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# CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

**Fortieth Session - Quarantième session - 40.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 3-8 July 2017  
VERBATIM RECORDS OF MEETINGS OF COMMISSION II  
OF THE CONFERENCE**

**Rome, 3-8 juillet 2017  
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES DE LA COMMISSION II  
DE LA CONFÉRENCE**

**Roma, 3-8 de julio de 2017  
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES DE LA COMISIÓN II  
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# CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

<b>Fortieth Session Quarantième session 40.º período de sesiones</b>
<b>Rome, 3-8 July 2017 Rome, 3-8 juillet 2017 Roma, 3-8 de julio de 2017</b>
<b>FIRST MEETING OF COMMISSION II PREMIÈRE SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II PRIMERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II</b>
<b>3 July 2017</b>

The First Meeting was opened at 16.03 hours  
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La première séance est ouverte à 16 h 03  
sous la présidence de M. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la primera reunión a las 16.03  
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Presidente de la Comisión II



## CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished colleagues and dear friends, I would like to extend to you a warm welcome.

We are starting later but that was necessary because we have to have a quorum in the room which we have now. Of course, especially today, many things are going on with a lot of Ministers here; more than 80, with a lot of meetings going on in parallel, the Plenary with the Ministers, Commission I and Commission II. But luckily we have a quorum now. We have locked the room so you cannot go out otherwise we will lose the quorum. We will see how far we can get.

I know that there are many bilateral special events, which are counting on your presence, because of course we have many important items, but we still have quite some time. My idea would be that we go on until 18.00 hours today, and then we continue tomorrow at 9.30 hours, so as not to rush you in anything, not to overload you with work. A few people are smiling so I think that will help. Then we will continue tomorrow. I think there are many important items on the Agenda for which we need time for discussion but also that we have all people here to listen, to arrive at a consensus decision.

I trust that I will be able to count on your support but also your flexibility to continue working with the same spirit of cooperation which led to the consensus of the Council last April. Of course I will do my utmost as Chair and certainly I will come back to the support of the Vice-Chairs, to get a consensus on all the important items.

I have the honour of the support of the two Vice-Chairpersons of Commission II: Mr Antonio Otávio Sá Ricarte of Brazil and Ms Marieta Okenková of Slovakia.

Following the discussion of each Agenda item, I or the Vice-Chairpersons will present conclusions to facilitate the work of the Drafting Committee. I wish to remind delegates that the first meeting of the Drafting Committee for Commission II is foreseen on Wednesday afternoon in the Lebanon Room but of course everything depends on how we proceed and how far we can get through our Agenda.

I received the following nominations for the Drafting Committee: Mr Khaled Al-Taweel of Egypt as the Chairperson, and I wish you a lot of success and count on your able leadership to get things done in the Drafting Committee. We have members of Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, Netherlands, Russian Federation and United States of America. I think it is a good group and certainly they will arrive at a consensus.

I trust of course, because that has to be formally done, that Commission II can confirm the above nominations. I hope that we can do it with applause.

*Applause*

*Applaudissements*

*Aplausos*

**Item 21. Programme Implementation Report 2014-15**

**Point 21. Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2014**

**Tema 21. Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2014-15**

*(C 2017/8; C 2017/LIM/2)*

## CHAIRPERSON

We turn now to the first item on our Agenda, that is Item 21, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-15*. It is presented in the documents C 2017/8 and relevant web Annexes 3, 4 and 5. The Council at its 154<sup>th</sup> Session in June 2016 endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 and the extract of the Report of the Council on this document is presented in document C 2017/LIM/2.

The Council noted that transformational change undertaken at FAO since 2012 had led to the delivery of positive results by the Organization within the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17. The Council expressed overall satisfaction at the implementation of the Programme of Work 2014 and 2015.

The Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 is submitted for approval by the Conference. I would like to give the floor to Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy Planning and Resource Management for a brief introduction of the item.

**Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management)**

The Programme Implementation Report (PIR) is FAO's accountability document. It informs the Membership about the work carried out by the Organization over the previous biennium, for all sources of funds. It is retrospective in nature, reporting on what the Organization has achieved in terms of programmatic results and financial performance, compared to the targets set out in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2014-15.

The achievements and lessons learned are contained in the main PIR document mentioned by the Chair, the three web Annexes, and the region-specific documents presented to the Regional Conferences during 2016. We have also published a short brochure to convey the main results particularly at Outcome level, which is available in all languages at the Document's Desk.

The PIR 2014-15 was reviewed by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in May 2016, and by the Council in June 2016. The Council expressed overall satisfaction at the implementation of the programme of work in 2014-15 and highlighted a number of major achievements in its Report.

Today I will focus briefly on four innovations in the PIR 2014-15. This is the first PIR under the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17. It reports results relating to the five Strategic Objectives in terms of the 48 Outputs – what FAO delivers, with results measured by indicators and targets, contributing to 17 Outcomes – that is the changes and capacities at country level to achieve the Strategic Objectives.

It also reports on the Sixth Objective on technical quality, statistics and cross-cutting themes of gender and governance supporting delivery of the Outputs and Outcomes. It reports on the four Functional Objectives and three Special Chapters providing the internal enabling environment for FAO's work, measured by 34 key performance indicators.

Secondly, this is the first PIR using a robust monitoring and reporting methodology for results at Output and Outcome level. The outputs are FAO's contribution, in terms of products and services, to the Outcomes – that is what FAO is accountable to deliver. Outcomes reflect changes needed in the enabling environment at the country or global level to achieve the Strategic Objectives.

The methodology and measurement of indicators and targets to measure Outputs and Outcomes was developed by the FAO Chief Statistician, with analysis done by Strategic Programme Leaders. As mentioned by the Director-General this morning, FAO delivered 88 percent of the planned Outputs in the previous biennium, delivering the assistance to Members as committed in the PWB 2014-15. Output delivery helped Members progress in the changes expected in the enabling environment to achieve the Strategic Objectives, with FAO's contribution to Outcome Indicator progress rated positive by over 70 percent of the countries surveyed.

This is also the first PIR with integrated reporting on gender as a cross-cutting theme. FAO aims for strengthened country capacity to formulate, implement and monitor policies and programmes providing equal opportunities for women and men. FAO addressed gender issues contributing to Strategic Objectives through support to policy dialogue, programmes and capacity development in countries; through gender-related statistics; and through advocacy at global level.

Progress is measured by three sets of Indicators:

- The FAO Gender Policy on Equality – where 11 of 15 standards were achieved on the previous biennium.
- The UN-System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) implementation: where 13 of 15 performance indicators were met or exceeded.
- The Gender-sensitive Strategic Objective Outcome and Output indicators across the Strategic Objectives.

Finally, this is the first PIR benefiting from improved means of FAO delivery resulting from transformational change.

- 30 Key Performance Indicators of Functional Objectives were achieved, that is 88 percent of the KPIs.
- There was USD 2.5 billion overall expenditure in full compliance with IPSAS accounting standards, including 99.4 percent of net appropriation spent, and an increased proportion of expenditure in the field.
- TCP project approvals increased in volume by 11 percent, and delivery reached USD 125.8 million in the TCP Programme.
- We found USD 36.6 million in efficiency savings in the non-technical areas.

The experience in 2014-15 has informed our work in the current biennium, in particular four areas:

- First, the partnerships are key to achieving results at country level. Those of you who have seen the Mid-Term Review for 2016 will see that we continue to report on increased use of partnerships.
- The regional initiatives help focus FAO's work on country and regional needs.
- We found that country-level involvement in setting Output targets improves the accuracy of reporting and provides better information on the need and targeting of FAO assistance.
- Finally, the outcome reporting requires sufficient time and effort to collect information from stakeholders. As a result, we have already started the process of collecting reporting information for the 2016-17 biennium this month.

This concludes my introduction of the Programme Implementation Report for 2014-15, which is for consideration and endorsement by the Conference.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

We commented on the PIR in the Council in detail. I do not feel comfortable to say the same thing again. My suggestion would be we make it very short and just say that the Conference endorses the Report of the Council on the PIR and then quote the Report of the Council.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU (Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey) align themselves with this statement.

FAO reached nearly 90 percent of planned outputs and 77 percent of Outcomes during the biennium 2014-15. While we welcome these results achieved by FAO, we would like to underline the need for more stretching milestones and targets, facilitating lesson learning and helping FAO to improve its relevance and effectiveness at both global and country level.

We look forward to receiving the PIR 2016-17 and we encourage FAO to ensure all indicators for the 2018-19 results framework are SMART – or specific, measurable, with achievable, relevant and time-bound targets and baselines. This will contribute to the shift needed towards demonstrating effectiveness and impact – communicating to the world the difference that FAO is making, beyond processes.

