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Food and Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
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COUNCIL

Hundred and Fiftieth Session

Rome, 1-5 December 2014

**Arrangements for the 151st Session of the Council (23-27 March 2015) and
the 39th Session of the Conference (6-13 June 2015)**

Executive Summary

This document gives an overview of arrangements for the 39th Session of the FAO Conference (6-13 June 2015) and the 151st Session of the Council (23-27 March 2015), and contains proposals regarding the provisional agenda for the session, the scheduling of items, elections, resolutions and invitations.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to make decisions on:

- a) The provisional agenda for the 39th Session of the FAO Conference (*Appendix A*);
- b) The main theme for the general debate on the State of Food and Agriculture, and a five-minute time limit for statements made by Heads of Delegation under this item;
- c) Deadlines for the receipt of nominations for:
 - the office of Independent Chairperson of Council for the period July 2015 to June 2017;
 - Council Membership for:
 - i) July 2015 to June 2018; and
 - ii) July 2016 to June 2019.
- d) The establishment of two commissions:
 - i) on Substantive and Policy Matters (Commission I)
 - ii) on Programme and Budgetary Matters (Commission II)
- e) Inviting Palestine to participate in the Session as an observer.

Queries in the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

Stephen Dowd

Chief, Conference, Council and Government Relations Branch

Tel: +390657053459

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A. Introduction

1. As decided by the 38th Session of the Conference (15-22 June 2013), the 39th Session of the Conference will be held in Rome from 6 to 13 June 2015¹.
2. The Conference is the ultimate decision-making body of the Organization, determining its overall policy and strategy and taking the final decisions on objectives, strategy and budget.² The Conference focuses on ensuring coherence in global policy issues and regulatory frameworks, acting normally on the recommendations of the FAO Technical Committees and Regional Conferences and, where appropriate, the FAO Council. More specifically, the Conference approves the Organization's priorities, strategy and budget, having considered the recommendations of the Council.

B. Agenda, Theme for the General Debate and Voting

3. A provisional agenda for the Conference is found in *Appendix A*.
4. Two Commissions will be established:
 - Commission I on Substantive and Policy Matters; and
 - Commission II on Programme and Budgetary Matters.
5. A tentative timetable for the Conference session, including details of side events, will be submitted to the 151st Session of the Council (23-27 March 2015).
6. Each session of the Conference usually has one major theme agreed by the Conference, normally on the recommendation of the Council. The themes selected for the General Debate at the past three sessions of Conference were as follows:
 - "Food Systems for Food Security and Better Nutrition" (2013)
 - "The Vital Role of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development" (2011)
 - "Improving Preparedness for, and effective response to, Food and Agriculture Threats and Emergencies" (2009)
7. In this regard, the Council may wish to consider taking into account the theme of the *State of Food and Agriculture* publication for 2015 when proposing the theme for the General Debate of the Conference under Item 10 "Review of the State of Food and Agriculture":
 - "Social Protection and Agriculture: Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty and Hunger".
8. Since only five days are available for work in plenary meetings, and as the majority of Heads of Delegations present at the Conference are expected to make statements under Item 10, the Council may wish to follow past practice and recommend that statements be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes each.
9. The Council may also wish to recommend that Friday 12 June 2015 be set aside for the: (i) election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council; (ii) election of Members of the Council (by secret ballot); and (iii) vote on the budget level for 2016-17 (by electronic roll call vote).
10. In order to streamline procedures and debate during the session, documents for the session will include an executive summary and highlight matters for decision by the Conference. Where feasible, this will be done primarily by presenting draft decisions to be taken by the Conference in a form ready for approval and inclusion in the final report of the session.

C. Composition of Delegations

11. Delegations are normally headed by Ministers. In accordance with Article III of the Constitution (*Appendix B*), each Member of the Organization may be represented by one delegate who may be accompanied by alternates, associates and advisers. Online registration is accessible through

¹ C 2013/REP para 132

² Conference Resolution 7/2009.

the password-protected FAO Members Gateway at <http://www.fao.org/members-gateway/en/>. Instructions for online registration can be found on the same site. It should be noted that online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph.

D. Constitutional Duties of the Conference

12. In addition to adopting amendments to the Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the Organization, and approving conventions and agreements, the Conference has the following specific constitutional duties:

Admission of New Members

13. The Conference, as the supreme authority of the Organization, admits new Members and deals with all matters relating to membership. At the date of preparing this document, no application for membership had been received. Under Rule XIX-2 of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO), applications are receivable up to 30 days before the opening of the Conference session, i.e. Thursday 7 May 2015. The admission of new Members is decided by secret ballot and requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, provided that the total number of affirmative and negative votes cast shall be more than one half of the Member Nations of the Organization. Membership becomes effective on the date on which the Conference approves the application.

