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Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques
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English - Or. English

COUNCIL

Council

**OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AT MINISTERIAL
LEVEL ON 7-8 APRIL 2016**

(Note by the Secretary-General)

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1. Ministers of Agriculture and Representatives of OECD's 34 Members, the European Union and Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Latvia, Lithuania, Peru, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Viet Nam met in Paris on 7-8 April 2016 to explore challenges and opportunities facing the global food system around the theme "Better Policies to Achieve a Productive, Sustainable and Resilient Global Food System". The meeting was co-chaired by Stéphane Le Foll, Minister of Agriculture, Agrifood, and Forestry of France, and Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture. Over 400 participants attended the Ministerial meeting.

2. The deliberations kicked off with a vigorous policy dialogue, hosted by the Secretary-General and Co-Chairs, and attended by an invited audience, including 28 accredited members of the Press. Issues such as agricultural productivity, trade, climate change and the future for young farmers were addressed at this event.

3. The subsequent Ministerial plenary discussions focused on both the opportunities and the challenges facing global agriculture and food systems: ensuring food security for a growing and more demanding global population while sustainably managing natural resources, mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects, and contributing to economic growth, rural development, and poverty alleviation, in particular in less developed economies. Five "break-out" sessions were arranged on both days, each facilitated by a Minister. These more intimate discussions were the highlight of the event according to the Ministers themselves. Participants noted the timeliness of the discussions at the Ministerial, in particular in light of the adoption of the UN SDGs in September 2015, the COP 21 Paris Agreement in December 2015, and the WTO Ministerial in Nairobi the same month.

4. Ministers underlined the value of OECD agricultural policy monitoring and evaluation, global market outlook, and national-level food and agriculture policy assessments and advice – and looked to focus OECD analysis even more on their shared goals to improve food system productivity, sustainability, and resilience. They called upon the OECD to continue to build the evidence-base supporting government implementation of a more coherent and integrated mix of policies to achieve these goals, and to strengthen OECD's advocacy and outreach efforts with OECD and partner countries and with relevant international organisations as well. The Co-Chairs' Summary provides details of the discussion at the Ministerial meeting [[TAD/CA/MIN\(2016\)4](#)].

5. One of the main outcomes of the meeting at Ministerial level was the adoption by the Ministers and Representatives of 46 countries of the Declaration on Better Policies to Achieve a Productive, Sustainable and Resilient Global Food System [[TAD/CA/MIN\(2016\)3/FINAL](#)] (hereafter the "Declaration"), which is set out in the Annex. The Declaration outlines a set of shared goals for the agriculture and food sector, and a set of policy principles to ensure an integrated approach to agriculture and food policies reflecting these shared goals. The Declaration also notes the value of open dialogue in building mutual understanding and trust amongst countries and emphasises the importance of enhanced international cooperation, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, innovation and climate change. It recognises the important role played by the OECD in support of policy reform efforts in its Member countries and increasingly, in Partner countries, in the field of food and agriculture. Finally, it invites the OECD to accelerate efforts to build a solid evidence-base on the best policy mixes to achieve the shared goals, and notes priorities for the urgent attention of the OECD.

6. According to established practice, all Declarations adopted within the OECD framework are transmitted to the Council, inviting the Council to "note" these legal instruments. The Declaration will then be added to the list of OECD legal instruments, with a list of Adherents to be updated as appropriate.

Proposed Action

7. In the light of the preceding, the Secretary-General invites the Council to adopt the following draft conclusions:

THE COUNCIL

- a) noted document [C\(2016\)71](#);
- b) noted the Declaration on Better Policies to Achieve a Productive, Sustainable and Resilient Global Food System, set out in the Annex to document [C\(2016\)71](#);
- c) noted that twelve non-Members (namely Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Latvia, Lithuania, Peru, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Ukraine and Viet Nam) have adopted the Declaration, and encouraged other non-Members to adhere.

ANNEX

**DECLARATION ON BETTER POLICIES TO ACHIEVE A PRODUCTIVE,
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM**

We, the Ministers and Representatives of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam, met in Paris at the meeting of the OECD Committee for Agriculture at Ministerial Level on 7-8 April 2016, to discuss the opportunities and challenges for the global agriculture and food sector and to explore appropriate policy responses. We placed a high priority on developing policies to underpin competitive, sustainable, productive and resilient farm and food businesses.

CONSIDERING that:

1. A growing, higher income and more urbanised population will continue to demand a more varied and nutritionally balanced diet. The bio-economy, including renewable energy, will also increase demand for food and agricultural products. While responding to these opportunities, the agriculture and food sector will confront increased competition for natural resources, it will have to adapt to changing temperatures, precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events, improve its impact on the environment, and address the provision of ecosystem services. There are multiple challenges in improving the well-being of farm households, especially of smallholders and women, while facilitating structural change. A range of health-related issues is coming to the fore, among them animal disease risks, antimicrobial resistance and human health and nutrition. The sector will, in some countries, also be expected to contribute significantly to climate change mitigation while improving global food security.

2. International focus on these and related issues has been particularly prominent over the past year. The WTO's 10th Ministerial Conference confirmed the importance of agriculture and food in international trade relations, addressed one of the most distortive policies by eliminating export subsidies and disciplining other forms of export measures, but left other issues unresolved. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change laid out the ambition to limit global warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, while indicating that this should be done "in a manner that does not threaten food production". The new sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015 [A/RES/70/1] call, in particular, to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agricultural productivity improvement, by 2030. There have been repeated calls by governments at the G20, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Expo Milan 2015, Global Forum for Food and Agriculture 2016 (GFFA) in Berlin, and elsewhere for a renewed focus on sustainable productivity growth and reductions in food waste and losses.

