



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session • Cent trente et cinquième session • 135° período de sesiones

**Rome, 17 November 2008
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Rome, 17 novembre 2008
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL**

**Roma, 17 de noviembre de 2008
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL CONSEJO**

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session
Cent trent-cinquième session
135º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 17 November 2008
Rome, 17 november 2008
Roma, 17 de noviembre de 2008**

**FIRST PLENARY MEETING
PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

17 November 2008

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.40 hours
Mr Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 09.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

I. INTRODUCTION – PROCEDURE OF THE SESSION**I. INTRODUCTION – ORGANISATION DE LA SESSION****I. INTRODUCCIÓN – CUESTIONES DE PROCEDIMIENTO**

1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (CL 135/1; CL 135/INF/1; CL 135/INF/5)

1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier (CL 135/1; CL 135/INF/1; CL 35/INF/5)

1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario (CL 135/1; CL 135/INF/1; CL 135/INF/5)

CHAIRPERSON

I call the first meeting of the Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session of the FAO Council to order. I wish to welcome Council Members and Observers to this Session, especially those of you that have travelled to be here today and, hopefully, this week. I wish all of us an efficient, effective and fruitful week.

Before proceeding, I would like to ask Ms Williams, Secretary General of the Council, to make a short announcement.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to bring to the attention of the Council that the European Community is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9, Article II of the FAO Constitution.

I have been asked to inform you that the Declaration, made by the European Community and its Member States is contained in document CL 135/INF/5, which is available at the Documents Desk.

I wish to draw the attention of the meeting to this Declaration.

CHAIRPERSON

Before moving to the Adoption of the Agenda, let me extend a warm welcome to the Director-General and give him the floor.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the Members of the Council, to the Observers and to our friends who are here, some of them having flown from very far away. We are, naturally, very grateful to have them here to start a very important week in the life of the Organization.

We, therefore, would naturally reserve our longer comments to the opening of the extraordinary Conference.

In the meantime, we would like to say welcome to FAO Headquarters and welcome to the Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session of the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Director-General. I am looking forward to seeing you in the Conference and listening to your statement.

Our first Item is the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable, as set out in documents CL 135/1, CL 135/INF/1 and CL 135/INF/5.

Document CL 135/1 contains the Provisional Agenda, which was distributed on 18 September 2008 to all Members of the Organization, together with the invitation to this Session.

Are there any comments on the Provisional Agenda?

I do not see any, so I can take this as approval of the Agenda.

Adopted
Adopté
Aprobado

CHAIRPERSON

With respect to the Timetable you have before you, document CL 135/INF/1, which is a provisional draft. Does this draft Timetable meet with approval of the Council?

I do not see any comments, so the Timetable is adopted.

Adopted
Adopté
Aprobado

As I pointed out in my letter of 10 November 2008 to you, regarding the format of this Session, we only have one and a half days to complete our work before the Thirty-fifth Special Session of the Conference opens tomorrow afternoon. Let us bear this time constraint in mind as we work through our Agenda today and tomorrow morning.

Before we continue with our Agenda and in the interest of the safety of all of us, I request your attention to view a short audio visual presentation on fire safety.

Video Presentation on FAO Security Measures
Présentation vidéo des mesures de sécurité de la FAO
Videopresentación sobre las Medidas de Seguridad de la FAO

2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons **2. Élection de trois Vice-Présidents** **2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes**

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your attention, and I hope that we never have to remember or use these recommendations.

We now move to Item 2, Election of the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference.

Following consultations with the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairpersons have been received: His Excellency, Pietro Sabastiani from Italy; Doctor Lamya Ahmed Al-Saqqaf from Kuwait, and Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran from Nigeria.

With your endorsement, I would like to congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons on their election.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Así se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Let me remind you that after agreement reached with the Chairs of the Regional Groups that the Chairs of the Council Committees will introduce their respective reports and the ensuing discussion will be limited to matters reached, either concerning the Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation or requiring a decision by the Council at this Session.

Therefore, interventions should only cover these issues. Any other issues arising from the Reports which will not be discussed at this Session will, of course, be tabled at the next Council Session in June 2009.

Furthermore, if you wish to discuss a specific issue contained in the Report of the Committee of World Food Security that requires endorsement by the Council in this Session, you can do so in Agenda Item 10, Any Other Matters.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP
III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM
III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA

6. Preparations for the Thirty-fifth Session of the FAO Conference (Recommendations to the Conference) (C 2008/2)

6. Préparatifs de la trente-cinquième session de la Conférence de la FAO (recommandations à la Conférence) (C 2008/2)

6. Preparativos para el 35.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO (Recomendaciones para la Conferencia) (C 2008/2)

6.1 Nomination of the Chairperson of the Conference

6.1 Nomination du Président de la Conférence

6.1 Presentación de candidaturas para la elección del Presidente de la Conferencia

6.2 Nomination of three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference

6.2 Nomination de trois Vice-Présidents de la Conférence

6.2 Presentación de candidaturas para la elección de los tres Vicepresidentes de la Conferencia

6.3 Nomination of seven Members of the General Committee: for decision

6.3 Nomination de sept Membres du Bureau: pour décision

6.3 Presentación de candidaturas para la elección de siete miembros del Comité General

6.4 Confirmation of nine Members of the Credentials Committee

6.4 Confirmation de neuf Membres de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs

6.4 Confirmación de los nueve miembros del Comité de Credenciales

CHAIRPERSON

We can now move onto Item 6, Preparation for the Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session of the Conference, which are recommendations to the Conference.

The relevant document is C 2008/2.

Ms Williams will introduce this Item.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

First is the nomination of the Chairperson of the Conference.

In accordance with Article XXIV.5 of the General Rules of the Organization, the Council nominates candidates for this post and forwards the recommendations to the Conference for decision.

Following consultations with the Regional Groups, His Excellency Mauri Pekkarinen Minister of Economic Affairs of Finland, was nominated.

CHAIRPERSON

Do I have your endorsement for the nomination just mentioned?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

SECRETARY-GENERAL

We now move on to Sub-item 6.2, Nominations of three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following delegates have been proposed: His Excellency Guillermo Salazar, Minister of Agriculture Development of Panama; Mr Lee A. Brudvig, Minister Counsellor of the United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, and His Excellency Zubeir Bashir Taha of Sudan.

CHAIRPERSON

Do I have your endorsement of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference as just read out?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

SECRETARY-GENERAL

We now move on to Sub-item 6.3, Nomination of seven Members of the General Committee. The Regional Groups have proposed the following nominees: Brazil, Canada, China, Ethiopia, France, Jordan and New Zealand.

CHAIRPERSON

Do you agree to the countries proposed?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

SECRETARY-GENERAL

We now move onto Sub-item 6.4, Confirmation of nine Members of the Credentials Committee.

The Regional Groups have proposed the following nominees: Angola, Estonia, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Qatar, San Marino and United States of America.

CHAIRPERSON

As you know, the Credentials Committee begins its work in the run-up to the Conference.

May I take this that the Council endorses these nominations?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

We have now concluded Agenda Item 6.

Before moving on to the next Item, I should like to remind you that the full written text of your interventions may be submitted for your inclusion in the Verbatim Records of this Session and a shorter version delivered orally.

Whenever texts are submitted for inclusion in the Verbatim Records, an announcement to this effect will be made from the podium.

May I also request that you give a copy of any statement that you intend to make to the room messengers in advance, to assist the interpreters and Verbatim Records staff. The Conference announcements give an email address where written interventions may be sent for this purpose.

II. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
II. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION
II. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS

3. Reports of the Joint Meeting (28 May and 8 October 2008) of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee (CL 135/2; CL 135/3)

3. Rapports de la Réunion conjointe (28 mai et 8 octobre 2008) du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier (CL 135/2; CL 135/3)

3. Informes de las reuniones conjuntas (28 de mayo y 8 de octubre de 2008) del Comité del Programa y el Comité de Finanzas (CL 135/2; CL 135/3)

CHAIRPERSON

The next Item on our Agenda is Item 3, Reports of the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, 28 May and 8 October 2008.