We are also pleased to see that the USD 36.6 million of efficiency savings requested by the Conference have been achieved during the biennium and we encourage FAO to continue to demonstrate its maximum value both through demonstrating its relevance and effectiveness and through improving efficiency. This will help to make the case for further support.

Looking ahead, we expect FAO to allocate the resources needed to improve results, targeting priority areas in alignment with SDG targets and indicators. As custodian of 25 SDG indicators, FAO will need to support the utilization of those indicators, and we would welcome further information from Management on how FAO plans to resource this.

Once again, we commend FAO for the progress made in taking forward the results agenda over the past biennium and reiterate our support for continued strengthening of results management in FAO. We encourage FAO to continue with improvements to its results reporting, learn from experience and set realistic, ambitious and transparent output targets.

**M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)**

Je voulais être bref comme le délégué de l'Afghanistan parce que le Congo était intervenu au Conseil sur ce rapport, que nous avons déjà approuvé, mais comme je prends la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique je vais en lire la déclaration.

Le Groupe Afrique accueille favorablement le Rapport sur l'exécution du programme 2014-2015. Le rapport vient confirmer les changements transformationnels opérés dans l'Organisation depuis 2012.

Le Groupe Afrique note que la mise en œuvre du Programme a permis de réaliser 98 pour cent des produits attendus. Nous saluons les résultats obtenus et en apprécions la forte proportion au niveau des pays. Le Groupe Afrique exhorte la FAO de renforcer les acquis par des actions plus ciblées, notamment par l'intermédiaire des initiatives régionales déterminées lors des Conférences régionales.

Le Groupe Afrique apprécie les progrès accomplis par l'Organisation dans la lutte contre l'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition. Nous notons que les contributions de la FAO au Programme de développement à l'horizon 2030, à l'Accord de Paris sur les changements climatiques et à la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition ont été significatives. Nous attendons de voir intégrer ces résultats historiques dans les différents cadres de l'Organisation et leur mise en œuvre.

Le Groupe Afrique souligne la nécessité de mettre en œuvre le Programme 2030 et la Décennie d'action des Nations Unies pour la nutrition. Nous attendons un engagement de la FAO à continuer de se mobiliser en faveur de ces actions de fond et de renforcer les capacités institutionnelles des pays membres pour la réalisation des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD) et la Décennie d'action pour la nutrition.

Nous apprécions les progrès accomplis dans la célébration de l'Année internationale de l'agriculture familiale et de l'année internationale des sols, ainsi que leur mise en œuvre en lien avec la sécurité alimentaire. Les deux années internationales ont été célébrées avec succès. Compte tenu de l'importance de ces questions, pour nos régions, nous encourageons la FAO à consolider les résultats escomptés durant ces années par des actions plus ciblées aux niveaux national et régional, en vue d'aider les petits producteurs qui sont confrontés à la menace des changements climatiques.

La décentralisation est un outil capital, qui permet à l'Organisation de travailler de manière continue avec les gouvernements pour relever le défi de la faim zéro. Nous apprécions les résultats obtenus en matière de renforcement de la décentralisation et attendons avec intérêt de voir la suite du processus durant cet exercice biennal, notamment en ce qui concerne le renforcement des capacités des bureaux régionaux et autres bureaux décentralisés, afin que ceux-ci puissent répondre efficacement aux besoins des Membres.

Nous reconnaissons le rôle capital que jouent les partenariats dans la lutte contre la faim. Nous apprécions que la mise en place et le renforcement de partenariats stratégiques avec les Membres, les organisations des Nations Unies et d'autres organisations internationales, le secteur privé, ainsi que l'action constante menée, la coopération Sud-Sud et la coopération triangulaire sont des outils fondamentaux pour échanger sur les bonnes pratiques et les nouvelles technologies entre les Membres.

Le Groupe Afrique apprécie les progrès accomplis et les résultats obtenus par l'Organisation sur le thème transversal de la parité hommes-femmes. Nous encourageons la FAO à continuer d'intégrer la parité hommes-femmes dans ses activités et de prêter l'attention souhaitée aux thèmes transversaux comme la nutrition et le changement climatique, conformément à son mandat, pour forger la génération faim zéro.

Le Groupe Afrique note que durant l'exercice 2014-2015, le Secrétariat a pu dégager des gains d'efficience à hauteur de 36,6 millions d'USD. Nous saluons la mise en œuvre des normes comptables internationales pour le secteur privé, ainsi que le caractère novateur et la modernisation de la gestion des ressources humaines. Toutefois, le Groupe Afrique insiste sur la nécessité d'accorder l'attention souhaitée à une représentation géographique équitable du personnel.

Avec ces commentaires, le Groupe Afrique approuve le Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015.

**Ms Jiani TIAN (China) (Original language Chinese)**

China would like to thank the Secretariat for the documents provided. We would also like to congratulate the progress that has been achieved. China agrees to the approval of this Report and we would also like to make the following comments. Over 90 percent of the Outputs achieved and the 88 percent of the Outcomes is extremely commendable. The emphasis on South-South and triangular Cooperation is extremely important. The mention of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) is also extremely important.

Furthermore, in terms of the language services offered by FAO, even though we have mentioned that there were certain issues related to the translation quality and the timelines of the provision of the documents, as a whole we believe that FAO has maintained an effective, multilingual service.

Lastly, with regard to the priority of work of FAO, in the document there were 25 mentions of the priority points. China would like to see FAO put the different priority areas in sequence so that we can further our work in a more effective manner.

**Mr Anton MINAEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

The Russian Federation would like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the Programme Implementation Report for the past biennium.

We welcome the implementation of the concept proposed by the Secretary-General of the FAO as a knowledge organization with its feet on the ground. We highly appreciate the delivery by the Organization of 88 percent of outputs which fall within the remit of the Secretariat.

We agree with the premise of the Report about the need to ensure that Member States feel the practical benefits of FAO activities. But in order to monitor the situation on the ground, it is important to use reliable information, first and foremost information from the governments of the relevant countries.

Given the approval of the new assessment system, we consider the achievement of 77 percent of the Outcomes to be a fairly good indicator. In the future, we would suggest attaching special attention to those areas which appear to be lagging behind somewhat. This includes Strategic Objective 4 on enhancing the efficiency of agriculture and food systems. We support FAO efforts to make a meaningful contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

We approve of the attention that is given by the Organization to balance nutrition. FAO should take concrete steps in the framework of the follow-up action to follow the Second International Conference on Nutrition. In connection with this, we welcome the role of the Organization in ensuring the proclamation of the Decade for Action on Nutrition by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

We also highly value the standard-setting work of FAO. We are satisfied that the Council at the end of 2016 adopted the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management, which were developed at our initiative. In this context, we would suggest that the Secretariat pay great attention to promoting and assisting the effective implementation of the existing tools.

We are in favour of cooperation between FAO and non-state actors. Such cooperation should take place in accordance with the principle of intergovernmental decision making within our Organization. We believe that there is additional potential for developing partnerships between FAO and relevant academic institutions. A good example of this can be seen in the work done along the lines of the Global Soil Partnership. We would suggest including an item about the importance of cooperation with academia in the final report of our meeting.

We approve the development of ties between FAO and regional intergovernmental organizations. To complete the information contained in the Secretariat's Report, we would like to highlight our support for strengthening cooperation between FAO and the Eurasian Economic Commission with which the Organization has adopted and is implementing a Multi-Year Plan of Joint Action.

With regard to the financial side of things, we would like to note that the increase in the amount of voluntary contributions to FAO over the last two years by six percent is a reflection of higher perceived efficiency. Our delegation welcomes the efficiency savings made to the tune of USD 36.6

million achieved by the Secretariat during this reporting period, without any prejudice to the implementation of the Programme of Work. We hope that the Organization's Management and the framework of its delegate powers will continue to ensure an optimal use of financial resources.

We are grateful to the Secretariat for the efforts to promote linguistic balance within the Organization, including through a more extensive use of the Russian language. At the same time, we would like to underscore that budgetary savings should not serve as a pretext for reducing the number of languages used during FAO meetings. In this respect, we welcome the fact that during the recent session of the Plenary Assembly of the Global Soil Partnership both translation and interpretation were provided. We are in favour of continuing this practice in the future on a permanent basis. We highly value the increase in the number of Russian language publications, electronic documents, and terms on FAO's Specialized Portal. It is important to preserve and further develop this positive trend and we would like this to be reflected in the final report of this session as well.

**Mr Takaaki UMEDA (Japan)**

First of all, Japan would like to thank the Secretariat for the document. Japan commends FAO's efforts to establish and provide increasing results-based programme and budget management system, and welcomes the achievement of concrete results at both the Output and Outcome levels, as well as significant efficiency savings in 2014-15.

