

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate release

ARC calls for courage by the Commission for the future of the CAP

*The Agricultural and Rural Convention reveals its own vision,
on the day that the Commission's proposals are published*

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BRUSSELS, November 18, 2010 – The Agricultural and Rural Convention 2020 (ARC) has today submitted to the European Commission and Parliament its proposals for a radical review of policies for agriculture and rural development; and has called upon the Commission to be courageous in pursuing its vision for the future of the Common Agricultural Policy.

ARC calls for a new **European Food, Agriculture and Rural Policy**, with objectives which go beyond those stated in the Treaty of Rome. These objectives would embrace food security, food quality and public health as well as sustainable standards in agriculture, fair income for farmers, protection of the environment, mitigation of climate change, strengthening of the rural economy, and the well-being of rural communities.

ARC proposes that this Policy should be implemented through two funds - the **European Agricultural Fund** focused on food and farming; and the **European Rural Fund**, focused on the wider rural economy and territorial development.

ARC's proposals for agriculture centre on a key demand: **sustainable farming everywhere**. The current mainstream system of agriculture in the EU is inherently unsustainable. ARC calls for a **paradigm shift** from industrialised agriculture towards sustainable farming everywhere in the EU, which builds on the regional and local diversity of farming and economies, makes far lighter use of non-renewable resources, respects animal welfare, puts good agronomic sense and agro-ecological innovation at the heart of farming decisions, and achieves a wide range of positive environmental, social and economic outcomes.

As to rural development, ARC also highlights the need for a **Rural Renaissance**, building upon the strength and diversity of communities, cultures and resources, linked effectively to regional development and honouring the EU's commitment to social, economic and territorial cohesion. This renaissance can make a major cumulative contribution to the goals of EU 2020, by finding new sources of prosperity and creating new jobs.

ARC cautiously welcomes the Commission's Communication

ARC welcomes the tone of the Commission's document. Commissioner Cioloş launched this year a wide public consultation, and he has clearly heard the resulting call from European citizens for a more sustainable and inclusive policy, reflecting

public concern for food quality, protection of environment, mitigation of climate change, support for small farmers, strengthening of local economies, and greater equity in the use of precious EU funds.

ARC is glad to see that these public concerns are indeed reflected in the Commission's Communication. We welcome in particular the proposals for :

- support to sustainable farming, including in areas affected by natural handicaps
- change in farm support systems towards greater emphasis on environmental and other public benefits
- a mandatory 'greening' component of direct payments by supporting environmental measures applicable across the whole of the EU territory
- greater equity in distribution of farm supports, with a cap in the amount paid to any one farm
- specific support for small farmers
- diversification of rural economies, including new sectors such as renewable energy
- recognition of the role of local markets and of the need for links between urban and rural areas
- measures to ensure high quality and wide choice in food supplies, including links to local products and to health
- improved instruments to ensure the good functioning of the food chain and to strengthen the position of farmers within that chain
- a common strategic framework for EU funds which can benefit rural areas.

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ARC notes that many of the Commission's proposals are stated in rather general, and even opaque, language. We trust that the next phase of work will see a courageous stance and progressive sharpening of the ideas. ARC intends to contribute vigorously to the consultation process in the period up to the publication of the Commission's legislative proposals in mid-2011. We expect to endorse the more radical options stated by the Commission. We will urge greater emphasis on rural development, notably in areas affected by narrow economies, ageing population, subsistence farming or high concentrations of poverty. We call for a more considered approach to food supply management, trade, aid and development, in order to offer a fair deal to farmers both in the EU and in developing countries.

– ENDS –

See Notes to Editors attached

Notes to Editors

The Agricultural and Rural Convention (ARC 2020) was created in early 2010 as a platform to enable concerned citizens and their organisations to advocate a sustainable reform of the agricultural and rural development policies of the European Union. Active within the platform is a growing number of civil society organisations, at European, national, regional and local level. They represent a wide variety of interests, including human rights, farmers, consumers, rural communities, nature protection, cultural heritage, animal welfare, minorities, public health, organic food and many others.

Attached to this Press Release is the ARC **Communication of Civil Society to the European Union on the Future of Agriculture and Rural Policies**, which was today submitted to :

- Dacian Ciolos, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development
- Paolo de Castro, Chairmen of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, European Parliament
- Mercedes Bresso, President, Committee of Regions
- Staffan Nilsson, President, European Economic and Social Committee.

Shown below is the list of organisations which have signed the ARC Communication. For more information on ARC, please visit www.arc2020.eu/pressCorner.php or contact Zoé de York: zoe@arc2020.eu or +32 2 549 55 37, mobile: +32 473 22 44 84

To promote this Civil Society proactive initiative, the ARC has gathered in Brussels European experts on Agriculture and Rural Development. They will be available for interview from November 17 to November 18, when the European Commission delivers their Communication *The CAP towards 2020*. **See the full list of ARC experts.**

The full Communication of Civil Society to the European Union on the Future of Agriculture and Rural Policies is available on <http://www.arc2020.eu/finalCommunication.php>.

The ARC Statement of Principles, submitted to the July Conference, is available on <http://www.arc2020.eu/principles.php>.