Please ensure that you have documents CL 135/2 and CL/135/3 before you.

I would now like to ask Mr Victor C. Heard, the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, who Chaired the last session of the Joint Meeting, to introduce this Item.

Victor C. HEARD (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

As directed, I will be brief and confine myself just to those aspects in the Joint Meeting with the two Committees, which relate to the work we are engaging this week in the Special Session of the Conference.

I can indeed be brief where the Joint Committee is concerned, as we had very little to discuss, which was related directly to the Special Session of the Conference or the IEE.

There were one or two general issues which I think will be of interest to this Council. One is that for the first time we have admitted non-speaking Observers to the Joint Meeting of the two Committees.

We did not get a huge turnout. We, at one stage, thought we might have to reserve the Red Room but, in fact, we had three or four people. But, I think this is the kind of level of interest that we should have expected. I understand from those who had participated in this way that they found it very valuable and illustrative.

I think we have also broken new ground. My Egyptian colleague, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and I concluded that we should follow the instructions of the Independent External Evaluation and the Working Groups and the Conference Committee as the Programme and Finance Committees and as the Joint Meeting of the two Committees deliver clear, concise, useful advice to the Council.

One item on the agenda of the Joint Meeting of the two Committees which was relevant to the future was the consideration of the Programme Implementation Report, and this is largely because this is almost the last time that we will see it in its current form as this is one of the documents which will be converted into a results-based format for the future. We discussed this at some

length, deciding not to throw out too much of the current format as there are useful things in the existing approach to this Report. Perhaps when we meet at the next discussion on the PIR Report it will be in the old format but the future one will be based on actual results from the results-based framework. This, we think will be a positive step. It will make very clear what FAO has achieved over the two years covered by the Report, and will be a useful step forward.

That Chairperson is really all of the work of the Joint Meeting of the two Committees which relates to the Special Session of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Do you have any comments or questions on the issue which was explained by Mr Heard?

I do not see any.

4. Reports of the Ninety-ninth (28-30 May 2008) and Hundredth (6-10 October 2008) Sessions of the Programme Committee (CL 135/4; CL 135/5; CL 135/5-Add.1)

4. Rapports des quatre-quatre-dix-neuvième et centième sessions (28-30 mai et 6-10 octobre 2008, respectivement) du Comité du Programme (CL 135/4; CL 135/5; CL 135/5-Add.1)

4. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 99.º (28-30 de mayo de 2008) y 100.º (6-10 de octubre de 2008) del Comité del Programa (CL 135/4; CL 135/5; CL 135/5-Add.1)

CHAIRPERSON

The next item on our agenda is Item 4, Report of the Ninety-ninth and Hundredth Sessions of the Programme Committee. Please ensure that you have documents CL 135/4, CL 135/5 and CL 135/5-Add.1 before you.

Mr Victor C. Heard, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, will introduce the Report. You have the floor.

Victor C. HEARD (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I have a bit more to say on the Programme Committee as there were some items on the agenda which directly relate to the Report of the Conference Committee and we will need an action plan.

One of these items is the Evaluation Charter and I am sure that you will recall that in the Immediate Action Plan the evaluation system of FAO is to be revised, it is to become an Office which jointly reports to the Membership to us through the Programme Committee and to the Director-General, and has all been put in place. There is to be an Evaluation Charter, which was presented to us as a draft at the meeting of the Programme Committee, and we have made some recommendations.

We were not at that stage able to accept it fully, as we thought it could go further, after some discussion our colleagues in Management of FAO agreed with us. We have asked for this to be returned to us at the May session of the Programme Committee.

This raises a slight problem, because at the moment as you are aware, there is no head of the Evaluation Service in FAO as the head of the Evaluation Service resigned to allow himself to be the Secretary of the Conference Committee. If we were to wait until May before we went ahead with replacing this person, then there would probably be no head of the Evaluation Service right through to 2009. What we have agreed within the Programme Committee is that the recommendations in the IEE and in the IAP are very clear about the level of this post and about the sort of duties that would be carried out. We therefore felt that the Organization should go as far as possible towards recruitment of a new Head of Evaluation Service, so that once the IAP has been approved later this week, recruitment can go straight ahead and that post can be filled before the end of this year. In fact last week I saw advertisements in some major magazines and newspapers for this post. That is the Evaluation Charter, this was quite a significant step towards implementation of the IAP.

The second issue that we have been charged with was to consider the draft elements of the Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan, and this we did. We discussed them in some

detail, and the Programme Committee has fully endorsed everything that has been done in the Working Groups of the Conference Committee towards producing the strategic plan and Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan. We were, in fact, very positive about the results-based framework and implications that would have for budgeting and for performance measurements and for the operational aspects of FAO's work in the future. However, we did not stop there, we thought that we could add value to this process by moving a little way forward on another issue, and that is the issue of prioritization, which we have tried to deal with in the Working Groups and each time we have tried to deal with it, we have all agreed unanimously that we must have prioritization within FAO, and then we stopped because we could not see any way of moving forward beyond that. What has been suggested after considerable discussion in the Programme Committee is a formula where we recognize that we, as delegates to this Organization, are not specialists and if we are specialists then our specialization is very narrow and there is whole wide range that FAO covers. We ourselves cannot really sit down and decide whether some aspect of animal genetics should take priority over some disease of farm salmon in the programmes of FAO, and we need some help with this.

The obvious Bodies to do this are the Technical Committees of FAO, which focus on technical areas. We have, therefore, recommended a process where management will put to each of the Technical Committees, COFO, COFI, etc. a paper on prioritization. It will not be a list of priorities; it will be the basis for those committees to discuss prioritization within their field. Once that is done, then we will have, we feel, a technical view of the possibilities for prioritization in each of the fields of FAO.

That will come back, we thought, to the Programme Committee to be considered, because we will have priorities in fisheries, priorities in agriculture, priorities in forestry, and to get some sort of view across the board. The obvious body to try to do this is the Programme Committee to make recommendations on that to the Council.

There are also issues which this Organization deals with that are cross-cutting. These do not have a technical committee associated with them, they are far wider, natural resources management to name but one, climate change. On these, we have asked Management to produce a prioritization paper for the Programme Committee and it will not be the next one in May. I don't think that it will be the next one after that in July, but at a future meeting the Programme Committee will have the task of looking at the prioritization that cuts right across the full work of this Organization.

I am relieved that by then I should have finished my term of office as Chairperson of this Committee, because that will be one of the most difficult tasks that anyone has ever asked any Committee in FAO to undertake, but it is absolutely essential. We have agreed this and we have all said that we need prioritization of this Organization and unfortunately that is how we have to get it, through some very difficult and lengthy discussions in the Programme Committee, then through recommendations to the Council, followed by lengthy discussions by the Council before we can get the prioritization that we want in this Organization and the effectiveness and the impact.

I have talked at some length on this because I think that it is important that you appreciate that this discussion has taken place, and that we have tried to set in motion a process which we have nearly managed to set in motion in the Working Groups of the Conference Committee but have never actually managed to do because of its difficulty. Perhaps we thought that it would be a short-term process where we just identify this priority and that priority. I think the recognition that it is quite a lengthy and complicated process is a useful step forward in itself.

And that is the most significant item that we discussed in the Programme Committee related to the work of the Conference later this week. There is one further thing that is worth noting perhaps, that is that for the first time in a long while all members of the Programme Committee are Rome-based, and we noted this fact and we realized that it would give us an opportunity to take forward issues informally perhaps, not as Programme Committee, but at least we can meet together, the people that you have elected and nominated as your Representatives on the Committee, between

meetings of the Committee and keep the ball moving forward. We felt that this was the useful step.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Heard, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, for your explanation. So as we listened, there are two major items which have been discussed in the Programme Committee, one is the Charter for an Office of the Evaluation which has been explained as work under progress, they are still working on that and we will come back to that on our next meeting, and then what is related to this is the recruitment of the Head of the Evaluation Service, for which the Programme Committee has made a specific recommendation. As a matter of fact, this recommendation is exactly the recommendation that we have made in the Immediate Plan of Action and so in this one we do need your endorsement for the recruitment of the Head of the Evaluation Service to go ahead as recommended by the Programme Committee and as is reflected in the Immediate Plan of Action.