Appointment of the Director-General

14. The procedure regarding nominations for the office of Director-General is governed by provisions of Rule XXXVII-1 of the GRO, which read as follows:

“1. In pursuance of paragraph 1 of Article VII of the Constitution, the Director-General of the Organization shall be appointed under the following conditions:

- (a) When the term of office of the Director-General is due to expire, the appointment of a new Director-General shall be placed on the agenda of the regular session of the Conference immediately preceding the expiry of the term of office; whenever, for other reasons, the office of the Director-General is vacant, or notice is received of a pending vacancy, the appointment of a new Director-General shall be placed on the agenda of the next session of the Conference which opens not less than 120 days from the occurrence or notice of the pending vacancy.
- (b) In consideration of the expiry of the term of office of the Director-General, the Council shall set the dates for a period during which Member Nations may submit nominations for the office of Director-General. The nomination period shall have a duration of three months and end at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the session of the Council referred to in subparagraph (c) of this paragraph. The nomination period shall be communicated to all Member Nations and Associate Members by the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council. Nominations validly made in accordance with Rule XII, paragraph 5 of these Rules shall be communicated to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council by the date set by the Council. The Secretary-General shall circulate these nominations to all Member Nations and Associate Members by the date likewise set by the Council, it being understood that in the case of an election taking place at a regular session of the Conference, such date set by the Council shall be not later than 30 days before the session of the Council provided for in subparagraph (c) of this paragraph.
- (c) Subject to such arrangements as the Council may make consistent with these Rules aimed at ensuring equality among candidates, candidates shall address the session of the Council which will be scheduled not less than 60 days before the session of the Conference and respond to such questions as may be put to them by Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization. There shall be no debate and the Council shall not draw any conclusion or recommendation from any of the statements or interventions made.
- (d) As soon as possible after the opening of the Conference session, the General Committee shall determine and announce the date of the election, it being understood that the appointment of the Director-General at a regular session shall begin and be effected within three working days

following the opening date of such session. Candidates shall address the Conference and respond to questions that Member Nations and Associate Members may put to them, subject to such arrangements as the Conference may make consistent with these Rules aimed at ensuring equality among candidates.”

15. The term of office of the present Director-General will expire on 31 July 2015. Pursuant to the provisions cited in the preceding paragraph, the 149th Session of the Council set 1 November 2014 to 31 January 2015 as the period in which nominations for the post of Director-General for the period 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2019 are receivable³. Nominations received by the established deadline will be circulated one week thereafter by circular letter and through the FAO Members Gateway.

16. Procedures concerning the address to the Conference and the 151st Session of the Council by candidates for the office of Director-General are set out in *Appendix C*, and *Appendix D* respectively. These procedures were endorsed by the Council at its 139th Session (May 2010), in view of the appointment of the Director-General in 2011.

Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council

17. In accordance with Article V-2 of the Constitution and Rule XXIII-1 of the GRO, the Conference appoints the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

18. Rule XXIII-1(b) of the GRO provides that the Council determine the closing date of submission of nominations for the office of Independent Chairperson of the Council by Member Nations to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council. Likewise, the Council also sets the date by which the Secretary-General circulates these nominations to all Members of the Organization. On the basis of past practice the Council may wish to establish 12.00 hours on Wednesday 8 April 2015 as the closing date for submission of nominations for this appointment, and Wednesday 15 April 2015 as the date by which such nominations are circulated by letter and through the FAO Members Gateway by the Secretary-General.

Election of Council Members

19. In accordance with Article V-1 of the Constitution, the Conference elects the Members of the Council. A separate paper on the election of Council Members, including a Nomination Form, will be circulated as Conference document C 2015/11. In accordance with Rule XXII-10(a) GRO, the Conference decides the date of the election and the date by which nominations for election to the Council must be submitted. As laid down in Rule XXII-10(c) GRO, nominations must be supported in writing by the delegates of two Member Nations to the Conference, other than the delegate of the Member Nation nominated, and must be accompanied by a formal written acceptance of the nomination by the delegate of the Member Nation nominated. Rule XXII-10(d) further specifies that the General Committee shall communicate the valid nominations received to the Conference at least three working days before the date selected for the election. In the light of these requirements the Council may wish to recommend that the deadline for the receipt of nominations be set at 12.00 hours on Monday 8 June 2015.

