



CDP(06)39-1 – SMB

Brussels, 25 July 2006

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

### **COPA-COGECA regret suspension of WTO talks and hope that fair and balanced agreement will still be achieved**

Brussels. The presidents of COPA, Mr. Rudolf SCHWARZBÖCK, and COGECA, Mr. Donal CASHMAN, expressed their regret about the suspension of the WTO negotiations in Geneva today. They were particularly concerned that the US did not show the necessary flexibility to allow for a fair and balanced outcome. The talks were suspended even as the European Commission from the start has made very far-reaching offers and in the last weeks even suggested movements which, in the view of COPA-COGECA, would go far beyond its mandate.

“The EU has reformed its agricultural policy in a very major radical and comprehensive way. The Americans meanwhile spent their time asking for more and more while seeking how they could shield their domestic support such as the counter-cyclical payments from any cuts”, President SCHWARZBÖCK said.

President Cashman added: “The break in the negotiations must be used to refocus on the objective of a fair and balanced deal for agriculture in the WTO. Such an outcome is essential both in the interests of developing countries as well as the EU.”

Both presidents expressed their belief that a good outcome, which does not benefit only big agricultural exporters like the US and Brazil at the expense of farmers everywhere else, remains possible. As the suspension of talks has shown, making unilateral concession after concession as the Commission has done is no way of obtaining reciprocity from our trading partners. EU negotiators must use this pause to return to a position based firmly within their negotiation mandate, thus to ensure the continuation of a sustainable agriculture in Europe.

---

For further information, contact Simon Michel-Berger, Tel.: + 32 2 287 27 90, E-mail:  
simon.michel-berger@copa-cogeca.be

Press contact: Ute Papenfuss, Head of Public Relations, Tel.: +32 (0)2 287 27 39, E-Mail:  
ute.papenfuss@copa-cogeca.be