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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
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

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CONFERENCE

Fortieth Session

Rome, 3-8 July 2017

Report of the First Meeting of the General Committee

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A. Agenda for the Session¹

1. The General Committee examined the Provisional Conference Agenda contained in document C 2017/1 Rev.1.
2. The Committee was informed of a proposal by Costa Rica to establish a “World Food Safety Day” supported by the *Codex Alimentarius* Commission at its 39th Session in 2016², and agreed that the matter could be dealt with by the Conference as additional Sub-item 18.9, “Proposed Establishment of a World Food Safety Day”.
3. The Committee recommends that the Provisional Agenda be adopted by the Conference, as amended.
4. The Committee further noted that the Finance Committee at its 167th Session (May 2017) endorsed a draft Conference Resolution³ to revise the funding mechanism of the Staff Welfare Fund to be submitted to the Conference for approval, and agreed that the matter could be discussed under Item 32, *Other Administrative and Financial Matters*.
5. Having noted that the Provisional Agenda included subjects on which information documents were tabled, the Committee also recommends that delegates wishing to comment on these documents be given an opportunity to do so under Item 34, *Any Other Matters*.

B. Establishment of Commissions and Tentative Timetable of the Session⁴

6. At its 155th Session (5-9 December 2016) and 156th Session (24-28 April 2017) the Council formulated proposals concerning the organization and timetable for the 40th Session of the Conference. These proposals were communicated to all FAO Members and observers in documents C 2017/12 and C 2017/INF/1 Rev.1. The Committee recommends that the Conference establish two Commissions to consider and report on the "Substantive and Policy Matters" and "Programme and Budgetary Matters" sections of the Agenda respectively.
7. The Committee recommends that the Conference approve the Tentative Timetable proposed by the Council. It is understood that this Timetable may be subject to modifications according to progress made in the Plenary and in the Commissions.

C. Appointment of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Two Commissions⁵

8. In accordance with Rules VII and XXIV.5(b) of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO) and as indicated in document C 2017/LIM/5, the Council at its 156th Session proposed the following candidates as Chairpersons of the Commissions:

Commission I:	Mr Ahmed bin Nasser Al-Bakry (Oman)
Commission II:	Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen (Netherlands)

On 19 June 2017, the Secretariat received a communication from the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Rome informing the Organization that Mr Hamoud Al Hasni, Director-General of the Agriculture and Livestock Research Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Oman, would replace Mr Ahmad bin Nasser Al-Bakri as the nominee for the position of Chairperson of Commission I.

The Committee recommends that the Conference endorse the nomination of:

Mr Hamoud Al Hasni (Oman) as Chairperson of Commission I
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen (Netherlands) as Chairperson of Commission II.

¹ C 2017/1 Rev.1; C 2017/INF/1 Rev.1; C 2017/12; C 2017/INF/2

² REP16/CAC, paragraph 263

³ C 2017/LIM/19

⁴ C 2017/12; C 2017/INF/1 Rev.1

⁵ C 2017/LIM/5

9. In accordance with Rule X.2(c) of the GRO the Committee recommends that the Vice-Chairpersons of the Commissions be as follows:

Commission I:	Mr Royhan Nevy Wahab (Indonesia) Mr François Pythoud (Switzerland)
Commission II:	Mr Antonio Otávio Sá Ricarte (Brazil) Ms Marieta Okenková (Slovakia)

D. Resolutions

10. The 148th Session of the Council (2-6 December 2013) recommended to discontinue the practice of establishing a Resolutions Committee of the Conference to carry out editorial review functions in respect of draft Resolutions presented in the course of the session of the Conference. The Council noted that the editorial review functions of the Resolutions Committee could, if necessary, be taken by an *ad hoc* committee to be established in accordance with the General Rules of the Organization, or entrusted to the Secretariat⁶. The General Committee recommends that these arrangements, implemented in June 2015, be followed again. The existing criteria for draft Conference Resolutions are described in document C 2017/12, *Appendix B*.

E. Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council⁷

11. By the date determined by the Council, i.e. 5 April 2017, six nominations had been received for election to the office of Independent Chairperson of the Council, namely:

- Ms Lauresha Grezda (Albania)
- Mr Halil Omanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Mr Spyridon Ellinas (Cyprus)
- Mr Suseno Sukoyono (Indonesia)
- Mr Khalid Mehboob (Pakistan)
- Ms Marieta Okenková (Slovakia)

These nominations were notified by the Secretary-General to all Members by circular letter C/CF 4/3(a) of 11 April 2017.

12. Under the terms of reference of Rule XXIII.1(b) GRO, the General Committee determines and announces the date of the election. The Committee recommends that the election be held in the morning of Friday 7 July.

F. Election of Members of the Council⁸

13. Rule XXII.10(a) of the GRO provides that the Conference, on the recommendation of the General Committee, shall, not later than the end of the third day of the Conference Session, decide the date of election of Members of the Council and the date by which nominations are to be submitted.

14. The Committee accordingly recommends that:

- a) nominations for the Council seats to be filled at the present session be communicated to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council by 12.00 hours on Tuesday 4 July; and
- b) the election be held in the morning of Friday 7 July 2017.

15. In this connection, the Conference will note in particular the following provisions of paragraphs 3 to 7 of Rule XXII of the GRO:

“3. In selecting Members of the Council, the Conference shall give due consideration to the desirability of:

- a) including in its membership a balanced geographical representation of nations interested in the production, distribution and consumption of food and agricultural products;

⁶ CL 148/REP, paragraph 20(c)

⁷ C 2017/9

⁸ C 2017/11 Rev.1

- b) ensuring the participation in the work of the Council of such Member Nations as contribute in a large measure toward the success of the Organization;
- c) giving to the greatest possible number of Member Nations an opportunity, by rotation of membership, to serve on the Council.

4. Member Nations shall be eligible for re-election.

5. No Member Nation shall be eligible for election to the Council if it is in arrears in payment of its financial contributions to the Organization in an amount equal to or exceeding the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years.

6. The Conference shall, at any regular or special session, fill all other vacancies on the Council which may have occurred since the last regular session. In the case of a special session, the General Committee shall recommend to the Conference such readjustments as circumstances may warrant to the time limits provided for in paragraph 10(a) and (d) below.

7. A Member of the Council shall be considered to have resigned if it is in arrears in payment of its financial contributions to the Organization in an amount equal to or exceeding the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years, or if it has not been represented at two consecutive sessions of the Council”.

G. Right to Vote

16. Article III.4 of the Constitution states: “A Member Nation which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contribution 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”.

17. The Committee noted that the Member Nations listed in the Annex to this Report have not paid a sufficient amount of their assessed contributions to retain their vote in the Conference.

18. The General Committee will consider at its third meeting on Wednesday 5 July 2017 the right to vote of the countries in arrears listed in the *Annex* to this Report, on the understanding that contacts with those Member Nations in arrears shall continue with a view to regularizing their situation before the votes scheduled for Friday 7 July.

H. Right of Reply

19. At its previous sessions, the Conference decided that, if delegates wished to reply to criticisms of their Governments, they should preferably do so on the day on which such criticism had been voiced after all those wishing to participate in the discussion had had an opportunity to speak.

20. The Committee recommends that these same arrangements be followed at the present session.

I. Verbatim Records

21. Rule XVIII of the GRO lays down that verbatim records shall be kept for all Conference Plenary and Commissions’ meetings and that delegates shall be given the opportunity to check the accuracy of the record of their interventions. Editorial amendments should be submitted by the delegation which made the statement within one week of publication of the draft verbatim record concerned.

22. The Committee noted that for the General Debate under item 9 – *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*, a dedicated Web page had been set up for statements provided by delegations and related audio recordings. Such statements and recordings would be uploaded immediately after delivery in the plenary meeting and treated as Verbatim Records for item 9.

