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Food and Agriculture
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Unies pour l'alimentation
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
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COUNCIL

Hundred and Fifty-fifth Session

Rome, 5-9 December 2016

Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference (3-8 July 2017)

Executive Summary

This document gives an overview of arrangements for the 40th Session of the FAO Conference (3-8 July 2017), and contains proposals regarding: invitations; the Provisional Agenda for the Conference; the scheduling of items; elections; resolutions and the selection of (i) a topic for the General Debate at the Conference in 2017; and (ii) a theme for Governing Body sessions convened in the 2018-19 biennium.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to make decisions on:

- a) The Provisional Agenda for the 40th Session of the FAO Conference (*Appendix A*);
- b) A topic 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) A biennial theme for Governing Body sessions held in the 2018-19 biennium;
- d) Deadlines for the receipt of nominations for:
 - Office of Independent Chairperson of Council (July 2017 to June 2019);
 - Council Membership for:
 - i) July 2017 to June 2019; and
 - ii) July 2018 to June 2020.
- e) The establishment of two Commissions:
 - i) on Substantive and Policy Matters (Commission I)
 - ii) on Programme and Budgetary Matters (Commission II)
- f) Inviting Palestine to participate in the Session as an observer.

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

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A. Introduction

1. As decided by the 39th Session of the Conference (6-13 June 2015), the 40th Session of the Conference will be held in Rome from Monday 3 to Saturday 8 July 2017.¹
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, Topic for the General Debate and Voting

3. A Provisional Agenda for the Conference is given 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 156th Session of the Council (24-28 April 2017).
6. The General Debate at the Conference usually has one major topic agreed by the Conference, normally on the recommendation of the Council. The topics selected for the General Debate at the past three sessions of Conference were as follows:
 - "Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty and Hunger by Strengthening Rural Resilience: Social Protection and Sustainable Agricultural Development" (2015)
 - "Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition" (2013)
 - "The Vital Role of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development" (2011)
7. In this regard, the 155th Session of the Council may wish to consider taking into account the focus of the *State of Food and Agriculture* publication for 2016 on "*Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security*" when proposing the topic for the General Debate at the 40th Session of the Conference under Item 9, "Review of the State of Food and Agriculture".
8. Given that 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 9, 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, 7 July 2017 be set aside for the:
(i) election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (by secret ballot); (ii) election of Members of the Council (by acclamation when there are as many candidates as seats to be filled); and (iii) vote on the budget level for 2018-19 (by an electronic roll call vote).
10. In order to streamline procedures and debate during the session, pre-session documents will include an executive summary and highlight matters for decision by the Conference. Where feasible, this will be done primarily by presenting draft decisions for the Conference in a form ready for approval and inclusion in the final report of the session.

¹ C 2015/REP para. 94

² Conference Resolution 7/2009.

C. Biennial Theme

11. At its 39th Session (June 2015), the Conference endorsed a series of recommendations under the agenda item on the Assessment of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms³ Recommendation 1 regarded the selection of a “biennial theme” for consideration by Governing Bodies at sessions taking place each biennium from 2018-19 onwards. The aim of this recommendation was to increase the focus of the Governing Bodies on strategic global issues within the Strategic Framework and priorities decided by them. Furthermore, by addressing challenges and issues of global and regional dimension, the Conference, Regional Conferences and Technical Committees would be given the opportunity to explore ways of formulating policy options and, where appropriate, reflecting them as priorities in the Medium Term Plan. The proposed theme for Governing Body sessions held during the 2018-19 biennium will be submitted to Commission I of the 40th Session of Conference (July 2017) for approval.

12. In selecting a theme for Governing Bodies taking place in the coming biennium, the 155th Session of the Council may wish to take into consideration the trends and challenges for food and agriculture identified in the "Reviewed Strategic Framework and Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21", submitted to the 155th Session of Council in December 2016,⁴ and in particular *Addressing climate change and intensification of natural hazards*. It is therefore proposed that the Council consider endorsing the following proposed theme for Governing Body sessions held in the 2018-19 biennium:

- *Climate Change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO*

13. Selection of this theme would enable the Governing Bodies to engage in a critical review of the intrinsic interlinkages between exogenous trends and challenges relating to climate change, and the multitude of related work and activities of FAO, including *vis-à-vis* nutrition, food security, migration, oceans, resilience, and so on. Furthermore, the Council may wish to note in this regard: (a) FAO's role in addressing climate change across all five Strategic Objectives; (b) its engagement with international climate change governance and finance; (c) the integrated approach to the Organization's work in a consolidated Climate Change Strategy reviewed by the Governing Bodies in 2016; and (d) the proposed creation of a dedicated Department of Climate, Land and Water under consideration by the 155th Session of the Council.

14. Following endorsement by the Conference of the theme proposed by the Council, the Provisional Agendas of the 2018 round of Regional Conferences and Technical Committees would include an agenda item dedicated to the theme endorsed by the Conference. Subsequently, the June and December 2018 Sessions of Council would consider input on the common theme emerging respectively from the 2018 round of Regional Conferences and Technical Committees. The April 2019 Session of Council would then be expected to examine the input received from Governing Bodies and draw conclusions, which would then be submitted to Commission I of the 41st Session of Conference in 2019 for discussion and decision, together with proposals for a new theme for the 2020-21 biennium.