In the future, the Programme Implementation Report may be further improved by providing a detailed explanation as to why some of the Output and Outcome targets have not been achieved so that we can review the indicators and targets as appropriate and necessary.

With these comments, Japan adopts the PIR 2014-15.

**Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management)**

I would like to thank all of the delegates for their careful reading of the report, their interest in what the Organization has been able to achieve working with you, and how we can better report on what we do in the future. For those of you who have been associated with the Organization over the years, you will recognize that our progress in planning and in particular reporting results has been incremental and we are now getting to the point where we think we can use these results to really help us plan, particularly at the outcome level. Several of you have noticed the need to identify where there are gaps and how we can better move forward while working with countries in getting results.

In terms of the SDGs, the 2014-15 biennium was just at the time that the 2030 Agenda was adopted as well as the negotiations of the Paris Agreement. We have, of course, moved forward in integrating our work with the SDG targets in the current biennium.

Concerning the request of the delegate from Estonia on behalf of the EU for more information on how we are building capacity for the SDG targets of which we are custodian, in the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 we created the Office of Chief Statistician with additional responsibility for helping countries with the monitoring of the indicators for which FAO is custodian. We have also allocated additional resources in the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 for work on statistics. There has been at least one briefing for the Membership provided by the Chief Statistician on how we are working with countries to build up the capacity to measure the SDG indicators. Of course all countries face issues with the indicators; while some are Tier I, some are Tier II or Tier III where data or methods do not yet exist. We are allocating resources for that and we would hope in the next PIR to be able to give you a little more concrete information.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I would like to give you the summary conclusions for Agenda Item 21, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-15*.

The Conference: a) endorsed the findings of the report of the 154<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council;

b) welcomed the transformational change introduced in FAO since 2012, which led to the delivery of positive results by the Organization within the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17;

- c) expressed overall satisfaction for the implementation of the Programme of Work in 2014–15 and welcomed the FAO contribution to major global policy achievements aimed at addressing hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- d) welcomed the high proportion of results delivered at country and regional level and encouraged continued efforts focused through the regional initiatives;
- e) expressed satisfaction at the increased efficiency and value for money, including the identification of USD 36.6 million in savings;
- f) appreciated the mainstreaming of gender across FAO activities, as well as efforts made in enhancing partnerships, South-South Cooperation and language balance in FAO products and looked forward to continued attention in this regard;
- g) welcomed the announcement of the new format of the Programme Implementation Report document and look forward to adjustments of indicator targets and to further refinement of reporting on Outcomes and Outputs in the next Programme Implementation Report. Lastly, it endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15.

I hope that you may agree with these summary conclusions.

**Mr Anton MINAEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

Thank you very much for your comprehensive summary. During my statement, I suggested that we should include a mention of bringing strengthening cooperation between FAO and academia. I would like this to be included in your summary as well, please.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think we can embed that in the conclusion which I will read out because there I was referring to announcing partnerships. There we could say “including with academia”. Thank you very much, Russian Federation for agreeing with this.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We are happy with most of the conclusions, but we missed a link to more ambitious and realistic indicators.

Also, could you please repeat d) of your conclusions?

**CHAIRPERSON**

Point d) was “welcomed the high proportion of results delivered at country and regional level and encouraged continued efforts focused through the regional initiatives”.

I would like to make the following suggestion taking on board your remarks about the indicators. I will read all of g): welcomed the announcements of the new format of the Programme Implementation Report document and looked forward to the adjustment of indicator targets, including more ambitious targets, and to further refinement of report on outcomes and outputs in the next Programme Implementation Report.

Is that agreeable? Thank you very much. Any other remarks? I see none. We can then adopt and at least send this to the Drafting Committee, but there is a clear understanding that we have concerns within this room about the conclusions of this Agenda Item 21 on the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15.

**Item 22. Programme Evaluation Report 2017**

**Point 22. Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 2017**

**Tema 22. Informe sobre la evaluación del programa en 2017**

(C 2017/4)

**CHAIRPERSON**

I would like to turn now to Agenda Item 22, *Programme Evaluation Report 2017*. The report provides a summary of the main evaluation activities of the Organization during the period 2015 and 2016. The

report also provides an analytical summary of the emerging trends in evaluation at FAO. It should also be noted that the Office of Evaluation has embarked in a new series of evaluations to review FAO's contribution to its Strategic Objectives which are very valuable tools, of course, for the Organization. The Conference is invited to provide such guidance as it deems appropriate.

Now I would like to give the floor to Mr Masahiro Igarashi, Director of the Office of Evaluation, to present the report.

**Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)**

I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to present the Programme Evaluation Report 2017 which covers evaluations conducted during 2015 and 2016.

The main part of this year's Programme Evaluation Report comprises the synthesis of findings of evaluations conducted in the last two years. The report thus presents major programme results identified, as well as gaps to be filled and lessons to be learned for the future.

During this period, we have initiated a series of strategic objective evaluations and increased the coverage of country programme evaluations and project evaluations. As you can see in the map on the screen, we have covered 79 countries either through full country programme evaluation or project evaluations. In addition to the evaluation of Strategic Objective 5, increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises, we carried out three thematic evaluations respectively on the FAO contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation, knowledge on food and agriculture and the conservation of sustainable use of genetic resources.

Let me move on to key findings from the evaluations. Overall, at the country level, it was found that in general FAO programmes were highly relevant to the needs at the country level. The Country Programming Framework has become the primary strategic instrument in alignment to national priorities and FAO's global objectives. Looking in more detail into individual projects or programme components, the linkage to the strategic level objectives were not always clear due to the lack of clear change which also takes into account the local context and conditions.

FAO has shown its comparative advantage in terms of leadership and convening power in policy and plan development and in technical support. However, FAO has struggled with marketing and resource mobilization. Partnership with a central government was generally found strong. The FAO decentralization has further strengthened the coordination with national authorities and other partners. At the same time, there were countries where FAO needs to engage more with public sector partners at the subnational level. Partnership with the private sector also needs to be further developed.

In terms of achievements at the country level, the results of assessment were mixed, but in general more positive than negative; more so in terms of achieving stated objectives and producing tangible benefits to target beneficiaries, less so in capacity development and resource mobilization. Challenges were also seen in small country programmes that, despite a demand for FAO expertise, could not effectively mobilize resources and provide support because of the lack of country office capacity.

Moving on to the results at the global level, evaluations found that FAO has generally responded well to the changing global contexts in the areas of its mandate, for instance in response to the increased global trade of agriculture products or the need to prevent the spread of plant and animal diseases. FAO developed a number of global strategies and standards and supported global governance, for instance in the areas of hunger reduction, food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural statistics, and food safety standards. It has also developed models to be applied at the country level that brought benefits to the countries and communities. The examples are climate-smart agriculture, farmer field schools, school garden and voluntary guidelines on land tenure.

In some areas, especially where new issues and concepts have emerged, such as on the role of agriculture in climate change or resilience-building, FAO could improve its policy link and advocacy in the evolving global context.

Now let me move on to cross-cutting issues on capacity development. Nearly two-thirds of the evaluations found that there was a good integration of the three dimensions of capacity development, namely both individual and institutional capacity development with an enabling environment. In some

other cases, the programmes tended to focus on individual training and changes were not visible on policy environment, institutional arrangements and knowledge systems for long-term impact. In terms of design, capacity development programmes were found to be more successful when they focused more on local expertise in institutions and when needs assessments and follow-up activities were systematically carried out.

On gender mainstreaming, FAO was found to be improving on mainstreaming gender dimensions of its work, even though more remains to be done mainly in terms of the design of field-level projects. Full cadres of gender specialists were deployed throughout the Organization, including field offices. It will still take time, however, for those gender specialists to fully understand how to integrate gender dimensions in different technical programmes and offer effective advice beyond pro forma checking.

On nutrition, mapping the progress against the FAO Nutrition Strategy, we found that in general FAO has played a positive role in coordination and leadership for promoting the inclusion of nutrition aspects into food security and agriculture policies and in support of collecting and disseminating nutrition data. The challenge ahead is in linking these policies to implementation at the subnational and local levels.

In closing, this was a presentation of some salient points in the report. I would like to invite you to check our website for further details if you are interested in a particular evaluation or a topic. I hope you liked this revised format for the Programme Evaluation Report and look forward for your comments and guidance.

**Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)**

Bangladesh has the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Asia Regional Group welcomes and appreciates this report of the Office of Evaluation for its new initiative to review the FAO contribution towards its Strategic Objectives and produce its cost report on Strategic Objective 5, *Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises*. We extend our sincere thanks for a clear Programme Evaluation Report 2017.