E. Officers of the Conference

20. In accordance with Rule XXIV-5(b) of the GRO, the Council at its 150th Session (December 2014) is called upon to invite countries to nominate candidates for the offices of: (i) Chairperson of the Conference; (ii) Chairpersons of the commissions of the Conference; (iii) three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference; (iv) seven elected Members of the General Committee to the Conference; and (v) nine Members of the Credentials Committee.

21. At its 151st Session (March 2015), the Council is expected to nominate the officers mentioned in the previous paragraph, who in turn will be approved by the 39th Session of the Conference. Nominations for the two Vice-Chairpersons of both Commission I and Commission II will be approved by the Conference through the General Committee.

³ CL 149/REP, para. 27

22. Following past practice the members of the Credentials Committee will commence their work in the 15 days leading up to the Conference. It may be of interest to note that the Council at its 148th Session (December 2013) endorsed a set of proposals for streamlining the Organization's practice concerning acceptance of credentials of delegations to the Conference.

F. Conference Resolutions

23. The 148th Session of the Council (December 2013) recommended that the 39th Session of the Conference discontinue the practice of establishing a Resolutions Committee of the Conference. The Council noted that the editorial review functions of the Resolutions Committee could, if necessary, be taken over by an *ad hoc* committee to be established in accordance with the General Rules of the Organization, or entrusted to the Secretariat. Further to the abolition of the Resolutions Committee, the standard arrangements for the sessions of the Conference examined by the Council and referred to the General Committee of the Conference will be amended accordingly⁴. The existing criteria for draft Conference Resolutions are set out in *Appendix E*.

G. Invitations

24. The United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency are entitled to be represented at sessions of the Conference, without the right to vote. Other intergovernmental organizations having concluded an agreement with FAO which contains specific provisions to this effect have a right to attend as observers. Those non-governmental organizations which have consultative status are also entitled to send observers to Conference sessions. Other intergovernmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations having specialized consultative status or liaison status, may be invited on a provisional basis by the Director-General.

25. *Appendix F* contains the above-mentioned provisions as set out in Rule XVII of the GRO and also in the FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations (FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section M).

26. The Council may wish to note the Director-General's suggestion that, following previous practice, Palestine be invited to attend the 39th Session of the Conference in an observer capacity.

Draft Decisions

- The Council decided to set the deadline for the receipt of nominations for the office of Independent Chairperson of the Council at 12.00 hours on Wednesday 8 April 2015.
- The Council agreed to submit to the Conference for approval the Provisional Agenda and the arrangements outlined in this document, and in particular recommended that:
 - a) Two commissions be established to examine respectively Substantive and Policy Matters (Commission I) and Programme and Budgetary Matters (Commission II);
 - b) The deadline for the receipt of nominations for election to the Council be set at 12.00 hours on Monday 8 June 2015, and the election be held on Friday 12 June 2015;
 - c) Palestine be invited to attend the Conference as an observer;
 - d) Statements by Heads of Delegation be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes each.

⁴ CL148/REP, para 20(c)

Appendix A**Provisional Agenda of the 39th Session of the Conference****Introduction**

1. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons
2. Appointment of the General Committee and Credentials Committee
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Arrangements for the Session
4. Admission of Observers

Appointments and Elections

5. Applications for Membership in the Organization
6. Appointment of the Director-General
 - 6.1 Address by Candidates for the post of Director-General
7. Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council
8. Election of Council Members
9. Appointment of Representatives of the FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee

Substantive and Policy Matters

10. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture

A. Regional Conferences

11. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory matters arising from:
 - 11.1 Report of the 32nd Regional Conference for the Near East (Rome, Italy, 24-28 February 2014)
 - 11.2 Report of the 32nd Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 10-14 March 2014)
 - 11.3 Report of the 28th Regional Conference for Africa (Tunis, Tunisia, 24-28 March 2014)
 - 11.4 Report of the 29th Regional Conference for Europe (Bucharest, Romania, 1-4 April 2014)
 - 11.5 Report of the 33rd Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile, 6-9 May 2014)
 - 11.6 Input from the Third Informal Regional Conference for North America (Washington, D.C., United States of America, 15-16 April 2014)

