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Extract from Press Release

SPEAKERS IN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL CITE

INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING MILLENNIUM GOALS

STEFANO MANSERVICI, Director-General, Directorate General for the European Commission, said the Commission had drawn up a new policy placing greater emphasis on rural development and agriculture. Its fields of action included developing a new policy and action plan for commodity dependent countries to support the design and implementation of a commodity strategy. It had also jointly developed with Member States a plan to address land reform and increased access to land for agricultural purposes.

The Commission was firmly committed to food security, and the use of food aid to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian crises, he said. It was also committed to sustainable land management, holding an integrated view based on participatory local planning and institutional development. On another level, the Commission was working within the WTO Doha round of trade negotiations towards a rural-friendly strategy.