



14 October 2005

Dear UK Food Group member



UK FOOD GROUP

**'Make Hunger History: confronting the crisis in food and farming'
Parliamentary Briefing - Monday 31st October 2005
3pm, Committee Room 6
Chaired by Joan Ruddock MP**

I would like to invite you to a Parliamentary Briefing with the leader of the West African farmers' organisations on Monday 31st October at 3pm in Committee Room 6 at the House of Commons. This meeting will take place just weeks before the World Trade Organisation's Ministerial conference in Hong Kong at which agricultural trade issues will be dominant. It is also the week of the Make Poverty History mass parliamentary lobby for trade justice (Wednesday 2nd November).

We are privileged to have Ndiogou Fall, the President of the West African Network of Smallholder Farmers' Organisations and Agricultural Producers – ROPPA in its French acronym – visiting London on 31st October. This meeting is an important opportunity for us to hear his views on what the European Union and the UK Presidency could do to support African farmers in the upcoming World Trade Organisation negotiations and avert the growing crisis in food and farming.

ROPPA is the most important farmers' network in francophone West Africa. In July they wrote to the Prime Minister and G8 about their concerns and called for:

- an immediate halt to negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements until there is a level playing field in terms of trade;
- the inclusion of smallholder farmers in developing and implementing plans and programmes for poverty reduction – something they say has been notably absent in the PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) process; and
- coherent policies that will address the espoused concern for Africa and will change the inequitable world order, which is controlled overwhelmingly by G8 countries and their corporations.

Together with farmers from the UK and UK NGOs, Ndiogou Fall will tell us "How Africa Could Feed Itself", describing how agricultural policies and EU trade agreements are hurting farmers, affecting local food supplies and what needs to change to Make Hunger History. Ndiogou will also be available to answer any questions you have. Our other speakers are:

- Lies Craeynest, War on Want, UK "Food Sovereignty: democratising food and farming choices"
- Christopher Jones, Agricultural Christian Fellowship, UK "Why agriculture matters at home and abroad"

This meeting is being supported by UK Food Group members (www.ukfg.org.uk), the African Voices in Europe programme (www.practicalaction.org/?id=africanvoices) and the EuropeAfrica campaign (www.europafrika.info/english/home_eng.htm).

I do hope you can join me on 31st October. Please RSVP to rachel@ukfg.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Ruddock MP

working together for global food security

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