The Asia Group commends FAO efforts to support the country development process through the promotion of internationally agreed normative standards, statistics, technical information, and to provide country-level support through capacity development and technical assistance. The Office of Evaluation conducted 11 country level evaluations, 39 project evaluations, and four other thematic evaluations to review the FAO's contribution in food and agriculture, including cross-cutting issues like capacity development, gender and nutrition building from 2015 to 2016.

The Evaluation Report found 51 percent of programmes have achieved the stated objectives in full and 36 percent of programmes have achieved partial objectives at country level. Higher-level satisfaction was found on policy impact and substantial benefits for larger group members with 54 percent in both cases, whereas in the case of capacity development and resource mobilization, the satisfaction level is 31 and 33 percent respectively. We agree that there are so many external factors affecting the full achievement of the FAO's Strategic Objectives. Asia will highlight the key fact that the participatory process should be allowed in programme planning and implantation to better implement the FAO Strategic Objectives.

The FAO contribution at the global level has been evaluated in terms of strategic relevance and strategic focus. While an authoritative source of information, standard technical frameworks and models including technical expertise in food and agriculture are widely recognized. The global strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics, the climate-smart agriculture, farmer field school, and school gardening are some of the important examples of the FAO contribution at the global level.

FAO is playing a vital role in a wide range of food and agriculture activities by interacting at national, regional and global levels. However, the insufficient contextualization of FAO technical materials with local needs, as well as lack of capacity to equalize the materials at the subnational levels, are identified as constraints for the effective application of FAO knowledge products. We welcome the evaluation conclusions on cross-cutting issues. We very much appreciate that 63 percent of the programme provided integrated capacity development support encompassing individuals and institutions and enabling environment levels.

We appreciate the findings of the better alignment of FAO's work with national priorities addressing gender disparity and the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE); however, it needs to improve the gender focus in the project document. Concerning the conclusions of the evaluation on all three outcomes of the FAO Nutrition Strategy, the Asia Group noted with thanks that FAO is contributing a lot in integrating nutrition into food and agriculture.

Finally, the Asia Group is looking forward to seeing the full implementation of findings and recommendations of the Evaluation Report for better results in the near future.

With this note, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Programme Evaluation Report 2017.

**Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)**

The Report is a very good initiative of course and so I only want to comment on one particular matter that was highlighted in the Report and also by the Director of the Office of Evaluation.

As the Deputy Prime Minister highlighted this morning in his response to the McDougall Memorial Lecture, farmers will not produce unless they can get a fair return and a decent wage. This applies to smallholders, family farms of all kinds, as well as small, medium and large businesses. So I want to highlight the important role of collaboration with the private sector in achieving our shared goal of ending hunger.

When the farmer or related upstream or downstream business invests their own money, this can help us end hunger. So what is it that makes that investment decision easier or harder? What makes it more likely that they will raise a decent income and what makes it less likely? What might stop that business from making that investment in the first place? What markets are there? What are the best opportunities for farmers in particular countries? What can governments do to make those investment decisions easier? So the answers to these questions are of course very complex and why we are here but what is clear, I think, is the private sector is a critical part of finding those answers and they can contribute through partnerships with governments, international bodies such as FAO of course and civil society.

I would like to briefly highlight two good examples for the information of delegates who might not be familiar with these. The first is the World Economic Forum Grow Asia Initiative, which was modelled on the Grow Africa Initiative, a similar initiative that preceded it. Grow Asia is a multi-stakeholder partnership platform developed by the World Economic Forum and the ASEAN Secretariat and launched in 2015. The focus is on catalysing more sustainable and inclusive agro-business ventures across Southeast Asia.

Grow Asia's objective is to drive new inclusive agro-business investments reaching ten million small scale farmers and improving farm productivity, profitability and environmental sustainability by 20 percent.

The second example I would like to highlight is Ag Results, a USD 118 million multilateral initiative to encourage high impact agricultural innovations in research and delivery in order to promote global food security, health and nutrition. An important feature of Ag Results is that it uses a market pull mechanism, which harnesses the innovative and financial potential of the private sector to create public goods and ultimately support food security.

In closing, I would like to say that Australia greatly appreciated the words of the Director-General at last year's meeting of the Committee on Agriculture where he highlighted the importance of private sector engagement in ending hunger.

**Mr Gerry INDRADI (Indonesia)**

At the outset my delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We would like to add our observations on national capacity but I would like to first thank the Office of Evaluation for their hard work in preparing the Programme Evaluation Report for the period 2015-16.

Now commenting on the document, first, my delegation is of the view that the Programme Evaluation Report 2015-16 has been markedly improved from the previous one. My delegation noticed that the

Office used different methodologies and formats for the two documents. We are of the view that the current Programme Evaluation Report is more reader friendly. Thus we would like to suggest that the Office use the same evaluation methodology and format for the next PER.

Second, my delegation is pleased with the Office's findings on strengthened coordination between FAO and national partners, especially government authorities, as a result of this decentralization process. In this regard, my delegation would like to underscore the importance of strong partnership between FAO and national focal points as the success of implementation of national projects hinges on it.

Third, in paragraph 19, third bullet from above, we take note of the Office's observation which stated that the CPFs (Country Programming Frameworks) should not be overly specific at the level of activities in order to enable emerging opportunities. However, my delegation is of the view that without clearly defined activities it would be difficult for some Member Countries, including my country, to measure the Outputs and Outcomes of the CPF.

In closing, we would like to again thank the Director and his staff for preparing this document which my delegation endorses.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We also welcome the document, on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries of Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

A strong and independent Office of Evaluation is essential to assess FAO's delivery, at the national, regional and global levels, and to continually improve performance to achieve greater impact. The introduction of Strategic Objectives and thematic evaluations is an important contribution to this. We welcome this report, which summarises the main findings from evaluations conducted in 2015 and 2016, demonstrating early results from reforms, including the reviewed Strategic Framework that has led to greater strategic focus in the work of FAO. We support the FAO collaboration with other partners and agencies, including in humanitarian crises, particularly with the World Food Programme. It is encouraging that evaluations show that Country Programming Frameworks (CPF) have become the primary strategic instrument for guiding FAO activities at the country level. We look forward to them becoming even more aligned with FAO global goals. Moving forward, we would like to ask FAO Management about the scope for CPFs being used to identify strategic opportunities for further strengthening partnerships, including with the other Rome-based agencies. If possible, piloting connecting country strategies – FAO, IFAD and WFP country strategic plans – could be a way of identifying further synergies to deliver results together in line with the aspirations of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

We encourage FAO management to continue strengthening the FAO response to evaluations, as a means to constantly improve the Organization. In this regard, we would like to commend FAO for the inclusive process that led to the adoption of the FAO Climate Change Strategy in response to the 2015 evaluation of FAO's contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation. We look forward to its implementation and ensuring that the gap between global and country-level performance highlighted in the PER is addressed.

We will continue to pay particular attention to the work of FAO on cross-cutting issues. We welcome the finding that there is increasingly consistent and strong emphasis on gender. We look forward to the evaluation of the FAO work on gender to be reviewed in 2018-19. We welcome the emphasis on climate change and agriculture within the FAO Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, particularly to support member countries to swiftly and fully implement the Paris Agreement. On nutrition, we commend FAO for having promoted collaboration and coordination of work between relevant actors at the central level, developing and implementing national multi-sectoral nutrition policies and strategies. We encourage FAO to do this at project level, working with other United Nations agencies to create synergies and partnerships, in which FAO can provide technical knowledge for nutrition-sensitive agriculture as proposed in the evaluation report. We also encourage FAO to continue working on the implementation of the work programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition,

which the Organization is called upon to co-lead with the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and IFAD.

The 2016 evaluation of the FAO evaluation function reported that the FAO Office of Evaluation has made significant progress during the last biennium but that there remains scope for improvement, both in learning and accountability. The evaluation notes that in some cases evaluations were done too early or too late and that there have sometimes been delays in the evaluation process. These issues could limit opportunities for learning and improvement. We urge FAO to improve the timeliness of evaluations and its responses to them.

We will continue to monitor the follow-up and implementation of evaluation recommendations, and welcome the inclusion of a key performance indicator on this in the FAO Strategic Results Framework. We look forward to reviewing progress, also in improving the integration of gender considerations in evaluation, as recommended by the Programme Committee in November 2016.

We would like to conclude by reiterating our full support to the work of the FAO Office of Evaluation, and the importance of identifying emerging and recurrent trends in evaluations to discuss with Management the main results, gaps and lessons identified in the work of FAO in order to learn, improve, and deliver better results.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

I have the honour to intervene on behalf of the Near East Group on the Programme Evaluation Report 2017. The Near East Group welcomes the format of the Programme Evaluation Report 2017, which is basically a synthesis of 11 country portfolio evaluations, 4 thematic evaluations and 39 individual project evaluations all carried out during 2015-16. It is a good synthesis of the major findings of these evaluations and will focus on some key aspects of the operation.

