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Press Release

Rice producers across Europe warmly welcome College of Commissioners' decision to apply a safeguard clause to rice imports from Cambodia and Myanmar

Today, the College of Commissioners sent a positive signal to all European rice producers: it intends to reintroduce tariffs on rice imports from Cambodia and Myanmar for the next three years. This decision puts an end to a situation that has become untenable for European rice producers following the implementation of the Everything but Arms (EBA) initiative in 2001.

Giuseppe Ferraris, Chair of Copa-Cogeca Working Party on Rice, said: *"We would like to thank the Commission representatives for the effort and work they put into reaching this positive conclusion. Given European rice farmers' current situation, it was also essential that the decision enter into force as quickly as possible. By deciding to apply new tariffs as of January 17th, the EU Commissioners have shown understanding of a critical situation."*

Reacting to the decision, Pekka Pesonen, Copa-Cogeca Secretary General, said: *"This is a positive sign for the new year. Rice is deeply rooted in European culture and is grown in eight EU countries. Rice cultivation is vital to preventing rural exodus and provides many environmental benefits. We will continue to defend our traditions and heritage by boosting the number of promotional campaigns on EU rice and by reiterating our call for mandatory origin labelling of rice at EU level."*

-ENDS-

Translations (in French, Italian, Spanish, German and Polish) will soon be available www.copa-cogeca.eu

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