001 in Geneva, which would be attended by high-level food safety regulators. The OECD consultation would provide an opportunity to further consider planned work at the OECD, in light of the deliberations of the Committee for Agriculture in April and in the context of recent developments in Member countries. It would not, however, be a substitute for a possible future high-level meeting at the OECD. (Subsequent to the meeting with Ambassadors, the Secretariat has been informed that the Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators will not take place in July but is now planned for October of 2001.)

4. Taking into account the above, the Secretary-General proposes that Council adopt the following amended draft conclusions:

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- a) endorsed the specific activities as proposed in C(2000)200/REV4 and CORR1 and requested the Committee for Agriculture, and its subsidiary bodies, to define the terms of reference for each activity and implement the overall programme of work;
- b) agreed to a separate high-level OECD consultation on food safety issues in conjunction with the next session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to be held from 2-7 July 2001 in Geneva;
- c) requested the Secretariat to return to Council in July 2001, after the programme of work has been better defined and the OECD consultation has taken place, with a proposal for an OECD high-level meeting.