The other issue was the examination of the draft elements of a Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan which, as was again mentioned, is work in progress and it is a very technical and time-consuming process that we are all involved in. Again, it will be continued by the Programme Committee and their recommendation will come during the next meeting.

The floor is open is opened for your comments and questions and especially your endorsement of the recruitment process of the Head of the Evaluation Service.

Ms Lamya Ahmen AL-SAQQAF (Kuwait)

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, Mr Victor Heard, for his excellent presentation.

I have one question, the role of the Regional Conferences in prioritization. I did not hear that and if he can elaborate on this. And we definitely endorse the recruitment of the Head of the Evaluation Service.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other requests for the floor?

I do not see any. Mr Heard you can go ahead and answer this question.

Victor C. HEARD (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I thank the Representative of Kuwait for this question, because we did touch upon the role of the Regional Commissions. In the new plans, in the Immediate Action Plan, they have a clearer role than they have had in the past, and certainly have a role in identifying regional priorities. This issue has to be fed into the same discussion that has to take place in the Programme Committee on technical priorities and cross-cutting priorities. We must take it all together, and that is yet one further element in the complex discussion that the future Programme Committee will have to have. It will have to try to factor in regional priorities to the extent possible.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for emphasizing the technical difficulties and difficulties. I am afraid that we do not have any person nominating himself for the Chairperson of the Programme Committee for the next term. But with the able representation in the Programme Committee, we can do it.

Any other question or comment? I do not see any, so I take it that the Council endorses the procedure for recruitment of the Head of the Evaluation Service and the rest of the reports on the prioritization and on the Charter would again be considered by the Council in the coming session based on their reports of the Programme Committee.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

5. Reports of the Hundred and Twenty-first (31 January - 1 February 2008), Hundred and Twenty-second (22-30 May 2008) and Hundred and Twenty-third (6-10 October 2008) Sessions of the Finance Committee(CL 135/6; CL 135/7; CL 135/7-Add.1; CL 135/8, CL 135/LIM/1)

5. Rapports des cent vingt et unième, cent vingt-deuxième et cent vingt-troisième sessions (31 janvier – 1er février 2008, 22-30 mai 2008 et 6-10 octobre 2008, respectivement) du Comité financier(CL 135/6; CL 135/7; CL 135/7-Add.1; CL 135/8, CL 135/LIM/1)

5. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 121.º (31 de enero-1.º de febrero de 2008), 122.º (22-30 de mayo de 2008) y 123.º (6-10 de octubre de 2008) del Comité de Finanzas(CL 135/6; CL 135/7; CL 135/7-Add.1; CL 135/8, CL 135/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move to the next item, which is Item 5, Reports of Hundred and Twenty-first and Hundred and Twenty-second and Hundred and Twenty-third Sessions of the Finance Committee, and the relevant documents are CL135/6, CL135/7, CL 135/7 Add.1, CL135/8 and CL 135/LIM/1. As I mentioned, I would like to ask Mr Yasser Sorour, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, to join us and introduce the Report.

Yasser Abdel Rahman SOROUR (Chairperson, Finance Committee) (Original language Arabic)

It is a great honour for me to present the Report as Chairperson of the Finance Committee to this distinguished Assembly.

I would like to highlight the fact that in keeping with what was decided, I will emphasize those issues pertaining to the Independent External Evaluation, and to the External Evaluation apart from the issues of renewal of the Organization's funds.

The Hundred and Twenty-third Session of the Finance Committee dealt with the issue of funding of the Immediate Plan of Action. The document was examined and underscored the fact that this Plan required US\$ 42.7 million for the forthcoming three years.

These estimates are still preliminary. They are just estimates and, in view of the concern of the Finance Committee to move ahead in examining the Immediate Plan of Action to facilitate its implementation, the Finance Committee recommended that the emphasis be placed on the Immediate Plan of Action for 2009 through the creation of a fund of US\$ 28.8 million, US\$ 14.7 million of which for immediate expenditure, the remaining US\$ 7.1 million for the remainder of that period.

The aim is to facilitate the Immediate Plan of Action as quickly as possible given that we are convinced that without mobilizing these funds, there is no chance of the Immediate Plan of Action coming into existence and being implemented. The Committee also considered that it was possible to establish funds for implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action, highlighting the need to implement the full amount for 2008-2009 without any amendment. We examined the funds and also the economies of scale that were able to be implemented and the maintaining of certain funds for programmes within the budget excluding extra-budgetary funds. We considered that some countries would have difficulty in contributing directly to implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action. However, those countries are prepared to contribute to technical programmes and their implementation so it is necessary to give those countries the opportunity to contribute indirectly. The final point linked to this issue, Mr Chairperson, is that the Finance Committee considered it necessary to hold an extraordinary session, on a date to be agreed to later. The idea to hold this extraordinary session in June was initially mooted. After initial reflection we reconsidered that it would be too early to hold it in January as we wouldn't have time to establish the recommendations required so we decided to postpone this to the beginning of March in order to agree on the points to be implemented. So I now invite the distinguished Assembly to provide their views on this recommendation.

Another issue pertaining to reform - this is an important issue that we considered necessary to share with you - related to the financial health of this Organization. According to the information we have, a document we drafted and submitted to the Council, an updated document, the Finance Committee decided to include the financial health of the Organization as an agenda item to ensure that we could give follow up to this within the Committee and on this, two points need to be highlighted: these efforts are a run up to an overall effort being made by the Committee, the results of which will be submitted to the next session to examine the reform procedures for the Organization and find an appropriate solution. There are four important points in this context which I should recall, for the benefit of Member Nations, I refer to the 34th Session of Conference and the need to make contributions and those countries which have arrears should be encouraged to pay these arrears in one go or on a staggered basis, the amount to be determined. Secondly the Member Nations should present a schedule for the payment of their arrears so that the Organization can plan and forecast appropriately. Also, it is necessary to comply with the Basic Texts of the Organization as far as Voting Rights are concerned. An additional point, as you know the 34th Session of the Conference in November 2007 examined the issue of the General Fund of the Organization and decided to postpone this matter until November 2008. However, it was considered necessary to postpone this issue until we examined the Programme of Work and Budget for 2010. We invite distinguished Members of the Council to examine this recommendation.

I hope I haven't been too long. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much. No it was not too long, it was very concise and to the point. So as you listened to the distinguished Chairperson of the Finance Committee, there is a recommendation for the establishment of this Trust Fund which has already been done by the Management of FAO. It needs your endorsement, and then the matters of the Financial Health of the Organization and the Arrears Situation will be discussed at the next meeting of the Finance Committee and will be considered again in our future Meeting of the Council. The Replenishment of the Special Reserve Account for which it has been decided that consideration will take place within the context of the Programme of Work and Budget 2010-2011 will then be presented to the Conference in 2009. With this in mind, the floor is open for your questions and comments. Of course, there are lots of other points in the reports in front of you which are not related to the Immediate Plan of Action or they don't need a decision in this Council. So all of them would be tabled in our next Meeting of June 2009.

So only for the issues which were raised by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the floor is open for your questions and comments. I have Brazil followed by France.

José Antônio MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil)

Thank you Mr Chairperson. I am referring to document CL 135/8 on Measures to Encourage Timely Payment of Financial Contributions. Should I understand, Mr Chairperson, that the Council will be endorsing these four bullet points that are being recommended by the Finance Committee in paragraph 34, and that we are also agreeing to request or to renew our request for the Finance Committee to come up with an Incentive Scheme for the Payment of Contributions. It is unclear to me, Mr Chairperson, whether we are approving or whether we are just taking note of what is being said by the Finance Committee, because it is my recollection that last year when we considered this point, the Membership had requested the Finance Committee to come with a comprehensive package of measures, not a partial package of measures, so if the larger package of measures is not yet finished, Mr Chairperson, at this point in time I would move that no decision is taken on this and that we just continue working on the expectation that the Finance Committee will finally come with a comprehensive package. Mr Chairperson, I do not fully understand what is meant here under paragraph 32. The Committee understood that there are countries facing "extremely difficult economic situations" but then it implies that the financial situation would be solved if those countries that are in arrears, which are developing countries that have faced these economic situations, paid their dues. The Organization would then be in good financial standing. I

think it is a very imprecise conclusion in reading paragraph 32. It addresses only the issue of arrears but it does not reflect the issue of late payments, that you yourself, Mr Chairperson, and all of the Membership, understand is really affecting the financial situation. So, I would think that this paragraph 32 wording is not very felicitous because it tackles only one minor issue of the overall problem. So, Mr Chairperson, I thank the Finance Committee but let us not take any decision as of yet, as we are expecting the Finance Committee to present the overall package.