DECLARE that we:

3. Express our firm conviction that the agriculture and food system can contribute very significantly to global solutions in all these areas. We also note that while policies for food and agriculture have begun to change, international and domestic policy settings are not sufficiently aligned with emerging needs. We further note that there is a growing urgency for integrated policy approaches that will better enable farmers and the food sector to simultaneously improve productivity, increase competitiveness and profitability, improve resilience, access markets at home and abroad, manage natural resources more sustainably, contribute to global food security, and deal with extreme market volatility, while avoiding trade distortions.

Shared goals for the agriculture and food sector

4. Share the following *goals* for the agriculture and food sector:
- To provide all consumers with reliable access to safe, healthy and nutritious food.
 - To enable producers everywhere, big and small, male and female, to operate in an open and transparent global trading system and to seize available market opportunities to improve their standards of living.
 - To contribute to sustainable productivity and resource use, solutions to climate change, resilience in the face of risk, and the provision of public goods and ecosystem services.
 - To contribute to inclusive growth, and development, within and across countries.

Policy principles for an integrated approach to agriculture and food

5. Agree a set of *policy principles* to ensure an integrated approach to agriculture and food policies reflecting these. In pursuit of the shared goals, policies need to:
- Be coherent with economy-wide measures, including in relation to growth, development, trade, investment, employment, well-being, and the environment. Special efforts are needed, particularly in less developed economies, to improve the enabling environment in which the sector operates (from health and education to physical infrastructure and land rights), to encourage much needed public and private investments, and to enable farms of all sizes, including smallholders, to choose the growth path which offers them the greatest opportunity.
 - Be transparent (with explicit objectives and intended beneficiaries), targeted (to specific outcomes), tailored (proportionate to the desired outcome), flexible (reflecting diverse situations and priorities over time and space), consistent (with multilateral rules and obligations) and equitable (within and across countries), while ensuring value for money for scarce government resources.
 - Support a better-functioning multilateral trade system which will enable further integration of the sector, so that competitive suppliers are able to pursue market opportunities on an equitable, transparent, market oriented and non-discriminatory basis. This will allow the sector to take advantage of the benefits of trade for inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, and global food security, while observing the principles of responsible business conduct.
 - Make innovation a priority in order to achieve sustainable productivity growth, including through organisational change, cross-sectorial cooperation, greater public and private investment in research and development, technology transfer and adoption, education and training, and advisory services.
 - Foster production systems that use available water, land, forest, energy, soil and biodiversity resources sustainably and which promote animal, plant and human health.
 - Foster greater resilience of farmers to risk, to enable them to cope with more frequent, unpredictable events, such as weather-related shocks, disease outbreaks, and market volatility.

Creating the evidence base for a new policy paradigm

6. Note the value of open dialogue in building mutual understanding and trust amongst countries and emphasise the importance of enhanced international cooperation, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, innovation and climate change. We recognise the important role played by the OECD in

support of policy reform efforts in its members and increasingly, in partner countries, in the field of food and agriculture. We invite the OECD, in collaboration with other interested International Organisations and partner countries, to further elaborate concrete actions, both individual and collective, to improve agriculture and food sector productivity, sustainability, and resilience.

7. Invite the OECD to accelerate efforts to build a solid evidence-base on the best policy mixes to achieve the shared goals. We emphasise that the well-established work on agriculture policy monitoring and market outlook should remain a high priority, and be complemented by advice tailored to specific countries so as to take account of the diversity of economic, environmental, social, and food security situations across and within countries.

8. Note the following priorities for urgent attention of the OECD:

- Comprehensive and consistent policy packages that target development of productive, sustainable and resilient food systems, capable of delivering food security for all, reflecting the needs of countries at different stages of development and with different resource endowments, encompassing economy-wide measures as well as measures specific to the agriculture and food sector.
- Innovation policies and systems that include basic and applied scientific research & development; technology adaptation, transfer and adoption; public-private partnerships; intellectual property rights; and education, skills, and advisory & extension services; institutional change.
- Integrated policies which improve agricultural productivity to foster sustainable use of water, land, forest, energy, soil and biodiversity resources, to promote improved economic and environmental performance and preservation of ecosystems, as well as to enable effective climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Risk management policies to enhance both individual and sector-wide resilience, with an appropriate balance between private, market and public actions.
- Policies to promote the development of well-functioning, competitive, and transparent food systems and responsible business conduct, along the food chain.
- Policies to promote human, animal, and plant health throughout the food supply chain.
- Trade and domestic policies that foster well-functioning and more integrated international and domestic markets, including through Global Value Chains, and that contribute to more widespread inclusive growth, sustainable development, and global food security.
- Practical actions to foster increased international cooperation, in particular through regulatory cooperation, trade, investment, open data and knowledge and technology sharing.

9. Welcome further dialogue under the auspices of G7, G20, APEC, WTO and other forums planned to be held in 2016 and beyond, and, finally, agree to come together again at OECD within the next five to six years to take stock of progress on implementing policies to achieve a more productive, sustainable and resilient food system.