The Near East Group also welcomes the policy shift of the Office of Evaluation to give priority to the evaluation of FAO's five Strategic Objectives. Two Strategic Objectives have already been evaluated; namely Strategic Objective 5 and Strategic Objective 3. The evaluation of Strategic Objective 4 is planned for this year and Strategic Objective 1 and Strategic Objective 2 for 2018.

The Near East Group is hoping that the synthesis of the five Strategic Evaluations will be submitted to the 41<sup>st</sup> FAO Conference in 2019. At country level, the findings of the Evaluation Report give a fairly high mark to the relevance of FAO field projects with nationalities and polarity and in this respect underscores the vital contribution of the Country Programme Framework.

On partnership, the Evaluation Report gives a positive impression of the FAO sustained effort to improve and expand partnership with all stakeholders including national institutions and makes the point that decentralization has contributed to the effectiveness of partnership. The Near East Group agrees with this general conclusion.

On capacity development, which is an essential ingredient of FAO's engagement in the developing countries, especially the LDCs, satisfactory progress has been made but more needs to be done. In particular, by linking training with institutional development, improving targeting and in mobilizing more resources for capacity development.

Likewise, gender mainstreaming has made progress especially the role played by dedicated gender specialists across FAO. With respect to nutrition, the FAO contribution is considered as praiseworthy especially at the policy level and in interagency coordination on nutrition. However, more work is required to make nutrition the centrepiece of sustainable national food policies.

On section four, the Near East Group wishes to make the following two observations. Observation one: the evaluation shows that during the period of the review only two evaluations took place in the Near East and North Africa compared with eight evaluations in Asia and the Pacific and seven in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Is there any reason for the very small number of evaluations in the Near East and the Africa regions?

Observation two: it is a bit odd that the number of country project evaluations is less than that of the global inter-regional and regional projects. This is because in terms of numbers, the country projects

account for no less than 90 percent of the total number of field projects at a given time. Is it that global, inter-regional and regional projects are problem-prone and therefore subject to evaluation?

With these observations, the Near East Group endorses the Programme Evaluation Report 2017.

**M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)**

Je voudrais commencer par féliciter le Directeur de l'évaluation, que je vois souvent au Comité du Programme, pour l'excellent travail de compilation des évaluations de 2015 et 2016, qu'il a réalisé avec son équipe.

Je prends la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique, qui accueille favorablement ce rapport. Le rapport met en lumière les progrès accomplis pour faire de la FAO une organisation davantage axée sur les résultats aux niveaux mondial et des pays. Au titre des contributions de la FAO au niveau des pays, le Groupe Afrique salue la pertinence et l'alignement stratégique des programmes de la FAO par rapport aux objectifs nationaux et aux priorités régionales et mondiales, puisque 87 pour cent des évaluations ont estimé que les programmes étaient satisfaisants et même très satisfaisants.

Toutefois, le Groupe Afrique souligne que certains programmes devraient apporter un soutien plus adapté aux pays pour conduire à une participation plus intense des partenaires et des parties prenantes aux processus décisionnels. Le Groupe Afrique apprécie les partenariats et la coordination entre les pouvoirs publics et la FAO. Nous estimons que la collaboration pourrait renforcer le sentiment d'appropriation des projets par les gouvernements et ainsi contribuer à la viabilité des résultats des projets. Nous soulignons la nécessité de promouvoir une collaboration solide entre la FAO et les pouvoirs publics au niveau national pour éviter les doutes quant à l'efficacité et à la viabilité des interventions.

Le Groupe Afrique apprécie également les partenariats fournisseurs de ressources à travers des mécanismes efficaces mis en place par la FAO pour établir des contacts avec des donateurs. Nous saluons également la collaboration de la FAO avec les organismes chargés des crises humanitaires, comme le Programme alimentaire mondial que nous avons cité tout à l'heure. Nous encourageons la FAO à s'engager dans des programmes communs, notamment dans le cadre de l'initiative des Nations Unies «Unis dans l'action», qui peut être une source de collaboration sûre et de partenariat sur le terrain.

Le Groupe Afrique souligne l'importance de la FAO, qui doit développer des liens forts avec le secteur privé afin de mettre en place des chaînes de valeur performantes. C'est ainsi que nous estimons que les projets à venir devraient accorder une place et une plus grande attention aux opportunités et aux forces du marché et pourraient à notre avis être conçus pour renforcer les partenariats avec le secteur privé et les organisations paysannes, qui sont les acteurs sur le terrain.

Le Groupe Afrique salue les progrès accomplis sur le renforcement des capacités, qui confirme que les capacités des divers groupes ont été renforcées. Nous sommes préoccupés par le fait qu'il a été plus difficile de déterminer les conséquences à long terme et à un niveau plus élevé, nous notons par exemple sur l'environnement politique, les engagements institutionnels, les systèmes de connaissances. Il serait donc judicieux de déterminer ces conséquences.

Le Groupe Afrique salue les progrès réalisés en matière d'intégration des questions de parité hommes-femmes dans les activités de la FAO, ainsi que les facteurs qui y ont contribué. Nous apprécions le bon alignement des activités de la FAO avec les priorités nationales en matière de lutte contre les disparités entre les sexes et les plans d'action nationaux en faveur de la parité.

Pour des projets à venir, le Groupe Afrique pense qu'il serait judicieux de mettre l'accent sur la parité, et nous exhortons notamment la FAO à consentir des efforts pour y remédier lors de la mise en œuvre des projets et d'appliquer des principes d'égalité entre les sexes.

Le Groupe Afrique apprécie que la FAO ait contribué à l'amélioration de la qualité, de la disponibilité et de l'accès aux données sur la sécurité alimentaire. Toutefois, nous soulignons l'importance de la mise en œuvre de la Décennie d'action pour la nutrition. C'est pour cela que nous saluons également le rôle déterminant de la FAO en tant que chef de file dans le processus de coordination technique sur la nutrition à l'échelle des pays. Nous exhortons la FAO à assister les pays membres à résoudre les

problèmes concernant la gouvernance multisectorielle, multipartite et les capacités de mise en œuvre des politiques au niveau infranational.

C'est avec ces commentaires que le Groupe Afrique appuie l'adoption de ce rapport.

**Ms Jiani TIAN (China) (Original language Chinese)**

China agrees with the work of the Office of Evaluation.

First of all, China recognizes the relatively high quality of the Report, which not only highlights the delivery at the national, global and regional levels but also includes a stand-alone evaluation of cross-cutting contributions. However, China noted at the country partnership level the mentioning of South-South Cooperation was missing. China hopes that the Office of Evaluation will provide an explanation for this deletion.

Furthermore on the country level, Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) related work was also not mentioned when in fact much new progress has been achieved. This is extremely important in relation to climate change, youth farmers, re-employment of youth farmers, gender equality, etc. In fact, much progress has been achieved in these areas so China wishes to know the reason for the lack of evaluation of GIAHS-related work on this point.

While we commend FAO contributions in cross-cutting evaluation, we believe FAO should focus on the core functions and comparative advantage instead of spending so much energy on cross-cutting. FAO should enlarge the work on food security in order to reduce a number of people who go hungry in the world. The reason for China's considerations is that we consider cross-cutting work being handled by specific organizations in the United Nations system. We hope the Office of Evaluation will recognize China's concerns.

We worry that when too much attention is paid to cross-cutting topics, this will dilute the FAO strength in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, livestock, etc. Instead, systematic evaluation should be conducted in these areas.

**Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)**

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Group statement delivered by Bangladesh and welcomes the Programme Evaluation Report 2017.

The evaluation work conducted by the Office of Evaluation is essential for ensuring accountability of FAO and we highly appreciate the quality of this Report and of many others.

Japan would like to highlight some of the Report's findings, for example that FAO needs to collaborate further with the private sector and that technical materials produced by FAO should be contextualized to meet local needs, while providing greater support for capacity building at subnational levels to utilize these materials. Such findings we think are particularly important when considering how to disseminate FAO contributions more widely. We hope that FAO continuously improves its work based on these evaluation results.

**Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

Trinidad and Tobago commends the PER for its clarity and insight. From our perspective, the PER represents an opportunity to reflect, take stock and provide guidance for moving forward with purpose and confidence.

Trinidad and Tobago and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean very much depend on and benefit from the technical excellence that FAO has exhibited over the years of our cooperation in the areas of food security and nutrition, agriculture, plant and animal health, forestry and fisheries. In fact, this support is very critical in our context as small island states with limited human resource capacity. Therefore, we agree and remain concerned about the observation made about the limitations of the country office capacity that exists in the FAO representations.

