

**JOINT STATEMENT OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, GERMANY,  
ITALY, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM**

The above mentioned delegations in the spirit of the Joint statement reflecting the Council Conclusions on “Health Check” (ST 7150/08 ADD1) oppose the introduction of any **upper ceiling** for direct payments received by large individual farms as suggested in the Communication from the Commission “*The CAP towards 2020: Meeting the food, natural recourses and territorial challenges of the future*”.

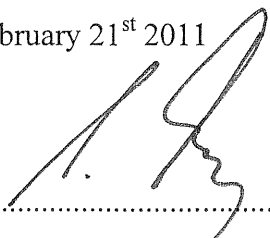
It should be noted that in recent years a significant number of Member States have repeatedly rejected the principle of such reductions as unjustified. Clearly, any discrimination on the basis of farm size impedes the fundamental principles of the CAP reforms, particularly in regards to simplification, enhancing the competitiveness of EU farmers and efforts to make CAP more equitable.

In addition, there is no evidence to show that larger farms do not sufficiently contribute to higher environmental requirements, to provision of public goods or are incapable of addressing any of the challenges identified in the Commission’s proposals.

Any threat of a reduction of direct payments to farms because of their size would lead to:

- different treatment of farmers within the CAP and within the single market;
- artificial splitting of farms and consequent increase of administrative burden;
- discouragement of farmers to join together in order to become more competitive;
- a transfer of resources from agriculture and environmental protection to administration and litigation.

Brussels, February 21<sup>st</sup> 2011



FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC



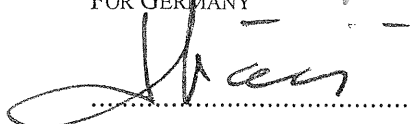
FOR ITALY



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