

Statement on behalf of Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland H.E. Henryk Kowalczyk represented by Ambassador Aleksander Surdej at the Meeting of the OECD Committee for Agriculture at Ministerial Level 2022

Plenary session I. Taking action together for global food security: Lessons from recent crises

The world is facing an unprecedented global food crisis. The Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine, as well as the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, have led to significant repercussions, such as increasing prices for energy, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs, high food prices and difficulties in food supply.

The strong price increase on cereal markets threatens global food security, affecting the most vulnerable in food-deficit countries. It is therefore necessary to protect countries in difficulty, especially in Africa, the Middle East and the countries neighbouring Europe.

Poland believes that in the present situation, export restrictions and bans should be avoided because open and well-functioning global supply chains as well as adequate logistics are essential for world food security.

In the short term, a big challenge is posed by the disruption in supply of energy carriers and the large increase in their prices. Of particular concern is the suspension of nitrogen fertiliser production by a number of European companies and the risk of interrupting the supply chain of products essential to the agri-food industry. Some plants have suspended production due to high costs.

Given Ukraine's key role in supplying grain particularly to countries in Africa and the Middle East, a vital part of the response by the EU and its Member States, including Poland, is to support Ukraine in restoring its exports to pre-war levels. The most visible example of this help are the Solidarity Lanes. Thanks to the functioning of the Solidarity Lanes and the agreement to open the Black Sea ports, Ukraine's current exports have practically returned to pre-war level. This has freed up storage space for grain and made the next sowing possible. We hope that the Black Sea grain agreement will be prolonged.

Poland makes a significant contribution to those efforts. We assist Ukrainian partners in exporting as many agri-food products as possible, including cereals, across the border with Poland. Since the beginning of the war, we are maintaining close contacts with the Ukrainian Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food. For our part, we have implemented a number of

measures to facilitate and speed up border checks for agri-food goods.