B. Technical Committees

12. Global Policy and Regulatory matters arising from:
 - 12.1 Report of the 31st Session of the Committee on Fisheries (9-13 June 2014)
 - 12.2 Report of the 22nd Session of the Committee on Forestry (23-27 June 2014)
 - 12.3 Report of the 24th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (29 September - 3 October 2014)
 - 12.4 Report of the 70th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (7-9 October 2014)

C. Committee on World Food Security

13. Reports of the 40th (7-11 October 2013) and 41st (13-18 October 2014) Sessions of the Committee on World Food Security

D. Other Substantive and Policy Matters

14. Progress on the Millennium Development Goals targets relevant to FAO/Post-2015 Development Agenda
15. Report on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System
16. Report of the 15th Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (19-23 January 2015)
17. Joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) (19-21 November 2014)
18. International Years and Days:
 - 18.1 Evaluation of the International Year of Quinoa 2013
 - 18.2 Evaluation of the International Year of Family Farming 2014
 - 18.3 International Year of Soils 2015 and World Soil Day
 - 18.4 International Year of Pulses 2016
19. Global Soil Partnership
20. United Nations/FAO World Food Programme

Programme and Budgetary Matters

21. Programme Implementation Report 2012-2013
22. Programme Evaluation Report 2015
23. Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices
24. Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 (Draft Resolution on budget level)

Governance, Legal, Administrative and Financial Matters

A. Governance Matters

25. Assessment of Governance Reforms, including consideration of the Independent Review Report

B. Constitutional and Legal Matters

26. Amendments to the Basic Texts
 - 26.1 Proposed Amendments to Rule XII, subparagraph 10(a) of the General Rules of the Organization (Draft Resolution)
 - 26.2 Proposed Amendments to Rule XII, paragraphs 3, 4, 12 and 13 of the General Rules of the Organization (Draft Resolution)
 - 26.3 Proposed Amendments to Rule XXXIII of the General Rules of the Organization (Draft Resolution)
27. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters

C. Administrative and Financial Matters

28. Audited Accounts 2012-2013 (Draft Resolution)
29. Scale of Contributions 2016-2017 (Draft Resolution)
30. Payment by the European Union to Cover Administrative and other Expenses Arising out of its Membership in the Organization
31. Other Administrative and Financial Matters

Other Matters

32. Date and Place of the 40th Session of the Conference
33. Any Other Matters
 - 33.1 McDougall Memorial Lecture
 - 33.2 In Memoriam

Information Documents will be tabled on the following subjects:*

- A. Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Director-General
- B. Status of Contributions

* Delegates wishing to comment on Information Documents will be given an opportunity to do so under Item 33, "Any Other Matters"

Appendix B**Extract from Article III of the Constitution of FAO****The Conference****[Provisions regulating composition of delegations]**

1. There shall be a Conference of the Organization in which each Member Nation and Associate Member shall be represented by one delegate. Associate Members shall have the right to participate in the deliberations of the Conference but shall not hold office nor have the right to vote.
2. Each Member Nation and Associate Member may appoint alternates, associates and advisers to its delegate. The Conference may determine the conditions for the participation of alternates, associates and advisers in its proceedings, but any such participation shall be without the right to vote, except in the case of an alternate, associate, or adviser participating in the place of a delegate.
3. No delegate may represent more than one Member Nation or Associate Member.
4. Each Member Nation shall have one vote. A Member Nation which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Conference if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. The Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a Member Nation to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member Nation.

Appendix C**Procedure Concerning the Address to the Conference by Candidates
for the Office of Director-General**

- (i) Each candidate, validly nominated in accordance with Rule XII, paragraph 5 of the GRO, will make a statement to a plenary meeting of the Conference, of up to 15 minutes. The sequential order in which candidates make statements and answer questions is defined by lots drawn by the Chairperson. The statements should include a presentation of the candidate's vision of the future priorities for the Organization.
- (ii) After each statement, up to 15 minutes will be made available to Member Nations of the Organization to ask questions through the Chairperson who will then give the floor to candidates to respond for up to 15 minutes.
- (iii) The Chairperson may adjust the time allotted for questions and answers foreseen in paragraph (ii) above, subject to a requirement of equality of time among all candidates. In determining the time allotted, the Chairperson should bear in mind that, as far as possible, all candidates should address the Conference on the same day.
- (iv) The Chairperson, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council, ensures that the allocated time, both for the statements and for the questions and answers, is strictly enforced.
- (v) A candidate may speak in any language of the Organization.
- (vi) Once all statements and questions and answers have been completed, the Chairperson shall declare this process closed. There shall be no debate, nor any conclusions drawn from the statements, questions or answers.
- (vii) The Conference proceeds to the appointment of the Director-General, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXXVII of the GRO.

