

GREEK DELEGATION

Brussels 18.07.2006

Dear Juha,

I am very pleased for today's meeting since it gives me the opportunity to inform you about some major issues that the Council will deal with, during your Presidency and are in great importance for my Country.

Specially,

- **Wine Reform**

We believe that the Commission's Communication for the wine sector should be the basis of a deep and effective deliberation. For this reason the restructuring of the Common Organization in wine should be targeted on:

- the enforcement of the vineyards potential in my country,
- the safeguard and guarantee of primary producers revenues,
- the amelioration of the Greek wine's competitiveness in the international market and the strengthens of the reputation of Greek quality wines in the world.

It should be noted that in many regions (small islands, outmost, mountainous and less favored regions) in Greece the viticulture is the only vital economic activity, especially as regard employment and revenue. Based on the above point of view, is extremely difficult for me, in order to protect the Greek producers, to accept non-equilibrate solutions.

I am not agreeable to Commission's suggestions concerning the vinification in EU of must imported by third countries, the degradation of European wine through the intermixture of wine produced in third countries and the application of oenological practices which are not acceptable.

Measures that can lead to the total abandonment of the vine production put in dangerous the European and Greek vineyards if the Member-States don't have effective participation and contribution in their application.

Appropriate support market measures accompanied by effective promotion measures will improve European production competitiveness and all these reasons should be on the center of our discussion.

Concerning the transfer of resources from Pillar A to B, I am not convinced that is the appropriate solution. On the contrary, I believe that the vineyard-restructuring scheme would be maintain under the national envelope. The national envelope scheme would give to wine-producing Member States the possibility to finance measures according to its preference from a given menu and basic on country's particular characteristics.

- **Spirit Drinks**

The reform of the regime for the spirit drinks is major issue with great importance and we have the obligation all of us to protect effectively the European production. I would like to note that in the new regulation, two unique Greek products, tsipouro and tsikoudia, should be protected.

- **Organic production**

My government, has great interest on the enforcement of organic production and the increase of organic production's share in the Greek market. The Commission's proposal should target on the establishment of viable management system that will respect M-S interests and concerns and facilitate their efforts to maintain high level of production.

The purposes of the new regulation should be the preservation as far as possible, of the European high quality organic products from the illicit competitiveness.

- **Reform of Fruits and Vegetables**

The sector of Fruits and Vegetables represents a vital economic activity in my Country and also has an important social and political interest. The production of fruits and vegetables has been extended in all the regions in my country and in some of them represents consequently the only income source.

The Commission proposal should take accounts of the above elements and simultaneously the insufficient external protection of fruits and vegetables resulting from the existing preferential agreements of the EU as well as the developments in the context of WTO negotiations.

- **Animal Welfare**

The Commission's proposal, for the protection of chicken kept for meat production, will not lead to positive development for the sector and will have negative economic effects for both producers and consumers. The social-economic impact should be taken under consideration. For us, the new regulation should be based on the prediction of long transitional period, during which the productive system will have the ability to be adapted in the new directives. At the same time the Commission's proposal should be based on divers technical parameters established after appropriate elaboration and evaluation of data send by the M-S.

Finally, I would like to note that we must protect the European chicken from the international competitiveness and in particular from imports by third countries, which do not apply the same rules and directives with EE for animal health conditions and welfare.

- **Fisheries Sector**

Concerning fisheries sector, our main interest could be identified as following:

Proposal for a Council Regulation on the management of fisheries stocks in the Mediterranean Sea, I believe that this proposal would be adopted during Finnish Presidency.

The remaining difficult points for my delegation, for which your intervention is important, are as following:

- **For the trawlers:** maintaining the codend mesh size as it stands. In other case, implementation of an enough long transitory period could be a solution to the Commission proposal for mesh size amendment. The minimum distance from the coast for trawl nets should be one mile due to geographic specificities of my country.
- **Seiners:** The use of purse seines shall be prohibited within 300 meters of the coast or within the 30 meters isobath. We propose to delete the relation between the deployed depth of a purseine and the percentage of the overall drop of the purse seine itself.

- **For the boat seines:** we believe that the use of this traditional fishing gear would be continued as it stands or during a long transitory period.
- **WTO negotiations**

Concerning the achievement of an agreement, on draft Modalities, we are in very crucial situation. Greece would like to have a successful result equivalent and fair outcome for agricultural and the other sectors, respecting the principle of the single undertaking.

Dear Juha,

I would like to assure you that you will have my support during your Presidency. I wish all my best, I'm sure that you will achieve a successful Presidency.