

# Trans-Atlantic NGO Food Aid Policy Dialogue

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**5 June 2006**

## **TO: Representatives of Food Aid Convention Member States**

We, the undersigned, representing some of the larger North American and European non-governmental (NGO) organizations involved in food aid distribution and food security programming, are writing to express our keenness to engage in discussions concerning the reformulation of the Food Aid Convention.

Over the past decade, we have seen increases in the number of people suffering food crises and chronic food insecurity, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Over 800 million people in developing countries are suffering from hunger and it is likely that this number is again increasing. The impending renegotiation of the Food Aid Convention presents an important opportunity to review the use of food aid to address food insecurity and to ensure that sufficient resources are available to realize this potential.

In May 2006, 15 NGOs from Europe, Canada and the US came together in Ottawa for a unique 'transatlantic' gathering to discuss how the Food Aid Convention could become more effective in providing adequate food aid resources and in allocating these resources according to need.

We concluded that food aid, while not the only response needed, remains an important element in the fight against food insecurity. We are also convinced of the vital importance of having a reliable global governance system which ensures that adequate food aid resources (both in cash and in-kind) are available to respond to food crises and to provide vital food safety nets. The Food Aid Convention is currently the only international treaty to address this.

We urge the Members of the Food Aid Convention to recommit to this important international treaty and to give the following issues high priority during the negotiations:

- The objectives of the Convention must be strengthened to highlight their needs-focussed and demand-driven nature.
- Food aid commitments should be denominated in amounts of food or nutritional equivalents and be based on an analysis of global needs. These commitments should be allocated according to needs assessments using internationally accepted methods.
- Monitoring and reporting of these commitments must be made more timely and publicly-transparent.
- The membership of the Convention should be broadened to include new food aid donors and representation from food aid recipient countries. There should also be provision for input from other stakeholders.

We also support making the Food Aid Convention consistent with other recent international agreements including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Implementation of the Human Right to Adequate Food.

We are in the process of developing a more detailed set of recommendations that will be forwarded to you shortly. Please accept our interest and suggestions based on our extensive

field experience and commitment to reduce food insecurity. We look forward to further discussion with you individually or collectively.

Yours sincerely,



Benoit Miribel,  
Executive Director, Action contre la faim



Jim Cornelius,  
Executive Director, Canadian Foodgrains Bank



Helen D. Gayle  
President and CEO, CARE



Sean L. Callahan,  
Vice-President Overseas Operations, Catholic Relief Services



Tom Arnold  
Chief Executive Officer, Concern Worldwide



Gerhard Schmalbruch,  
Secretary General, Euronaid



Hans Joachim Preuss  
General Secretary, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe/  
German agro Action



Robert Fox,  
Executive Director, Oxfam Canada



Nick Roseveare,  
Humanitarian Director, OXFAM GB



Pierre Veronneau,  
Executive Director, Oxfam Quebec



A blue ink signature of Peter Harlock, written in a cursive style.

Peter Harlock  
Chief Operating Officer, Save the Children UK



A black ink signature of Charles F. MacCormack, written in a cursive style.

Charles F. MacCormack  
President, Save the Children USA



A black ink signature of Dave Toysen, written in a cursive style.

Dave Toysen,  
President, World Vision Canada