In this regard, we argue that this renders even more urgent the importance of strengthening the composition and the capacity of the subregional offices and in particular the subregional office in the

Caribbean so that it may more adequately backstop the development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the Caribbean subregion of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In that regard, it is critical that as we move into the new areas of relevant concern we do not lose sight of the fact and detract from the intrinsic basic technical capacity that we depend on at FAO in the areas of entomology, plant protection, plant pathology and so on in support of all agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

As intimated by Mr Steiner in his lecture this morning, all needs in this regard will become even more relevant and intense in the context of meeting the challenges confronting the agricultural economy of tomorrow, of course realizing what we are seeking to realize with the Strategic Objective 4.

With these observations, Trinidad and Tobago unhesitatingly endorses the PER 2017.

**M. Louis LAHOUD (Liban) (Langue originale arabe)**

Au nom du Groupe Proche Orient, je voudrais souligner l'importance de l'évaluation de ce Programme mis en œuvre en 2014-2015, sur lequel nous avons reçu des évaluations périodiques, élément fondamental en particulier pour les pays de notre région. Je voudrais faire quelques propositions qui, j'espère, seront prises en compte dans la prochaine évaluation du Programme.

Nous espérons que l'évaluation tiendra compte à l'avenir des questions sexo-spécifiques. Deuxièmement, nous espérons que l'évaluation se concentrera sur les petits agriculteurs, en particulier dans les pays de nos régions parce qu'ils représentent un très grand pourcentage. Ceci est vrai aussi pour les femmes dans les zones rurales, qui jouent un rôle important dans les projets de développement.

En ce qui concerne la nutrition, un certain nombre de pays ont beaucoup avancé sur cette question et nous espérons qu'à l'avenir, lors des réunions, la FAO jouera un rôle plus important à cet égard compte tenu du fait que les Membres de notre région ont besoin de ce type de projet.

Ce rapport est excellent et il nous amènera certainement à des conclusions qui seront bénéfiques pour tous les États Membres.

**Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)**

I would like to echo all the appreciation that has been expressed so far on this Programme Evaluation Report. I will focus my comments on one particular issue, which is gender.

We very much appreciate the progress in FAO's efforts and results in mainstreaming gender and measures that are taken to do that even more systematically. We look forward to working more closely with the Organization to find solutions that would deliver even more transformational impact. Our Minister for International Development and La Francophonie, Minister Bibeau, launched two weeks ago our new Feminist International Assistance Policy that really put at the heart gender equality and the empowerment of women while also constituting a core action in itself.

We will devote at least 95 percent of Canada's bilateral international assistance in targeting or integrating gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and we will in part help promote reforms to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, including in areas such as land tenure. So we really think that, as was highlighted at one of the Zero Hunger events today, this is an area where we really need to step up and scale up like it was highlighted there as well as in the evaluation on Strategic Objective 3, how we can scale up approaches that work to reach a greater impact. We really also welcome the new approach of evaluations having specific gender analysis.

Finally, to say that it would be helpful in the future to see how evaluations could look at synergies among the three cross-cutting issues, nutrition, climate change and gender, and how they mutually reinforce each other.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Canada, for your remarks, especially highlighting the crucial role of women and gender in the work of FAO.

I do not see any other requests for the floor. I would like to give the floor first to Mr Igarashi to react to some of the remarks.

**Mr Masahiro IGARASHI, (Director, Office of Evaluation)**

Thank you, delegates, for the number of comments, especially also for understanding our intent of moving into this format and presenting the new Programme Evaluation Report to you.

Let me just reply to some of the issues that may be relevant to us. First, just responding to what was said by Indonesia about the Country Programming Frameworks (CPF) and activity level information to be included in the CPF. What we realized is that the CPF is used more as a strategic level document to agree on the direction and the high-level objectives of the collaboration between FAO and the country. Yes, there needs to be more elaborate agreement on the activities to be conducted, but those are two different objectives that may need to be really thought about in terms of what goes into this document and what kinds of things should go into another document. This is a format question that we are looking at in the Synthesis Report that will be provided next year in the Programme Committee. We are also looking into other organizations' experiences in different planning documents and how this can help FAO look into a sharper CPF and also activity planning documents.

A number of delegations raised the issue of the private sector. I am glad to inform you that we are going to present the Strategic Objective for evaluation in the next session of the Programme Committee which looks into food systems and value chains and these kinds of topics. There are a number of interesting findings that we feel may further help you discuss how to deepen private sector engagement. In addition, we advised the Programme Committee that we are particularly looking at the policy on the private sector partnerships that will be coming in 2021 in our evaluation plan.

Now in terms of capacity development, a number of delegations picked up on this point that was made in the Programme Evaluation Report that there should be more long-term involvement in terms of policy environment, institutional development, knowledge systems, and so on. That is a more challenging area of development. Our observation – now this is a synthesis, so if I may get a little bit more into this – is that this also relates to the project design because if you want to go to the local level, if you want to contextualize our approach to agricultural development in the countries, you cannot just design it at headquarters to make a model that fits everybody. The headquarters level develops a technical approach and the models that need to be further designed, contextualized and brought to the level of local governments and partners. This needs a project design that is suited to this, but often the traditional projects just do the one-time capacity development activities at the national level and stop. That is why we are suggesting that not only FAO local office but also donors of those projects have to think about having a design that is conducive to contextualization and local capacity development.

Let me respond to the question of Afghanistan on why we had only two evaluations during this period in the Near East region. Actually, we were planning a little bit more, but in the case of one country one evaluation was declined by the country because the government wanted to do it themselves and the other was actually conducted, but this was a programme evaluation in the West Bank and Gaza, so we did not include those in the number of country programme evaluations.

Now why were there more interregional and regional or global project evaluations than country level evaluations? This is partly because there are more country projects, but the budget size is smaller and it is also designed between the country office and the resource partner in the country. Often we have found that the evaluation provision is not properly included in the project agreement for the smaller country projects because they wanted to spend more resources on the activities. The bigger projects, for example the irrigation project in Afghanistan, have a proper budget for evaluation and that is why we were able to conduct those evaluations. This is in contrast to the regional global projects which are more controlled by headquarters and therefore we have more of a chance to conduct evaluations. Another factor is that the resource partners are identified through the headquarters and we therefore have more opportunity to comment on proper budgeting for evaluations in these projects.

Responding to China, yes, we were looking into South-South Cooperation. Probably we should propose something for the next cycle of evaluation and planning. Please understand that this is a

synthesis of existing evaluations. When we look into projects and so on, if there is a specific South-South component, we then comment. But what we found was there was not enough material for us to comment on this round of evaluations during the two years. However, I understand the number of initiatives based on the South-South Cooperation model has been increasing and I am sure that in the next round of synthesis we will have enough materials to pick from these evaluations and make comments.

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) is also one trust fund project evaluation. We wish to see whether it has certain evaluation provisions in the programme and we can actually engage with those. However, I remember that it was conducted before 2014 and probably therefore the programme cycle is just skipping over this particular biennium.

On the cross-cutting topics, most of the evaluations actually evaluate the programme itself, the main FAO programme. The synthesis was done mainly because of the interest of Member States at this level on picking up the lessons learned on the same things related to gender or capacity development and that is why the report took this shape. However, of course, most of the FAO programme is embedded in FAO main objectives, the Strategic Objectives, and therefore we only focus the evaluation there.

**Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)**

It is a very interesting topic and I think it will come up again in the discussion tomorrow on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). The short answer I think would be definitely we are very interested in looking at how we can utilize or move towards a common Programming Framework with IFAD and WFP. We have something along these lines in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with WFP already. We are modifying that to add IFAD in as a third member of that MoU. The matter is touched on in the strategic collaboration paper that you have seen. With regard to using the three instruments that the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) each have in a more comprehensive way, clearly we are interested in that and are hoping to move in that direction.

The difficulty arises when you get to the country level and see all three of the instruments within the context of a UN country team collaboration. In that case, always all three of the documents should be fully aligned with the country's own development strategy. Sometimes the timing of the strategy that each of us develops is not synchronized, which is a bit of a problem. But where we run into the most interesting issues as we go forward is at the interaction of the three Rome-based Agencies within the larger UN Country Team Framework and the UN Development Assistance Framework, the UNDAF.

The Secretary-General released on 30 June his initial response to the QCPR that outlines what he sees as the main elements of UN reform or some of the elements that he sees as a priority for this. A number of those relate to having the UN Development Assistance Framework become the single document, not just something that we all contribute and each have our own versions of, but that it would move to become the single document. We will see how it develops as this is somewhat complicated for all of us. What may happen in that regard is that the funds in programmes that come under the Secretary-General, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, and so on, already have stricter arrangements in how their country strategy must fit into the larger UN Development Assistance Framework.