Philippe VINÇON (France)

Nous avons examiné les économies qui déjà pouvaient être réalisées ainsi que la mobilisation de certaines sommes du Programme de travail et budget, cela outre les fonds extra-budgétaires. Nous avons également constaté que certains pays pourraient trouver difficile de contribuer de façon directe à la mise en œuvre du plan d'actions immédiates. Toutefois, ces pays sont disposés à contribuer aux programmes techniques et à leur mise en œuvre. Et donc, il est nécessaire de donner la possibilité à ces pays de contribuer de façon indirecte. Le dernier point ayant trait à cette question, Monsieur le Président, est que le Comité financier avait jugé nécessaire de tenir une session extraordinaire sur la date de laquelle on se mettra d'accord ultérieurement. L'idée étant initialement de tenir cette session extraordinaire en juin prochain mais après avoir mûrement réfléchi, nous avons considéré que tenir cette session en janvier serait prématuré et le Secrétariat n'aura pas le temps nécessaire de mettre en œuvre les recommandations auxquelles elle pourrait aboutir, donc nous avons pensé retarder cette session extraordinaire au début de mars prochain et ce, afin de se mettre d'accord sur les points à mettre en œuvre.

J'invite donc l'auguste assemblée à donner son avis sur cette recommandation.

Monsieur le Président, une autre question est entrée à la réforme, c'est là une question très importante dont nous avons jugé bon de vous faire part, à savoir la situation financière et la santé financière de l'organisation. Sur la base des éléments dont nous disposons, un document mis à jour sera soumis aux Membres de ce Conseil. Le Comité financier a décidé de façon générale d'insérer la question de la santé financière de l'Organisation comme point à l'ordre du jour et ce, afin que nous puissions au sein du Comité, en assurer le suivi.

À ce propos, deux points méritent d'être soulevés. Ces efforts-là précèdent un effort global que le Comité est en train de fournir et qu'il vous soumettra à la prochaine session pour envisager l'examen des procédures de réformes de l'Organisation ainsi que la question de trouver une solution aux arriérés.

Quatre points à ce propos sont importants. Nous devons rappeler premièrement aux Pays Membres de la Conférence de 2007, de la 34^{ème} session pour rappeler la nécessité de payer les contributions. Deuxièmement, inciter les pays qui ont des arriérés à les payer soit d'une traite soit de façon partielle en se mettant d'accord avec le Secrétariat sur les tranches à payer. Troisièmement, l'encouragement aux Pays Membres pour que ces derniers présentent un échéancier pour le paiement de leurs arriérés afin que l'Organisation puisse avoir la possibilité de faire ses prévisions et de planifier à l'avance. Quatrièmement, l'engagement à l'observation de la constitution de l'Organisation pour ce qui est des droits de vote.

Monsieur le Président, le troisième axe de notre intervention a trait au fonds spécial de l'Organisation. Comme vous le savez, la 34^{ème} Session de la Conférence en novembre 2007 avait examiné cette question et a jugé d'en déferer l'examen à novembre 2008. Toutefois, après examen de la question, le Comité financier avait jugé nécessaire de solliciter le Report encore cette question jusqu'à l'examen du programme d'actions et de budget pour 2010. Nous invitons les Membres du Conseil à examiner cette recommandation. J'espère ne pas avoir été trop long.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you distinguished representative of France. Any other question on the Report of the Finance Committee? Mr Chairperson, you have the floor.

Yasser Abdel Rahman SOROUR (Chairperson, Finance Committee) (Original language Arabic)

Mr Chairperson, as regards the measures foreseen in paragraphs 33 and 34 of the Report of the previous Finance Committee Meeting. I would simply say that the Finance Committee highlighted measures which had been already taken. For instance, the payment of arrears in local currency, was covered by decision of the 34th Session of the Conference and the Finance Committee can in no way challenge a decision taken earlier. The Finance Committee is merely drawing attention of Members to the fact that they can cover their contributions in local currency. It is not something we suggested; it was something that was endorsed by the 2007 General Conference.

As regards instalment payment of contributions, again that measure is not something that was thought up by the Finance Committee. We took new measures along those lines, as I stated in my report. The item on the agenda that has to do with the sound financial situation of the Organization is something that comes up again and again on the agenda of the Finance Committee, the point being to try to resolve the perennial issue of contributions in arrears. These measures were adopted by the Governing Bodies of this Organization, and the Finance Committee simply highlighted them.

As regards the holding of an Extraordinary Session of the Finance Committee, I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to the Distinguished Delegate of France in respect of his very good commendation. It is foreseen that this Extraordinary Session will be held next March. By virtue of the powers bestowed upon me, I would insist on this being held next March.

CHAIRPERSON

Does the Secretariat have anything to add to this? I hope this explanation is enough for those who raised the questions. Denmark has the floor.

Søren SKAFTE (Denmark)

Thank you to the Chair of the Finance Committee for referring our discussion and I am speaking as a Member of the Finance Committee. I would also point to paragraph 12 of the Report, referring to the intervention by Brazil. In paragraph 12 of the Report, the Committee stated that they fully recognized that only through timely receipt of contributions could FAO meet operating cash requirements and so on. In the paragraph we referred to before, the Committee is dealing with these timely payments so the Finance Committee is not dealing solely with arrears. We are certainly also discussing measures to improve timely payments and also to improve the performance of some late payments from some Members of this Organization.

Personally, I would have hoped to have some more full endorsement from the Council for these endeavours of the Finance Committee. As it is clearly stated in the Report, the Finance Committee is inclined to continue to explore the possibilities to improve the timely payment and I would certainly like to have this Council Meeting, in its Report, clearly reflect that the Council supports these endeavours.

CHAIRPERSON

So my understanding is that this is a work in progress and that the Finance Committee will continue discussing that and that the issue will be brought back again at our next meeting of the Finance Committee. Brazil you have the floor.

José Antônio MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil)

Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson, and I also thank my colleague from Denmark for his intervention. My Delegation wants a comprehensive package dealing with all sides of the issue and not a one-sided solution for the matter affecting the poorer side of the equation. So I want to make that very clear. At this point in time, Mr Chairperson, the four bullets contained in paragraph 34 affect the poorer side of the equation, and especially in the last bullet point of

paragraph 34. So at this point Mr Chairperson we are not endorsing what is being done, we just will recall that the Membership had requested the overall package for the solution and the Finance Committee, whose Chairperson is sitting to your right and other members that are sitting among ourselves, should very clearly ascertain and listen to the Membership and the Membership is saying “*you must deal with all issues related to this and not a one-sided approach*”. So, Mr Chairperson, with that being said, and I thank you for your ruling, we just take note that no decision of what is contained in this Report, and specifically on measures to encourage timely payments, except that we still encourage the Finance Committee to come with the overall package that is going to be adopted and it will have no impact in the Conference next week.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, do I have your endorsement of those paragraphs on having a Session of the Finance Committee at latest by March 2009?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Here I would like to inform you of news that I did not want to raise with you but I have to. Our Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Mr Sorour, is completing his term of office here in Rome and he is returning to Egypt for another position in which I am sure that he would be very effective there as he has been here, not only as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee but as a member of our community, he has been very active and very effective. You have seen his participation in the negotiations for the preparation of the Immediate Plan of Action. Here I want, on behalf of the Council, and on my own behalf, to sincerely thank you. You have done a lot for this Organization. We wish you all the best wherever you are, and you are a credit to your society. We wish you all the best and I am sure that the Council endorses these words that I have said to you.