Appendix D**Procedure Concerning the Address to the Council by Candidates
for the Office of Director-General**

- (i) Each candidate, validly nominated in accordance with Rule XII, paragraph 5 of the General Rules of the Organization, will make a statement to a plenary meeting of the Council, of up to 15 minutes. The sequential order in which candidates make statements and answer questions is defined by lots drawn by the Chairperson. The statements should include a presentation of the candidate's vision of the future priorities for the Organization.
- (ii) After each statement, up to 15 minutes will be made available to Members of the Council to ask questions through the Chairperson who will then give the floor to each candidate to respond for up to 15 minutes.
- (iii) The Chairperson may adjust the time allotted for questions and answers foreseen in paragraph (ii) above, subject to a requirement of equality of time among all candidates. In determining the time allotted, the Chairperson should bear in mind that, as far as possible, all candidates should address the Council on the same day.
- (iv) The Chairperson, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council, ensures that the allocated time, both for the statements and for the questions and answers, is strictly enforced.
- (v) A candidate may speak in any language of the Organization.
- (vi) Once all statements and questions and answers have been completed, the Chairperson shall declare the relevant agenda item closed. There shall be no debate, nor any conclusions drawn from the statements, questions or answers.

Appendix E**Criteria for Conference Resolutions**Criteria for the Formulation of Resolutions:

Resolutions should be confined essentially to the following formal matters:

- i) Amendments to the Constitution, the GRO, and the Financial Regulations.
- ii) Approval or confirmation of conventions or agreements and of amendments thereto.
- iii) Establishment of bodies under Article VI of the Constitution and adoption or amendment of the Statutes of such Bodies.
- iv) Adoption of the Programme of Work and Budget for the ensuing biennium.
- v) Decisions regarding financial matters such as the Working Capital Fund, the scale of contributions, and adoption of audited accounts.
- vi) Major programme and policy matters.
- vii) Recommendations to Member Nations or to international organizations.
- viii) Matters relating to the appointment of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Council.
- ix) Tributes and commemorations of special importance to FAO.

Appendix F

FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations
Rule XVII of the General Rules of the Organization
Participating International Organizations

1. A representative of the United Nations and a representative of any specialized agency of the United Nations, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of any commission, of any committee of a commission, and of any committee established under Rule XV. Such representatives may, without vote, speak and participate in the discussions and may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
2. An observer of any other intergovernmental organization with which an agreement has been concluded providing for representation, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference, and the meetings of any commission, of any technical committee of a commission and of any technical committee established under Rule XV. Such observer may, without vote, speak and, upon the request of the Chairperson, participate in the discussions. They may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
3. An observer of any international non-governmental organization having consultative status, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of any commission, of any technical committee of a commission and of any technical committee established under Rule XV. Such observers may, without vote, speak before such commissions and committees, participate in the discussions therein upon the request of the Chairperson and, with the consent of the General Committee, speak before plenary meetings of the Conference. They may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
4. The Director-General shall determine provisionally what other international organizations shall be invited to any session of the Conference and shall submit the list of such organizations to the Conference for approval.

Extract from the FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section M

FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations
General Arrangements

5. The Organization established relationships with certain international non-governmental organizations in order to secure their advice and to associate them effectively with the work of the Organization.

Organizations eligible for consultative status

6. In order to be eligible for consultative status, an international non-governmental organization shall:
 - a) be international in its structure and scope of activity, be sufficiently representative of the field of interest in which it operates, and be of a recognized standing that renders its views on policy a matter of great interest to governments and to FAO;
 - b) be concerned with matters covering a substantial portion of FAO's field of activity;
 - c) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;

- d) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.

Organizations eligible for specialized consultative status

7. In order to be eligible for specialized consultative status, an international non-governmental organization shall:
- a) be international in its structure and scope of activity, and representative of the specialized field of interest in which it operates;
 - b) be concerned with matters covering a particular portion of FAO's field of activity;
 - c) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;
 - d) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.

Organizations eligible for liaison status

8. In order to be eligible for liaison status an international non- governmental organization shall:
- a) be international in its structure and scope of activity and be sufficiently representative of the field of interest in which it operates;
 - b) be concerned with matters covering a portion of FAO's field of activity and be in a position to give practical assistance in that field;
 - c) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;
 - d) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.