Ideally, we would all work together on that. But the extent to which we have a common document will likely go faster with the funds in programmes that report directly to New York in a more direct way than we do. So I could imagine that there could be some complications that would work in the same direction as the three of us trying to work together and have a common framework within the context of having all agencies come together around a common framework. That has for us, when you aggregate the issues at that level, some advantages but it also has some disadvantages. So I think definitely we are very interested. We have it in the work plan to see how we might do this, but I think we need to watch very carefully how UN reform at the country level evolves in a way that either facilitates this or that does in fact make it somewhat more difficult for us as three agencies on our own to do that.

**CHAIRPERSON**

With that, I would like now to turn to the summary conclusions on Agenda Item 22, *Programme Evaluation Report*.

The Conference:

- a) welcomed the Programme Evaluation Report, including the main findings emerging from the thematic strategic country and project evaluations completed during the period 2015-16;
- b) noted FAO's comparative advantages and role in several important areas in food security and agricultural-related areas and activities, *inter alia*, in policy assistance and capacity building;
- c) appreciated FAO's progress in the decentralization process which has enabled strengthened coordination with national partners, South-South Cooperation, and the development of strategic partnerships with other stakeholders, especially the private sector, and key development actors;
- d) welcomed collaboration with other UN agencies, especially with WFP and IFAD, and looked forward to continued attention in this regard;
- e) noted the better alignment of evaluation with FAO's Reviewed Strategic Framework through the ongoing evaluations of FAO's contribution to its Strategic Objectives;
- f) welcomed the findings of mainstreaming and increased attention to cross-cutting issues, including climate change, nutrition, and gender, and look forward to the evaluation of FAO's work on gender to be submitted to the 2019 Conference; and
- g) supported continuation of improvements introduced by the Office of Evaluation, including with regard to timeliness of evaluations and their responses.

These are the summary conclusions. Could you support them?

**Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)**

I would just like to comment on the reference to the private sector. I cannot remember your precise wording but I think you talked about appreciating the progress in something about the private sector. Whereas I think the comments from around the floor and in the report were about the importance of building and working on those partnerships, whatever the right language is for that. Maybe it is about continuing to strengthen partnerships with the private sector or something along those lines.

**CHAIRPERSON**

What I then propose, and it was referred to in c), which was read and I could now re-read: appreciated FAO's progress in the decentralization process which has enabled strengthened coordination with national partners, South-South Cooperation, and the development of strategic partnerships with other stakeholders, especially private sector and key development actors, and looked forward to strengthening these partnerships, especially with the private sector.

**Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

I would just like to suggest two minor amendments to d). First, to change the verb 'welcomed' to 'encouraged'. And second, to change the word 'attention' to 'progress'.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Are these proposals acceptable? Because it would read then, "encouraged collaboration with other UN agencies, especially with WFP and IFAD, and looked forward to continued progress in this regard".

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We would simply like to ask you to repeat g) once again.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I will read it out again: "supported continuation of improvements introduced by the Office of Evaluation, including with regard to timeliness of evaluations and their responses".

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

Could we start the sentence with “looked forward”?

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think that sentence would read a little bit clearer, “looked forward to the continuation of improvements introduced by the Office of Evaluation, including with regard to timeliness of evaluations and their responses”. Can we agree with that?

Then we will, of course, send these approved summary conclusions of Item 22 to the Drafting Committee and I hope that they can finalize it.

The meeting is adjourned. Thank you so much for your positive attitude and cooperation. See you tomorrow morning at 9.30 hours sharp.

*The meeting rose at 17.58 hours*

*La séance est levée à 17 h 58*

*Se levanta la sesión a las 17.58*



CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE  
CONFERENCIA

<p><b>Fortieth Session Quarantième session 40.º período de sesiones</b></p>
<p><b>Rome, 3-8 July 2017 Rome, 3-8 juillet 2017 Roma, 3-8 de julio de 2017</b></p>
<p><b>SECOND MEETING OF COMMISSION II DEUXIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II SEGUNDA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II</b></p>
<p><b>4 July 2017</b></p>

The Second Meeting was opened at 10.10 hours  
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La deuxième séance est ouverte à 10 h 10  
sous la présidence de M. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la segunda reunión a las 10.10  
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Presidente de la Comisión II



**Item 23. Reviewed Strategic Framework****Point 23. Cadre stratégique révisé****Tema 23. Marco estratégico revisado**

(C 2017/7 Rev.1; C 2017/LIM/20)

**CHAIRPERSON**

Welcome back to our second meeting of Commission II. I hope that we can be as successful as yesterday and, of course, that can only be done if I can count on your support, your ideas, but certainly your flexibility to find compromises where necessary.

We start now with Agenda Item 23, *Reviewed Strategic Framework*, which is found in documents C 2017/7 Rev.1 and C 2017/LIM/20. The revised version was prepared by the Secretariat to reflect guidance provided by the Council at its 156<sup>th</sup> session as indicated in the abstract of the Council Report for the item in document C 2017/LIM/20. The Council, as you all know because you were there, endorsed the Reviewed Strategic Framework, in particular the FAO vision, global goals and objectives, and submitted it to the Conference for approval. As was done yesterday, I would like to ask Mr Boyd Haight, Director OSP, to give again a good and short introduction of the item.

**Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management)**

As part of the established programme planning process, FAO has carried out the quadrennial review of the Strategic Framework in light of global developments, global and regional trends and major challenges in the areas of the FAO mandate. The document before you presents the reviewed Strategic Framework, including FAO's Vision, Global Goals, Core Functions and Strategic Objectives.

This document, as mentioned by the Chair, C 2017/7 Rev.1, takes into account the Council's caution against references to the World Humanitarian Summit as a basis for action, through revisions to paragraph numbers 9, 26 and 147.

There has been strong and consistent support expressed by the FAO governing bodies for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the Strategic Framework. At the same time, several important global developments occurred in the past two years, in particular the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and entry into force of the Paris Agreement, which provide the broad context in which FAO will need to adapt and operate for enhanced delivery and impact.

The reviewed Strategic Framework provides the overall strategic direction for the Organization, starting from FAO's Vision and Global Goals, which have not been altered as part of this review, that is: "A world free from hunger and malnutrition, where agriculture contributes to improving the living standard of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner".

During 2016, a consultative strategic thinking process identified the main global developments and trends that will frame agricultural development over the medium term; this was informed by the sectoral and regional trends arising from FAO regional conferences and technical committees.

Ten challenges are identified and described, which represent the main development problems that countries and the development community will face in the near future. Within the context of FAO's Vision and Core Functions, the challenges formed the basis for the review of the conceptual framework and theory of change of the five current Strategic Objectives, which are to:

- SO1 - Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- SO2 - Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable;
- SO3 - Reduce rural poverty;
- SO4 - Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems;
- SO5 - Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

FAO must also ensure that it has the internal technical capacity and integrity to achieve the expected results. Therefore, the Strategic Framework continues to include a sixth objective, which has been retitled as requested by Council to reflect better its scope of ensuring technical quality and the

integration of statistics and the cross-cutting themes of climate change, gender, governance, and nutrition in the design and delivery of the Strategic Objectives.

An important consideration in the review of the Strategic Framework was to align the Strategic Objectives and their results frameworks to the Sustainable Development Goals in order to effectively assist countries in achieving their targets, as set out in the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget, which you will consider under the next agenda item.

The Conference is invited to endorse the reviewed Strategic Framework, in particular FAO's Vision, Global Goals and Objectives.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

I would like to thank the Secretariat for a very sharp description of what has been achieved. I have the honour to present the opinion of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey also align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the Reviewed Strategic Framework, its clear structure and its analysis of the global challenges related to food and agriculture. In particular, we applaud its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

We very much welcome the incorporation of SDG targets into the FAO strategic objectives and results framework. Targets for these results should be ambitious and should reflect the resources available to FAO to deliver its core functions. We look forward to the FAO report on progress with these.

We appreciate the efforts to identify, develop and enhance the Organization's contribution to facing the ten global challenges described in the document. We encourage FAO to continue its work in important areas such as the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, sustainable agriculture, food systems, rural development and in increasing resilience to protracted crises, disasters and conflicts, thus *inter alia* helping to address some of the root causes of migration.

The FAO Strategic Objective 6 is essential. It highlights the key role that the FAO technical leadership and statistical capacity should play in meeting its own objectives and supporting Member States to achieve the SDGs. The technical excellence of FAO's work is pivotal for our Organization.