Definitely this issue won't have any impact on our Conference this week. As was mentioned, we do appreciate the work of the Finance Committee on the financial health of the Organization and we take note of the request of Brazil that this issue should be considered as a holistic issue, as a comprehensive issue, and not as piecemeal parts of that.

What we are endorsing at this Session of the Council is paragraphs 42 and 43 and then 65 to 71. The rest of the Report has been noted by the Conference, and will come back to the next sessions of the Finance Committee.

The Council endorses having an extra Session of the Finance Committee by the latest in March 2009. Of course, in ample time before that, the documentation should be prepared and despatched to all Members of the Finance Committee and to whomever else is interested. I think these documents would be available upon request.

Yasser Abdel Rahman SOROUR (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Thank you, Chairperson. Thank you for very kind words and thank you to Council Members for their unflagging support. I would like to express my gratitude to you all for all the support that you have given to me as Chair of the Finance Committee where, as the Member of the Egyptian delegation at all of the meetings I attended, I would like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. It was a great pleasure, a great privilege to work with you all and I can only wish you all the best and success in your endeavours in the future. Once again, thank you very much and thank you, Chairperson, for your support.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)**III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)****III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA (continuación)****7. Election of six Members to the World Food Programme Executive Board (CL135/LIM/3)****7. Élection de six Membres du Conseil d'administration du Programme alimentaire mondial (CL 135/LIM/3)****7. Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del Programa Mundial de Alimentos (CL 135/LIM/3)****CHAIRPERSON**

I am sure that you will stay in your post as Chairperson of the Finance Committee. So we will see at latest in March next year. Thank you very much.

With this we now attend to Item 7. The document for this item is CL 135/LIM/3. Item 7 concerns the Election of Six Members to the World Food Programme for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011. I will now give the floor to the Secretary-General who will run through the nominations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

In accordance with Resolution 6/99 adopted at the Thirtieth Session of the Conference in 1999, Council is invited to appoint six members of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for a three-year term of office from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011. For List A, there is one candidate, Egypt, for one seat. For List C, there are two candidates, Brazil and Colombia, for two seats. For List D, there are two candidates, Denmark and Switzerland, for two seats. For List E, there is one candidate, Slovenia, for one seat. Therefore we have six candidates for six seats.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ms Williams, for the explanation. For Lists A, C, D and E, we have the same number of candidates as seats. We will now endorse it one by one. Does the Council agree to appoint the candidate for List A, Egypt, for the seat for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011 by clear general consent?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Does the Council also agree to appoint the two candidates for List C, Brazil and Colombia, for the seats for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011 by clear general consent?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Does the Council also agree to appoint the two candidates for List D, Denmark and Switzerland, for seats for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011 by clear general consent?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Does the Council also agree to appoint the candidate for List E, Slovenia, for the seat for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011 by clear general consent?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

May I be the first to congratulate Egypt, Brazil, Colombia, Denmark, Slovenia, Switzerland on their election to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme.

IV. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS**IV. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES****IV. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS**

8. Report of the Eighty-third Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (29-30 September 2008) (CL 135/9)

8. Rapport de la quatre-vingt-troisième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (29 et 30 septembre 2008) (CL 135/9)

8. Informe del 83.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (29-30 de septiembre de 2008) (CL 135/9)

CHAIRPERSON

So, we are continuing the next item on our agenda which is Item 8, Report of the Eighty-third Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, which met 29-30 September 2008. Please ensure you have before you document CL 135/9. I invite Mr Julio Fiol, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, to introduce the item.

Julio FIOL (Presidente del CCLM)

Gracias Señor Presidente. Me gustaría presentar de manera breve el informe de la 83ª Sesión del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos, que tuvo lugar los días 29 y 30 de septiembre de este año. El Informe como usted lo ha señalado está incluido en el documento CL 135/9. Desearía invitar a los Miembros del Consejo a que lo lean detenidamente, dada su importancia y particularmente a la luz del proceso de reforma ya iniciado. Por mi parte, les presentaré las conclusiones más importantes de la Sesión.

Esta Sesión estuvo dedicada principalmente a asuntos organizacionales de un intercambio de información entre sus Miembros así como con la Secretaría. Todos los Miembros del Comité, Sr. Presidente, están plenamente conscientes que el próximo año tendremos que desempeñar una

importante función. En ese contexto se asumió un primer acuerdo, para tener la flexibilidad suficiente de poder reunirse cada vez que fuera necesario. Por otra parte, el Comité dio la bienvenida a la próxima creación de un Comité a la Conferencia para la implementación del Plan Inmediato de Acción que permitirá recibir la orientación política y aclarar los asuntos que se estimen necesarios.

Al realizar una revisión preliminar de las enmiendas a los Textos Fundamentales, precisamente para la implementación del Plan Inmediato de Acción, el CCLM tomó nota de la compleja estructura de lo que comúnmente se conocen como Textos Fundamentales, que como ustedes saben incluyen entre otros la Constitución de la FAO, el Reglamento General de la Organización, el Reglamento Financiero, así como reglamentos de varios Comités y un conjunto de decisiones de la Conferencia. En ese contexto el Comité puso de manifiesto que existen diferentes requisitos de procedimiento para la modificación de los Textos Fundamentales. En particular, el Artículo XX-IV de la Constitución establece que no podrá incluirse una propuesta de modificación de la Constitución en la Agenda de una Sesión de la Conferencia, al menos que dicha propuesta haya sido enviada por el Director General a los Miembros al menos 120 días antes de la apertura de la Sesión. En consecuencia, para que la Conferencia pueda aprobar modificaciones a la Constitución es necesario que los Estados Miembros reciban una notificación con los cambios propuestos, a más tardar, en julio del año próximo.

El Comité señaló además que sería deseable poder revisar todas las propuestas de modificación a la Constitución lo más pronto posible y observó en este ámbito que existe hasta el momento un número reducido de dichas modificaciones que se contemplan en el Plan Inmediato de Acción.

Por otra parte, el Comité dio a cabo un análisis general de las materias en las que resultan necesarias modificar los Textos Fundamentales, para lo cual elaboró una identificación preliminar y realizó un primer intercambio de opiniones. Así mismo el Comité analizó una cuestión a la que asigna gran relevancia: cual es, si estos Textos Fundamentales tal y como están formulados actualmente impediría la implementación de las acciones que resultan necesarias con carácter inmediato, concluyendo que éste no era el caso.

A continuación el Comité examinó dos temas vinculados: el primero de ellos son los mecanismos y procedimientos de notificación de los Comités Técnicos al Consejo; y el segundo, la entrada en vigor inmediata de las modificaciones al Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto. En ambos casos y tras repasar la práctica FAO en situaciones similares el Comité recomendó que el Borrador de Resolución de la Conferencia en que se aprueba el Plan Inmediato de Acción deberá clarificar la posición de los Comités Técnicos estableciendo que dichos Comités deberían enviar sus Informes directamente a la Conferencia cuando se trate de asuntos relacionados con la política general y las cuestiones reguladoras y también al Consejo cuando se trate de cuestiones relacionadas con el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto. Consecuentemente el Comité destacó que, tal como establece el Plan Inmediato de Acción, el año 2009 no se deberán preparar Resúmenes ni de Programa de Trabajo, ni de Presupuesto.

Sr. Presidente, concluyo diciendo que la Propuesta de Resolución de la Conferencia 1/2008 como opción al Plan Inmediato de Acción para la Reforma de la FAO que será presentada antes de la Sesión Especial de la Conferencia, que empieza el día de mañana, refleja en su integridad estas recomendaciones.

Este es el informe que el Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos presenta al Consejo.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Mr Fiol. Before opening the floor, may I first congratulate you on your election as Chair of the CCLM and wish you all the best myself and on behalf of the Council. Now the floor is open for any comments or questions.

I have also received a letter from the Chairperson that explains that in the discussion they tried to see there is no impediment to the implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action in 2009 because either they could be done through the existing Basic Texts or there are two specific items

which have been explained right now by the Chairperson and these have been included in Conference Resolution 1/2009. We could be sure that there is no impediment to Implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action during 2009. With this, the floor is open for any question or comment.