This communication was finalised only within the last week. Since then we have received formal signatures of support from the following organisations:

AGORA - Working Group for Sustainable Development, Romania • AgrarBündnis, Deutschland • AGROM-RO Association Sangeorgiu de Mures, Romania • APM Tulcea, Romania • Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft e.V. (AbL), Germany • Asociatia Franco-Romana de Dezvoltare Agricola ALBA-AFRODA, Romania • Asociatia pentru promovarea performantei, Romania • Asociatia de Turism Rural, Ecologic, Cultural si Protectia Mediului "Codrenii Vasoiai", Romania • Asociatia Grupul de Initiativa Radu Anton Roman, Romania • Asociatia "Rural Med Zeletin" Afj, Romania • Association Geyser, France • Association for Rural Development in Mountain Areas, Romania • Association for the Support and Promotion of Rural Initiatives, Romania • Associazione "Alessandro Bartola", Italy • Austrian Green Farmers Association • Buzau Local Action Group, Romania • CELAVAR, France • Centrul pentru ARII Protejate si Dezvoltare Durabila Bihor (CAPDD Bihor), Romania • Centrum pro komunitni praci stredni Morava, Czech Republic • Cinnabar eco - creative, UK • CIVITAS Foundation for Civil Society, Romania • Compassion in World Farming • Consorzio RISTECO, Italy • Cooperativa La Vall de la Casella, Spain • Demeter e.V. Germany • Demeter International • Deutscher Tierschutzbund e.V. (German Animal Welfare Federation) • Deutscher Verband für Landschaftspflege e.V. (DVL) - German Association for Landcare • Eco Ruralis Association, Romania • Ecomeal.info • Ecosilvex 2000 Foundation, Piatra Neamt, Romania • ECOVAST-European Council for the Village and Small Town • Environmental Organization Rhodope, Bulgaria • Estonian Council of Environmental NGO's' (EKO) • Estonian Village Movement Kodukant • EU-RO Consult Foundation, Galati, Romania • EuroGites - European Federation of Rural Tourism • EuroNatur • European Milk Board (EMB) • Fédération Nationale d'Agriculture Biologique des régions de France (FNAB) • Fondation Nicolas Hulot pour la Nature et l'Homme, France • Forum Synergies • Forum Synergies Working Group on Access to Land • Franco-Romanian Tourism Association "Tirgu Neamt-St.Just St.Rambert", Romania • Friendly Kitchens Alliance (Stichting Vriendelijke Keukens), The Netherlands • Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) • Fundatia ADEPT Transilvania, Romania • GAIA - Belgian Animal Rights Organisation • Germanwatch e.V. • Groupe de Bruges • Hungarian Rural Parliament • ICPPC - International Coalition to Protect the Polish Countryside • IFOAM EU Group • IG FÜR, Germany • IG-Milch, Austria • Intercommunity Association "Tinutul Padurenilor" LEADER Local Action Group, Romania • International Network URGENCI • LAM Foundation, Romania • LEADER+BK Association Serbia • Lëtzebuerger Mëllechbauer - Luxembourg Dairy Board • Lithuanian Rural Communities Union • Local Action Group (GAL) Calafat, Romania • Local Employers' Association for SMEs (PLIMM) - Calafat • Masticulture - ecotourism in Greece • Mountain Area Development Agency (MADA), Albania • Mouvement Inter-Régional des AMAP (MIRAMAP), France • Munlochy GM Vigil, UK • Narodni observator venkova, Czech Republic • Nexus Foundation • NGO "Terra-1530", Republic of Moldova • NGO "Zalenieku dzirnas", Latvia • Ökospeicher e.V. Wulkow, Germany • Polish Rural Forum (FAOW) • Regina GmbH Landkreis Neumarkt, Germany • Romanian Association for Equal Opportunities - APES • Save

Our Seeds • Schweisfurth-Stiftung München, Germany • SerLOG cooperative, Italy • Slovenian Rural Development Network • Sotral SPA, Italy • Soy Alliance, UK • Terre de liens, France • TRINET • UNESCO Pro Natura Ecological Club, Bucharest, Romania • Vanatori Neamt Nature Park, Romania • Wervel (Werkgroep voor een rechtvaardige en verantwoorde landbouw), Belgium • World Vision Romania • Zivy pramen NGO, Slovakia

We await the signatures of the following organisations who have supported the ARC process:

AGRIREGIONIEUROPA, Italy • AGROLINK Association, Bulgaria • ALKA Center for Sustainable Development, Macedonia • Alliance of Associations Polish Green Network • Armenian Women for Health & Healthy Environment NGO • Associacao IN LOCO, Portugal • Association des Chambres d'Agriculture de Pyrénées, France • Avalon Foundation, The Netherlands • Carpathian Foundation - Poland • CEEweb for Biodiversity • Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires, Belgium • Die Gruene Liga - network of ecological organisations, Germany • Dolina Strugu Association - Strug Valley, Poland • Ecologica, Croatia • EUROMONTANA • EUROPE DIRECT - Carrefour europeo Emilia • Europe Direct CEIPREX - Extremadura • European LEADER Association for Rural Development - ELARD • European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium (EPHAC) • European Rural Alliance (ERA) • Fédération Nationale d'Agriculture Biologique des Régions de France • Fondation Sciences Citoyens, France • Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture FAPA, Poland • Foundation on Future Farming, Germany • Fundacja Partnerstwo Dorzecze Śląsi, Poland • Groupe de Recherche en Agriculture Biologique (GRAB), France • Heimatbund Thüringen, Germany • Instituto de Estudios Sociales Avanzados (IESA) • IFZ - Inter-University Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture, Austria • Institute for Sustainable Development, Poland • LEADER Local Action Group Kromme Rijn, The Netherlands • LAPAR - League of Romanian Agricultural Producer Associations • Lithuanian Centre for LEADER and Agricultural Training • Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economy • Pesticide Action Network Europe • Portuguese GM Free Coalition • PREPARE Network • REDR - Spanish Network for Rural Development • Romanian Research Institute for Vegetable and Flower Production • Soil Association, UK • Terra Nostra Academic Foundation for Rural Progress, Iasi, Romania • Umweltbund - Alliance of Beekeepers, Farmers and Consumers, Germany • University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro - CETRAD, Portugal • VODO Flemish Sustainable Development Platform, Belgium • Vredeseilanden (VECO), Belgium