



# Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The Director-General

OER-DG/22/162

28.III.2022

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

I have the honour to refer to your correspondence dated 15 March 2022 regarding the ongoing war in Ukraine.

As you rightly note, even before the war in Ukraine, global food prices were at extraordinarily high levels. Likewise, global levels of both chronic and acute food insecurity have been soaring, driven primarily by conflict, economic instability aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate extremes. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is deeply concerned by the impacts of the war on lives, livelihoods and agricultural production both within Ukraine and across the world, and as such, supports the UN Secretary-General's tireless efforts to bring an end to the war.

Providing critical information and analysis on food security, food prices and agricultural systems is at the core of FAO's mandate. As such, FAO continues to analyse and share critical information on global food prices through the Food Price Monitoring and Analysis system and related monthly bulletins. On 11 March 2022, FAO issued an Information Note on *"The importance of Ukraine and the Russian Federation for global agricultural markets and the risks associated with the current conflict"*, while I personally briefed the G7 Agriculture Ministers on the potential impacts and recommended policy actions to mitigate the effects of the war on global food supply chains and prices. Following on from this, on 25 March 2022 FAO hosted a Technical Briefing for its Members on the global implications of the war, to which all Permanent Representations to FAO were invited. In addition, I have been invited by the UN Secretary-General to join the Steering Committee of the new Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, which will be chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary-General.

**Members of the European Parliament:**

Viola von Cramon, Greens/EFA, Germany  
Petras Auštrevičius, Renew Europe, Lithuania  
Luis Garicano, Renew Europe, Spain  
Andreas Glück, Renew Europe, Germany  
Michal Šimečka, Renew Europe, Slovakia  
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Anna Cavazzini, Greens/EFA, Germany

My focus is on delivering FAO's technical mandate, as defined in its Constitution, as efficiently as possible, in a neutral manner and in line with the priorities set by the Governing Bodies. As such, the FAO team in Ukraine, the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) and FAO headquarters will continue to scale up our response and support the Government and the people of Ukraine in securing food security and agricultural production in this time of war.

The Organization is committed to supporting the humanitarian response in Ukraine, both as a specialized technical agency and in our role as the co-lead of the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster. On 1 March 2022, I personally attended the launch of the UN Flash Appeal for Ukraine, and urged high attention and resourcing for agriculture in the response. FAO staff, including the Deputy Director-General, Emergency Director and Director of the Liaison Office in Geneva, actively participate in all interagency coordination meetings on the humanitarian response.

Within Ukraine, FAO has stayed and is delivering, having reinforced its team in Ukraine, surging 12 staff, in addition to the 81 staff already in-country. FAO has scaled up and expanded ongoing humanitarian efforts to reach beyond eastern areas of the country, where the Organization had, until 2020, an emergency programme focusing on cash and agricultural input provision to smallholder producers, and an ongoing recovery programme until 24 February 2022.

Currently, FAO's immediate focus is on smallholder farmers, who play a particularly critical role in producing nutritious foods: vegetables, livestock and poultry. The Organization has quickly pivoted part of a substantial development programme in the country to focus on immediate humanitarian needs and laying the foundations for recovery and rebuilding of the agriculture sector and agriculture-based livelihoods. A situation update on our humanitarian response was issued and is available on FAO's website. In these efforts, we are working closely with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, with almost daily engagement and briefings on priorities. FAO has already started conducting needs assessments to access critical real-time data on markets, input prices and availability, and on the impacts of the war on agriculture. The first round of analyses from this system will be ready in early April 2022 and will be disseminated to partners, including the Government and FAO Members, to inform actions in the agriculture sector.

As a core member of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on Famine Prevention, FAO has been and continues to advocate for urgent interventions and sufficient resources to save lives, protect livelihoods and avert further declines. Recognizing that the war in Ukraine has enormous implications across the world, particularly in countries already facing high levels of acute food insecurity, FAO continues to emphasize the need to invest in local production close to where it is needed, noting that globally, about two-thirds of those at risk of or experiencing high acute food insecurity, are rural populations who rely on agriculture for their survival.

I encourage you to view and share widely FAO's ongoing efforts regarding the war in Ukraine, available at <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/briefing-notes/en>.

FAO continues to advocate for a rapid end to the war and to the tragedy of human suffering. We stand ready to work together with the Government of Ukraine in rebuilding the country's agriculture sector.

Accept, Members of the European Parliament, the assurance of my highest consideration and reassurance of FAO's sustained commitment to the people of Ukraine and to global food security.



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