I do not see any requests for the floor, so it seems that the report is very clear. So the Council endorses the Report of the CCLM, notes the importance of the work of the CCLM next year; that there are no impediments to the implementation of the actions foreseen for 2009 in the Immediate Plan of Action and, in particular, that their recommendations regarding the reporting lines of the Technical Committees and the new Programme of Work and Budget process is duly reflected in the Conference Resolution 1/2009. Do I have your endorsement/approval of this?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

CHAIRPERSON

Although we do have two outstanding items on our Agendas; the Calendar of our activities next year; and Any Other Matters: Consideration of the Report of the CFS, I have been advised by the Secretariat that some consultation is going on between the Regional Groups so we shall postpone the discussion of these two items to this afternoon. So we do have some time to enjoy this beautiful day in Rome, and we will see you at 14.30 hrs this afternoon.

Ladies and Gentlemen, your attention please, the GRULAC will now meet in the Malaysia Room.

Thank you very much and see you exactly at 14.30 hrs.

The meeting rose at 11.00 hours

La séance est levée à 11 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.00 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session
Cent trent-cinquième session
135º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 17 November 2008
Rome, 17 november 2008
Roma, 17 de noviembre de 2008**

**SECOND PLENARY MEETING
DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

17 November 2008

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:45 hours
Mr Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14:45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Mohammed Saeid Noori-Naeini,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

V. OTHER MATTERS
V. AUTRES QUESTIONS
V. OTROS ASUNTOS

9. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2008-2009 (CL 135/LIM/2)
9. Calendrier des sessions des Organes directeurs et des autres réunions principales de la FAO 2008-2009 (CL 135/LIM/2)
9. Calendario para 2008-09 de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores y de otras reuniones importantes de la FAO (CL 135/LIM/2)

10. Any Other Matters
10. Questions diverses
10. Asuntos varios

CHAIRPERSON

We have two outstanding items on our Agenda for this afternoon: Item 9, Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and Other Main Sessions 2008-2009, and then Any Other Matters.

Under Any Other Matters, as was explained in my letter to you, we shall discuss the Report of the CFS. So, as you see, these two are very closely interlinked. I think I prefer to start with Any Other Matters because then we can more easily deal with the Item of the Calendar.

So the floor is open for your consideration of Any Other Matters.

Okay, the issue under consideration is Any Other Matters, under which, if you want, you can discuss the Report of the CFS. The floor is open for your intervention, comments or questions.

El Salvador you have the floor.

José Roberto ANDINO SALAZAR (El Salvador)

Quisiera solicitar la autorización para que la Representante de Argentina pudiera hacer un informe de la Mesa de Seguridad Alimentaria. Solicito su autorización.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador. I would like to invite Ms Squeff, the distinguished Representative of Argentina, to give us a Report of the CFS. Before that I would like to congratulate her on being elected as the Chairperson of the CFS together with Vice-Chairpersons. You have the floor, Madam.

Sra Maria del Carmen SQUEFF (Presidente del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria)

Para mi es un honor presentar el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Atendiendo a los criterios de presentación indicados por la Presidencia del Consejo, solamente voy a referirme a la frecuencia y el calendario de las Sesiones del Comité, que es el tema pendiente de la última Sesión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial.

Después de haber mantenido una reunión de la Mesa y conversado con los distintos Grupos Regionales y la Secretaría, se acordó realizar una Reunión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial en la segunda mitad de 2009.

Por otra parte, deseo presentar la siguiente declaración de la Mesa del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria relativa a la próxima Sesión del Comité: todos los Miembros acuerdan que existe una necesidad urgente de avanzar en reducir el hambre mundial y enfrentar los desafíos planteados por la crisis financiera y económica global en la seguridad alimentaria, además del alza del precio de los alimentos.

Los Miembros también reconocen que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial puede hacer una contribución valiosa en la identificación de las causas de inseguridad alimentaria y proponer opciones de política en relación con ellos. Por lo tanto, la Mesa del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria acordó sobre la importancia de realizar una Reunión del Comité en la segunda mitad

de 2009, con una agenda sustantiva, políticamente relevante y con procedimientos modificados para hacer al Comité más efectivo.

La Mesa del Comité y la Secretaría deberían asegurar que la reunión de 2009 cumplirá con estos criterios y valorizará las iniciativas globales para promover la seguridad alimentaria y reducir el hambre. Con esta finalidad, la Mesa y la Secretaría del Comité, en estrecha consulta con los Grupos Regionales, preparará la Agenda y el formato para la próxima Reunión. Dicha Agenda deberá estar finalizada en febrero de 2009 para consideración por parte de la Mesa.

Esta es nuestra declaración, Sr. Presidente. Muchas gracias.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Madam, for this concise and to-the-point report. The floor is open for your comments or questions. The proposal is that the Bureau has met and has decided to have a meeting during the second part of next year. This meeting should be effective and the Bureau is preparing an Agenda to make the meeting effective and useful in contributing to the reduction of hunger. This is the proposal.

I recognize El Salvador.

José Roberto ANDINO SALAZAR (El Salvador)

Haré una declaración en nombre del Grupo de la América Latina y el Caribe. En primer lugar, permítame felicitar a la Señora Presidenta María del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, Señora María del Carmen Squeff por la presentación del Informe y por el trabajo que está realizando el Comité.

La crisis alimentaria mundial profundizada por el alza de los precios de los alimentos justifica, hoy más que nunca, la existencia y el reforzamiento de las labores del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, por lo que respaldamos plenamente el acuerdo de la Mesa del Comité de organizar una Reunión en la segunda mitad del 2009.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe desea, asimismo, reiterar que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria debería reunirse una vez al año en concomitancia con la celebración del Día Mundial de la Alimentación.

Para el GRULAC es fundamental reforzar el papel del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria como instrumento idóneo en el seguimiento de la seguridad alimentaria que es uno de los objetivos básicos que persigue esta Organización. En efecto, la situación de la seguridad alimentaria continúa a deteriorarse, 75 millones de personas se han sumado a la ya la impresionante cifra de personas con hambre en el mundo. No se han realizado progresos en alcanzar los objetivos que nos fijamos en la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, al contrario, se han aumentado la cifra de hambrientos, tal como se señala en el Informe del Comité. Por ello consideramos fundamental mantener la atención del mundo en el problema de la Seguridad Alimentaria, o mejor dicho, de la inseguridad alimentaria en la que viven millones de seres humanos y ésta es una de las principales tareas que se le ha encomendado al Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria a través del seguimiento de la Aplicación del Plan de Acción aprobado por la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación,

El GRULAC desea señalar que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria debería dar un adecuado seguimiento a la Conferencia Internacional sobre Reforma Agraria y Desarrollo Rural realizado en Puerto Alegre, Río Grande del Sur, Brasil, tal como fuera solicitado por el Comité de Agricultura en su vigésimo período de sesiones.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, El Salvador. Any other requests for the floor?

Lebanon, you have the floor.

Adel CORTAS (Lebanon)

May I ask the Chair of the CFS that within the Agenda that we are preparing for the meeting of the year, for the second half of 2009, do you have in mind that we include follow-up to what we have started in the High-Level Meeting of June this year on Food Security. I am sorry to say that we did not reach an agreement at the end for the Declaration issued after the High-Level Conference. I think we are going to discuss this during the Conference – the day after tomorrow – is it on the Agenda of the Conference? I think it is. Therefore, I would urge the Chair of the CFS that this be considered for the second half of the year 2009.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, distinguished Representative of Lebanon. Yes, we do have an Agenda Item under Conference, which is an information session on the High-Level Conference, and the information will be provided then.

I recognize Sudan, followed by France and then Eritrea.

Sudan, you have the floor.

Mohamed El Tayeb Elfaki El Nor (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I would also like to thank the honourable Representative for Argentina, the Chairperson of the CFS. I would like to say that we do support the holding of this meeting in the second half of 2009, because this is an important Committee that is shouldering the responsibility of improving the food security situation in the countries that need that.

