

RPCA MEETING OF THE FOOD CRISIS PREVENTION NETWORK

Organised by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD), under the auspices of the Commissions of ECOWAS and UEMOA

KEY LESSONS FROM TWO INTENSE DAYS

The restricted RPCA meeting was held in the context of the dramatic situation that is unfolding in Northern Mali, a zone which is now plunged into chaos by multiple factions with diverging interests. Nearly 250 000 out of 1.5 million people have already fled south and into neighbouring countries. Many others are on their way. How many will have fled in a few weeks? How many will have fled by August, when the lean season already promises to be difficult? If no miracle occurs, and if the socio-political situation does not progress, there will probably be several hundred thousand more people. A humanitarian disaster is, without a doubt, beginning to develop. However, the current humanitarian emergency also reminds us that conflict can provoke more famine than drought crises.

The role of ECOWAS in managing the political crisis in Mali (with the support of UEMOA through economic and monetary sanctions) was quick and exemplary. Moreover, the leadership of the two regional organisations in the field of food security has become much more prominent over the past few months, with the support of their “technical branch,” CILSS. The creation of the “High-Level Committee on Food Security” by the UEMOA Commission and the adoption of the “RESOGEST Framework for Co-operation” by ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS member countries, are just two examples.

The ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions were represented at the RPCA meeting in Paris by their respective Commissioners in charge of agriculture, Marc Atouga and Ibrahima Diémé. Together with Professor Alhousseini Bretaudeau, the CILSS Executive Secretary, they facilitated the debate in order to reach consensual conclusions.

One can only congratulate this new regional leadership which will further strengthen in the coming months and which the SWAC Secretariat will fully support. There is no alternative to sustainable West African political leadership and the meticulous respect of the “Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management”, adopted in November 2011 by all West African countries.

In the margin of the RPCA, the SWAC Secretariat facilitated meetings between ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS leaders and key personalities involved in the G20.

These meetings helped to promote ongoing West African food security initiatives, including the creation of a Regional Food Reserve which was endorsed by the G20 under the French Presidency. Some promising ideas and proposals have emerged from these discussions, such as the invitation of West African representatives to participate in the next meeting of the G20 Summit Working Group in Los Cabos (Mexico) in early May.

We will keep you informed on the outcomes of this important meeting.



Laurent Bossard
Director, SWAC Secretariat
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Meeting with Mr. Rintaro Tamaki, OECD Deputy Secretary-General; from left to right: Prof. Alhousseini Bretaudeau, Mr. Laurent Bossard, Mr. Ibrahima Diémé, Mr. Rintaro Tamaki, Mr. Marc Atouga and Mr. Sibiri Jean Zoundi, SWAC Secretariat.



Meeting with H.E. Agustin Garcia-Lopez Loaeza, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OECD (3rd person from left).



Meeting with H.E. Pascale Andreani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France to the OECD (4th person from left).



Meeting with Ms. Gabriela Ramos, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20 (4th person from left);
Mr. Marcos Bonturi, Director ad interim, OECD Council and Executive Committee Secretariat, and Global Relations Secretariat (3rd person from right);
Ms. Carmel Cahill, Senior Counselor, OECD Directorate for Trade and Agriculture (2nd person from right).

The West African Delegation also met with Mr. Sujiro Seam, Deputy Director, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of Global Public Goods.



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