D. Composition of Delegations

15. 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 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.

³ See documents C 2015/25 and C 2015/26 Rev.1.

⁴ See section I.B of document CL 155/3

E. Constitutional Duties of the Conference

16. 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

17. 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. 3 June 2017. 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 Independent Chairperson of the Council

18. 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.

19. 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 5 April 2017 as the closing date for submission of nominations for this appointment, and Wednesday 12 April 2017 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

20. 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 2017/11. In accordance with Rule XXII-10(a) GRO, the Conference decides the date of the election and the deadline 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 3 July 2017.

F. Officers of the Conference

21. In accordance with Rule XXIV-5(b) of the GRO, the Council at its 155th Session (December 2016) is called upon to invite countries to nominate candidates for the offices of: (i) Chairperson of the 40th Session of the FAO 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.

22. At its 156th Session (April 2017), the Council is expected to nominate the officers mentioned in the previous paragraph, who in turn will be approved by the 40th 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.

23. Following past practice the members of the Credentials Committee will commence their work in the 15 days leading up to the Conference.

G. Conference Resolutions

24. The 39th Session of the Conference in 2015 decided to discontinue the practice of establishing a Resolutions Committee of the Conference. The editorial review functions of the former Resolutions Committee could, if necessary, be carried out by an *ad hoc* committee established in accordance with the General Rules of the Organization, or entrusted to the Secretariat. The existing criteria for draft Conference Resolutions are set out in *Appendix C*.

H. Invitations

25. 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 that 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.

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

27. The Council may wish to note the Director-General's suggestion that, following previous practice, Palestine be invited to attend the 40th 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 5 April 2017.

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 3 July 2017, and the election be held on Friday 7 July 2017;
- 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;
- e) The topic for the General Debate be: "Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security";
- f) The proposed biennial theme for Governing Body sessions convened in the 2018-19 biennium be submitted to the 40th Session of the Conference for endorsement.

Appendix A

Provisional Agenda of the 40th 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 Independent Chairperson of the Council
7. Election of Council Members
8. Appointment of Representatives of the FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee

Substantive and Policy Matters

9. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture

A. Regional Conferences

10. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory matters arising from:
 - 10.1 Report of the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 4-8 April 2016)
 - 10.2 Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (Putrajaya, Malaysia, 7-11 March 2016)
 - 10.3 Report of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (Antalya, Turkey, 4-6 May 2016)
 - 10.4 Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico City, Mexico, 29 February-3 March 2016)
 - 10.5 Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East (Rome, Italy, 9-13 May 2016)
 - 10.6 Input from the Fourth Informal Regional Conference for North America (Ottawa, Canada, 21-22 March 2016)

B. Technical Committees

11. Global Policy and Regulatory matters arising from:
 - 11.1 Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (26-30 September 2016)
 - 11.2 Report of the 71st Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (3-5 October 2016)
 - 11.3 Report of the 32nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (11-15 July 2016)
 - 11.4 Report of the 23rd Session of the Committee on Forestry (18-22 July 2016)

C. Committee on World Food Security

12. Reports of the 42nd (12-15 October 2015) and 43rd (17-21 October 2016) Sessions of the Committee on World Food Security

D. Other Substantive and Policy Matters

13. Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals/2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
14. Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition and Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)
15. Progress report on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System
16. Report of the 16th Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (30 January-3 February 2017)
17. Outcome of the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors
18. International Years and Days:
 - 18.1 Evaluation of the International Year of Soils 2015
 - 18.2 Evaluation of the International Year of Pulses 2016
 - 18.3 Proposal for an International Year on Plant Health 2020
 - 18.4 Proposal for an International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture
 - 18.5 Proposal for an International Year of Camelids
 - 18.6 Proposal for a World Bee Day
 - 18.7 Proposal for an International Day for the Fight against IUU Fishing
19. United Nations/FAO World Food Programme
20. Biennial Theme 2018-19

Programme and Budgetary Matters

21. Programme Implementation Report 2014-15
22. Programme Evaluation Report 2017
23. Reviewed Strategic Framework
24. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (Draft Resolution on budget level)

Governance, Legal, Administrative and Financial Matters

A. Governance Matters

25. Implementation of FAO Governance Reform Actions
26. Independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization at headquarters and in decentralized offices

B. Constitutional and Legal Matters

- 27. Amendments to the Basic Texts
 - 27.1 Amendment to Paragraph 2 of Conference Resolution 9/2009 concerning qualifications for the Independent Chairperson of the Council (Draft Conference Resolution)
- 28. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters
 - 28.1 FAO Constitution - Request from the United Nations Treaty Section for filing and recording

C. Administrative and Financial Matters

- 29. Audited Accounts 2014 and 2015 (Draft Resolutions)
- 30. Scale of Contributions 2018-19 (Draft Resolution)
- 31. Payment by the European Union to Cover Administrative and other Expenses Arising out of its Membership in the Organization
- 32. Other Administrative and Financial Matters

Other Matters

- 33. Date and Place of the 41st Session of the Conference
- 34. Any Other Matters
 - 34.1 McDougall Memorial Lecture
 - 34.2 Review of FAO Awards Ceremony
 - 34.3 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 34, "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**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 D

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.