The Committee is being asked to follow-up the recommendations of the World Food Summit. In the previous meeting, we had noticed that the attention given to this matter was not really great. I think the CFS is the right forum to discuss follow-up to the recommendations, so I hope that an Item on the Agenda will be set for this matter on the progress made in this respect.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Sudan. France, you have the floor.

PHILIPPE VINÇON (France)

J'ai l'honneur de parler au nom de l'Union européenne et de certains de ses États Membres. Je voudrais aborder deux sujets, d'une part le fonds, il ne serait pas question des dates. Pour ce qui concerne le fonds, l'UE considère que l'important est de travailler à l'amélioration de l'efficacité du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire et l'on est convaincu et on compte beaucoup sur les efforts de la Présidence argentine et de son Bureau pour que le prochain Comité de la sécurité alimentaire traduise concrètement l'ambition que nous avons pour celui-ci d'avoir un véritable dialogue et d'apporter des éléments importants.

En ce qui concerne la date et la fréquence, l'UE s'est exprimée sur ce point lors du dernier Comité et à cette occasion nous avons soutenu les propositions du Plan d'action immédiat et notamment son paragraphe 26 sur les Comités techniques et son action 2 point 58 sur les méthodes de travail qui recommandent que les Comités techniques se réunissent une fois par biennium même seulement si cette Recommandation est assortie d'une certaine flexibilité.

Compte tenu de la situation actuelle en matière de sécurité alimentaire et de l'importance de ce sujet, nous ne ferons pas objection à la proposition que vous nous avez transmise concernant la prochaine session de ce Comité.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much France, speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Do I have any other Members of the Council who want to take the floor, or can I go to Observers? I do not see any. Now, Eritrea, you have the floor.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

I ask you if there is any other business that can be opened for discussion because this is the elected person for the Chairperson of the Council, not yet a Chairperson but expected to be a Chairperson for the forthcoming CFS given as information but without any background document.

The Council should not open discussion without the official request of the Committee. If the Committee requested that the meeting take place – as indeed there is a World Food Summit – whether it will be every year or, as the European Union speaker said, every biennium, which is when the Technical Committees meet.

I remain open to be corrected if we can open this, and I wonder what you are going to conclude in the Report of this Council Session without providing any background and without officially providing the requests for recommendations of the CFS.

Please clarify on this.

CHAIRPERSON

First of all, we do have a document on CFS – the Report of CFS was distributed to all – and in my letter to all, it has been said that this would be discussed under Any Other Matters. I have had the agreement of all the Regional Groups in two meetings – one a few months ago and one last week. So we had these informal discussions where it was agreed to discuss this Report under Any Other Matters.

There is a Report that has been distributed – the Report of the Thirty-first Session of the Committee on World Food Security in Rome, 14-17 October 2008, and the reference number is CL 35/10.

So, the Chairperson of the Bureau is the only issue on which agreement had not been reached and now, I think, we have reached agreement on that.

Thank you for your question, which clarifies the issue for others, if there are any doubts.

Ramalingam PARASURAM (India)

I am afraid that I am not still very clear about what is being finalized here.

As was brought forward by France, the recommendation from the Conference Committee, without exception, is for all Technical Committees to meet once in two years.

Do I then take it that the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security – in her presentation – suggested that, whereas this provision needs to be still considered by the Conference, what she is also recommending – after deliberations in the Bureau – is that there is a need for an extra or a Special Session in 2009? That is not going to turn into a practice of holding the meeting every year, which would be part of the broad, general decision which the Conference is expected to take.

Is my understanding clear on this? I would like clarification from the Chair.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, my understanding is that this is right. We are not deciding on anything beyond what we have already decided in the Immediate Plan of Action. But, as you see in the Immediate Plan of Action, there is considerable room for additional meetings.

Technical Committees will meet more flexibly as to duration and frequency according to need. Normally, once in each biennium, and they may be convened especially as required, if any new issue comes up.

There is considerable scope for having additional meetings like that, and it does not violate the decisions which have been made in the Immediate Plan of Action. The Chair of the Bureau has

asked for a meeting in the second half of 2009 and as the Chair has stressed, the Bureau will work on the Agenda in order to have an effective meeting.

Ichiro TSURUSAKI (Japan)

Japan thinks that it is worthwhile, given the fact that we have to consider the possibility of holding the CFS every year. Taking into account that we have had soaring food prices all of this year, the CFS is the only forum to discuss the food security issues at the administrative level. If we hold the CFS every year, we can vitalize its role and we can make the CFS a more important Committee.

For this reason, Japan thinks it is worthwhile considering the possibility that we would hold the CFS every year. Of course, we have to consider the burden on the Secretariat. While we are holding one meeting we should spend much time in preparation and discussion. We also have to consider such relevant aspects of having more frequent meetings.

We basically support that we have to consider the possibility of holding a meeting every year.

Emile ESSEMA (Congo)

Je voudrais rapidement dire que la question posée a pour notre part deux aspects: il y a le compte rendu de la Présidente et dans ce compte-rendu que nous tenons à féliciter, il y a une position claire, c'est-à-dire une proposition de tenir une Session extraordinaire au deuxième semestre de 2009; une proposition que nous appuyons en raison du travail à faire ; mais il y a un deuxième aspect, c'est-à-dire la Déclaration de son Excellence, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de El Salvador qui, au nom du GRULAC émet le vœu que les sessions du CSA se tiennent chaque année et c'est là le problème posé par un certain nombre de délégués ici, parce que cela va à l'encontre de ce que, par ailleurs, nous avons déjà décidé.

Donc la relance du débat sur ce que nous avons déjà dit, une session tous les deux ans, ne serait-elle pas mieux adaptée maintenant? C'est la préoccupation qui m'anime en ce moment. Quant à la proposition de tenir une session extraordinaire en 2009, cela va de soi. Voilà les inquiétudes que nous avons concernant la composition du GRULAC. Je vous remercie.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us make this clear that we are not talking about changing the decision that we have already made in the Immediate Plan of Action. We are only talking about having one meeting of the CFS in the second half of 2009. That is the only issue under consideration.

I would like to be clear that we are only talking about that.

As you said, there is no place here – especially this Council – to talk about yearly meetings of the CFS because we do not have the mandate and we do not have the Agenda Item to discuss that. This would be an issue that, for example, if GRULAC wants to raise it, they have to raise it in appropriate future Governing Body sessions.

For the time being, the issue under consideration is having one meeting of CFS in the second half of 2009.

Yasser ABDEL RAHMAN SOROUR (Egypt)

At the outset, I would like to add my voice to the previous speakers and congratulate the Distinguished Delegate of Argentina, the Chairperson of the CFS.

I do fully support what you have just said. We are not amending the Immediate Action Plan but we are acting within the framework of the Constitution of FAO. In paragraph 78 of the Constitution, there is a reference to the meetings of the CFS in a given biennium.

Therefore, we do support what has been proposed by the Chairperson of the Bureau of the CFS.

Søren SKAFTE (Denmark)

We have only deep respect for the consideration of the Bureau of the CFS. At the same time, we share the interests expressed by Eritrea and others concerning the nature of this discussion.

During Any Other Matters, you have educated us that it would be the opportunity to discuss recommendations in document CL 135/10. In this document, there is no such recommendation on a CFS meeting in the latter half of 2009. In paragraph 17 of document CL 135/10, it is stated: "The Committee agreed that the final decision should be taken on timing and frequency by the Special Session of the FAO Conference in November 2008."

I would like to have some clarification of the nature of the discussion and, eventually, decision in this meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

Again, in our informal meeting it was explained that in the decision by the CFS to send this Item to the Conference was a mistake. The Conference is not the right Governing Body to decide the frequency of the meetings.

We do not have any item in our Agenda of the next Conference to discuss this so, in order to avoid this misunderstanding, we have decided that we will discuss this under this Item.

I think that we now do have a wide range of agreement on having this in the next half of 2009.

Yaya Adisa Olaitan OLANIRAN (Nigeria)

I think that the decision taken earlier on the IPA stands and I think that there is a general understanding but with the circumstances and situation arising, there is the flexibility to call for special meetings.

