

Dacian CIOLOȘ

Member of the European Commission

Brussels, August 30, 2010

Dear participants,

I am sorry that I cannot address you directly today. I was intending to record a video message, but this has not been possible due to a last minute change of plan. I have seen the programme for your Conference in Ohrid – and your "travelling workshops" - and I hope you find it particularly useful in preparing for the various challenges that lay ahead in the coming years. I welcome the efforts by ARC and PREPARE to organise it all. In preparation for Romanian accession to the EU, I attended a number of similar events, and always found them extremely useful.

I note that you will have extended discussions about the future of the CAP after 2013. It is of course the issue which is my greatest pre-occupation at the moment, as we prepare our Communication on the post-2013, which we are intending to publish in November. In recent months we have already received a wide range of ideas and contributions about our priorities for the future. This came in the course of our "public debate" on the future of the CAP, which I launched in mid-April, centring on the 4 very basic questions of why we need a CAP, what citizens expect from agriculture, why it is necessary to reform the CAP, and what tools we need for the CAP of tomorrow. Whereas the usual response to this sort of public debate is roughly 1000 internet submissions, I was delighted that our questions generated nearly 6000 responses. One major success here is that these responses did not only come from farmers, but they came all parts of civil society, including a number of think tanks and NGOs. The key point is that the CAP is not just for farmers. It's for all Europeans, as consumers and taxpayers. We followed up the debate with a very successful Conference in July, which took forward this very broad public debate. For more details, go to http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/conference/index_en.htm

Looking forward, European agriculture faces a wide range of challenges – such as food security, the sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity loss, and various environmental issues, notably Climate Change. Our future policy must address these issues, but at the same stage ensure that European agriculture remains competitive. We must have a forward-looking policy which is understandable and credible to the taxpayer and fair to the farmer. This is the global challenge.

I wish you a fruitful conference and I look forward to getting feedback on your ideas.

Yours Sincerely

*Dacian Cioloș
signed*

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