23. In 1961 a procedure was formally adopted by the Conference whereby speakers who so desire may have their statements inserted in the record without delivering them in Plenary. The Committee recommends to follow this procedure in the interests of saving time on condition that:

- a) the Plenary, or the Commission concerned, be informed by its Chairperson that a statement not actually delivered, or a substantive addition to a statement that has been delivered, is being inserted in the record;
- b) the text handed over to the Chairperson for insertion should preferably be in digital format;
- c) the provisional verbatim record containing the additional statement be circulated before the close of the Session; and
- d) delegations attending the Session be able to avail themselves of the right of reply by having an opportunity to make, prior to the close of the Session, an intervention relating to the inserted statement.

J. Statements by Heads of Delegations

24. The Committee recommends that a list of speakers for the General Debate under Item 9, *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture* on the topic *Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security*, be published daily in the Journal of the Conference, in the order in which they will be called upon to take the floor by the Chairperson, and further recommends that statements be limited to a maximum of five minutes.

K. Admission of Observers from Intergovernmental and International Non-Governmental Organizations⁹

25. The list of Intergovernmental and International Non-Governmental Organizations which have been invited by the Director-General to be represented in an observer capacity at this session of the Conference is given in document C 2017/13 Rev.1. The invitations sent to Intergovernmental Organizations with which FAO does not have a formal agreement and to International Non-Governmental Organizations which do not have consultative status with FAO are extended on a provisional basis and are subject to approval by the Conference.

26. After having reviewed this list, the Committee recommends that the Conference confirm such provisional invitations.

L. Attendance by Palestine

27. In conformity with the suggestion made by the Council at its 155th Session¹⁰, Palestine has been invited to attend the Conference in an observer capacity. The Committee recommends that the Conference confirm this invitation, in line with the practice followed, and the terms applied, since 1975.

M. Conclusion

28. The Committee recommends that the Conference confirm all the above arrangements for the Session. Given the number of items on the Provisional Agenda, it is likely that the work of the Plenary and Commissions may need to continue after 17.30 hours. The Committee also invites all delegations to observe the working hours with the maximum punctuality.

⁹ C 2017/12; C 2017/13 Rev.1

¹⁰ C 2017/LIM/5

C 2017/LIM/18 – Annex

Member Nations with Potential Voting Rights Problems at 3 July 2017

	Member Nation	Amount in Arrears USD	Amount in Arrears Euro	Minimum Payment required to Ensure Vote in USD
1.	Antigua and Barbuda	\$ 260,274.10	€ 34,879.24	\$ 286,629.29
2.	Chad	\$ 21,916.87	€ 7,656.27	\$ 11,268.86
3.	Comoros	\$ 249,745.50	€ 7,642.40	\$ 249,494.95
4.	Democratic Republic of the Congo	\$ 23,754.71	€ 17,206.00	\$ 15,220.26
5.	Djibouti	\$ 8,003.76	€ 5,735.45	\$ 5,159.75
6.	Gabon	\$ 158,642.72	€ 114,708.80	\$ 101,743.55
7.	Kyrgyzstan	\$ 58,496.31	-	\$ 38,202.48
8.	Libya	\$ 1,124,519.50	€ 946,643.27	\$ 900,335.97
9.	Marshall Islands	\$ 7,918.76	€ 7,559.65	\$ 7,555.67
10.	Papua New Guinea	\$ 28,281.34	€ 22,578.91	\$ 16,430.60
11.	Sao Tome and Principe	\$ 112,639.73	€ 14,146.26	\$ 119,904.33
12.	Solomon Islands	\$ 7,918.76	€ 7,160.90	\$ 7,013.37
13.	Somalia	\$ 369,491.47	€ 24,464.37	\$ 391,029.01
14.	South Sudan	\$ 39,115.74	€ 28,657.60	\$ 35,510.25
15.	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	\$ 80,710.72	€ 28,715.26	\$ 35,632.91
16.	Turkmenistan	\$ 775,594.60	€ 283,655.53	\$ 954,945.25
17.	Ukraine	\$ 569,644.90	€ 366,824.65	\$ 26,710.96
18.	Vanuatu	\$ 7,918.76	€ 7,637.39	\$ 7,661.39
19.	Yemen	\$ 57,238.50	€ 49,886.86	\$ 19,081.61
		\$ 3,961,826.75	€ 1,975,758.81	\$ 3,229,530.46