I congratulate the Representative of Argentina as Chairperson of CFS and for the effort that she is going to put into this.

However, I would want to know, because the Distinguished Delegation from France, speaking on behalf of the EU, did say that there should be room for efficiency in the CFS. I am of the opinion that to be able to be efficient, even next year, the elements of deficiencies should be brought forward for analysis and discussion so that we may begin to have an efficient and effective meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

That is an important point but I think the Chairperson of the CFS, herself, made this clear that an Agenda would be prepared and arrangements would be made so that we would have an effective meeting.

José Antônio MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil)

I would also like to thank our colleague from Argentina for presenting this issue.

I think you heard very clearly the positions by El Salvador on behalf of GRULAC, by France and also by Japan.

You mentioned that it was a mistake by the CFS to say what it did in the later part of paragraph 17. I beg to disagree, because this issue was discussed at length in CFS and the CFS was well aware of the fact that the issue of the timing and frequency of meetings was one that was incorporated in the Plan of Action, that is going to be dealt with by Conference, not by the Council.

In that regard, the issue of frequency of meetings is an issue for the Hundred and Thirty-fifth Conference. You heard very clearly what was said by the Representative of El Salvador, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, of the position of Latin American and Caribbean countries in favour of a yearly meeting of the CFS. You have also heard from the Representative of Japan advancing the

position also in favour of yearly meetings of the CFS. You also heard the very constructive position put forward by France on behalf of the EU Member Nations that, in view of the situation, we need a meeting in 2009.

So, I think the decision is there for us to have the meeting in 2009 and what will be discussed in terms of the frequency of meetings is an issue for the Conference. As you chaired the CoC-IEE, I am certain that this issue will be discussed during Conference. All of the countries that have spoken in favour of yearly meetings of the CFS consider this issue to be of a political nature. Has the number of hungry people decreased in the world? Do we need to pay less attention to this issue? Don't we need to re-focus this issue on a more constant basis?

That is the issue that I think will be dealt with – the frequency of the meetings will also be dealt with in the Hundred and Thirty-fifth Conference. There was not a mistake by the CFS. They took an informed decision on this latter part of paragraph 17.

So, we are agreeing now on holding a meeting in 2009, and that decision will carry. What will be decided in terms of the frequency of meetings of the CFS, we might as well discuss among ourselves, as we always do. You may guide us into this discussion, but this is an issue to be dealt with during Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, it could be interpreted as you said but my understanding was that we have already – at least at CoC-IEE – decided not to re-open any discussion under IPA and this, as I said, we did not have any item to discuss.

But, of course, it is a matter that Conference itself could decide on. As far as Council is concerned, so far we have.

Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I wish to speak about two issues, firstly the issue of having the Technical Committees of the Council meet every two years is not an issue, that will be decided by the Conference, the day after tomorrow. The issue is what there should be a Special Session of the CFS next year and the Chairperson of the CFS says second half, now that meeting has to be justified for the Council to say yes or no.

Now two issues arise, firstly, can the Secretariat explain what will be their additional data which will reflect something else which was discussed at the last CFS. I do not think that there will be additional data. Secondly, the issues to be explained regard the CCP next year from 20 to 22 April 2009, I understand that there will be a paper for CCP on the price implications of high prices, scarcity and attainment of food security. If this could be explained, then it can be justified.

CHAIRPERSON

I will not express my opinion on this, I would like Mr Ghanem to respond to this question by Afghanistan, or the Chairperson of the CFS if she so desires. I am sorry to put you on the hot seat because you may not be prepared to answer the question. Could you please give an explanation? We would be grateful.

Hafez GHANEM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

The Representative of Afghanistan is making a good point and an important one, which is that the hunger numbers do not change very much from year to year. At the same time, we are going now through the financial crisis that is provoking a worldwide recession, and that has implications for hunger. So inasmuch as there will be changes on the food insecurity situation related to the current economic crisis and the slowdown in the world economy, that will be the new data. What we are planning to do on our side, as the Secretariat, is to produce the “State of Food Insecurity in the World” every year at the time of the CFS, or at least the first draft, to present to you the results at the CFS, as we did this year. The topic of next year’s “State of Food Insecurity” is “The Impact of Crisis of Food Insecurity”.

CHAIRPERSON

In addition to that, I would like to add that the Chairperson of the CFS mentioned that they will consult with all Regional Groups on important issues that they think should be discussed on the Agenda of the CFS. So we do have time, and the whole effort should be put on having a fine Agenda that will result in a very effective meeting of the CFS. The second meeting does not mean anything, we should have an effective meeting as was also mentioned by the Chairperson of the CFS. As she has also mentioned, they are going to work on that and by consulting all the Regional Groups.

Madam Chairperson, do you have anything to add to that?

Sra María del Carmen SQUEFF (Presidente del Consejo de Seguridad Alimentaria)

Muchas gracias y gracias también por la pregunta hecha por el Representante de Afganistán y también por lo que acaba de decir el Sr. Ghanem, que lo consideramos muy importante.

Nosotros tuvimos una primera reunión del Buró, que fue una reunión realmente sustantiva, en donde se plantearon cuestiones de funcionamiento y también cuestiones en las cuales deberemos trabajar en lo que resta de este año y del año que viene. Allí también discutimos sobre el Informe que teníamos del Comité. En este Informe hay varios puntos muy importantes para tener en cuenta. Uno de esos puntos importantes es lo que ha planteado el Sr. Ghanem y que no voy a repetir.

Hay una crisis mundial y un alza de precio de los alimentos que ya están impactando en todos los países, y especialmente en los países más pobres y en los países en vías de desarrollo. Este es un tema central.

Otro tema central que quedó en el reporte, es ver qué vamos a hacer para recabar de la mejor manera posible, los datos reales en los países con problemas de hambre - países que tienen realmente incapacidad de poder hacer una recolección de datos. Este es un punto que se puso directamente en el Informe, como una de las acciones que se tiene que llevar a cabo por el Comité durante este año.

Tenemos también, lo que ya dijo el Presidente del GRULAC, el seguimiento de la Conferencia sobre el Desarrollo Rural y Reforma Agraria, y varios puntos más y creo que sea necesario volver al informe, porque este contiene muchos puntos válidos e importantes.

Creo que con algunos puntos muy focalizados, se podría lograr un Comité más efectivo, más eficiente, que es lo que todas las Regiones, sin excepción, han manifestado en este corto período de consultas que hemos podido hacer.

CHAIRPERSON

I think that I do have a base to say that Council agrees to have a meeting of the CFS in the second part of 2009. Do I have an agreement?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We will move to the last Item on the Agenda which is the Calendar of Events.

The relevant document is CL 135/LIM/2, includes the dates of Governing Body sessions for 2009 which require the approval of Council.

As you will see in paragraph 2, the Council is invited to note that any adjustments that may be required in the schedule for 2009 would be made in consultation with the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

Further to the discussion under Item 5, it was proposed that an additional Session of the Finance Committee be scheduled during the week 9 to 13 March 2009.

Finally, please also note the proposed dates of the Hundred Thirty-six Session of the Council from 15 to 19 June 2009. With all these changes and the decision that we have already made on having a session of CFS in the second part of 2009, I seek your endorsement of the Calendar of Events.

The floor is open for any comment. I do not see any, so can I take it that Council has endorsed the Calendar of Events of 2009 as was explained with the amendments that we made? I do not see any request for the floor, so the Calendar of Events has been adopted.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

This brings me to the conclusion of our meeting today. Thank you for being efficient and effective. I have saved half a day for tomorrow morning. Please remember that this Session of the Council, because it is a short Council, does not have a Drafting Committee. The draft of the Report will be prepared and I, as Independent Chairperson, will clear it and it will be distributed very soon, hopefully this week for your consideration.

We will start our Conference tomorrow at 15.00 hours in the Plenary on the Third Floor. I am looking forward to seeing all of you, plus others who shall come from the capitals, tomorrow at 15.00 hours in the Plenary Hall.

The meeting rose at 15:30 hours

La séance est levée à 15 h 30

Se levanta la sesión a las 15:30 horas