Strategic Objective 6 also sets out FAO ambitions in the four key cross-cutting issues of climate change, gender, governance and nutrition, underlining their importance in the design and delivery of all Strategic Objectives. We particularly appreciate the inclusion of nutrition as a cross-cutting theme, in light of the current Decade of Action on Nutrition, which FAO is called upon to co-lead. We call for the final version of the FAO Strategic Results Framework to set out how FAO intends to incorporate these cross-cutting areas into the five FAO Strategic Objectives.

In light of these comments, we endorse the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

La Delegación de Argentina se congratula por la coherencia del Marco Estratégico de la FAO con la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, y con sus 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

Pero, como lo hemos dicho en otras ocasiones, la Delegación de la República Argentina tiene que decir que hubiera preferido que el párrafo 86 no hiciera esa relación sobre consumo de carnes rojas y cambio climático, sobre todo, teniendo en cuenta que el mismo párrafo 86 in fine señala que es preciso seguir investigando el tema para comprender los vínculos entre el cambio climático, la nutrición y las dietas. Como lo hemos dicho reiteradamente en esta sala también, desde el punto de vista nutricional, la importancia de la carne roja deriva de sus proteínas de alta calidad.

Sin perjuicio de lo cual también debemos decir que la ganadería es fundamental, no solo la nutrición, en la erradicación de la pobreza, en el acceso a ingresos, en empleo decente, en la resiliencia que produce y más aún, en algunos casos se constituye hasta en un seguro, puesto que ese animal es lo último de lo que quieren desprenderse las personas que están en situación de vulnerabilidad. Por eso motivo, nosotros sostenemos que es necesario que este tema se siga investigando y preferiríamos,

como bien lo dice el párrafo in fine, que no se introdujeran estos ejemplos brindados sobre consumo de carnes rojas, que no tienen en consideración los nutrientes de las mismas, los cuales contribuyen a mejorar significativamente la calidad alimentaria, seguridad alimentaria y nutricional de muchos países en desarrollo, que somos productores ganaderos. Y asimismo, creemos que la carne roja es fundamental para poner fin al hambre y a la malnutrición, ODS 2 de la Agenda 2030, que es precisamente el desafío mundial en cuyo marco es mencionado este ejemplo del párrafo 86.

En conclusión, damos nuestro apoyo al documento en cuestión, pero hubiéramos preferido que no se incluyera el ejemplo aludido sobre las carnes rojas en el párrafo 86.

**Mr Mohamad Nazrain NORDIN (Malaysia)**

Malaysia has the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We thank the Secretariat for the presentation of the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

The Asia Regional Group commends the FAO effort to respond to the global developments, trends and challenges the food and agriculture sector is facing. The Reviewed Strategic Framework highlights trends that are regional in nature and it is expected to influence areas of work in agriculture, commodities, fisheries, forestry and food systems, which form the basis for the review of the five current Strategic Objectives.

The Asia Regional Group welcomes and appreciates this effort particularly in addressing the impact of increased climate variability and enhanced exposure to extreme weather. The task is even greater as extreme weather is expected to worsen with natural disasters becoming more frequent; at the same time the challenge to sustain agricultural production needs to be sustained as global population rises, especially in our region. Food security remains the topmost priority we need to discuss and address.

We further welcome the inclusion of a sixth objective to ensure the Organization's technical leadership and integration of statistics and cross-cutting issues of climate change, gender, governance, and nutrition in the design and delivery of the Strategic Objectives.

We encourage FAO to make continued efforts in assisting countries to achieve national and international goals of food security through multiple channels including further strengthening of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

We urge FAO to continue prioritizing its work where it maintains a comparative advantage by supporting the Asia Region. This includes: increasing agricultural productivity through knowledge, technologies and experiences sharing, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation; developing effective food value chains and enhancing food safety; improving access to food in both rural and urban areas; protection of plant resources from pests and diseases and strengthening the role of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC); building resilience of farmers affected by climate change; and sustainable agriculture production and dynamic conservation including through the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, GIAHS.

With these statements, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)**

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group.

The Near East Group wishes to highlight the following seven features of the Reviewed Strategic Framework: i) the relevance of the 10 global development events and the implications of the 12 global and regional trends on the work of FAO are convincingly presented; ii) the articulation of the 10 global challenges with which FAO has to deal with is well done and the Near East Group receives these with appreciation; iii) the Near East Group reiterates its support for FAO's Vision, Global Goals, and Objectives, and notices the clarity in the alignment of the 20 outcomes of FAO's 5 strategic objectives with 40 SDG targets; iv) the Near East Group acknowledges that the title of Strategic Objective 2 has been simplified to provide better focus; v) the Near East Group notes that three new outcomes have been added, one each for Strategic Objective 1, Strategic Objective 3 and Strategic Objective 4; all the 3 new outcomes are intended to build the capacity of member countries and improving the implementation of the three mentioned Strategic Objectives; vi) the Near East Group

acknowledges that the articulation of the 20 outcomes has improved considerably; vii) the Near East Group notes improvements in the presentation of Objective 6, its 4 cross-cutting issues, and the strengthening of statistical capacity of FAO, as well as in supporting the implementation of the five Strategic Objectives.

To conclude, the Near East Group takes the position that the Reviewed Strategic Framework reflects further consolidation in FAO programming efforts, provides a sound framework for implementation and design-based management, and improves on the articulation of issues and challenges impacting the work of FAO and its partners at global, regional and national levels.

With these comments, the Near East Group endorses the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

**Mr Anton MINAEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

We thank the Secretariat for presenting the Reviewed Strategic Framework of FAO. On the whole, we approve the document submitted. We support the close link between the key provisions of the Strategic Framework of FAO with the Sustainable Development Goals which is intended to foster implementation of Agenda 2030. We welcome the fact that in the UN System FAO is a coordinating agency on monitoring 21 of the 232 SDG indicators and is involved in tracking a further 4 indicators. We commend the inclusion of the dimension of agricultural productivity in the title of Strategic Objective 2, as well as the attention paid in the document to the standard-setting work of FAO and consolidation of knowledge.

We are satisfied with how the document has reflected the so-called cross-cutting issues: climate change, nutrition, governance and gender issues. Speaking of the gender issue, we commend the emphasis placed on expanding the economic opportunities of women farmers and their upscaling and the relevant aspects of policy in the field of healthy nutrition and social protection in rural areas. We call on FAO to maintain a balanced approach to gender issues based on the work within its mandate and in light of the comparative advantages of the Organization.

We welcome the reflection in the document of issues such as combatting poverty, social protection with a food component, resisting the spread of plant and animal diseases, as well as agricultural pests, and the so-called triple burden of poor nutrition, the need to ensure food safety and quality and sectoral statistics. We support the emphasis proposed by the FAO Secretariat on stepping up the resilience of the agricultural sector to crises and its readiness for them, as well as disaster risk reduction, the link with emergency aid and development assistance in the context of Strategic Objective 5.

Nonetheless, we note that the World Humanitarian Summit is mentioned in the text of the document on an equal footing with other international UN meetings, which in our opinion is not correct since the outcome of this event was not agreed and adopted in an intergovernmental format.

**Ms Sagung Mirah Ratna DEWI (Indonesia)**

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group and would like to add the following observations in our national capacity.

As a country with a large population, Indonesia puts food security and eradicating malnutrition as a priority. This is why the Government of Indonesia puts special focus on sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry. We are therefore pleased with the FAO Reviewed Strategic Objective as laid out in the document. We particularly welcome FAO Strategic Objective 2: make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable.

While we agree with the four outcomes for Strategic Objective 2, we still bear in mind the importance of improving farmers' and fishers' welfare in our effort to achieve Strategic Objective 2. My delegation believes that by improving their welfare, we can make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable. The Government of Indonesia, therefore, is looking forward to strengthening cooperation with the Organization in this area.

We agree with the Organization on the ten identified future challenges that will be faced by FAO member countries as listed in the document, but the truth is there are countries already facing these challenges. My delegation, therefore, would like to stress the need to start acting on it without delay.

In closing, my delegation would like to extend once more our appreciation for the Reviewed Strategic Framework and express our support and endorsement for the document.

**Sr. Benito JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)**

México apoya la adopción del Marco Estratégico Revisado, que refleja las tendencias mundiales y desafíos en la lucha para la erradicación del hambre, reflejadas en los resultados de importantes conferencias mundiales, así como en la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Compartimos las conclusiones de que la demanda global de alimentos seguirá aumentando, la cual deberá satisfacerse en un entorno de productividad sostenible y competencia por recursos naturales escasos, que se reflejan en los diez desafíos planteados en el documento.

De particular importancia nos parece el segundo, relativo a velar por la sostenibilidad de la base de recursos naturales, los cuales constituyen la base de todos los sistemas agrícolas. Suelos, agua, bosques, pesca y recursos de la biodiversidad son un conjunto de elementos cuya degradación en uno de ellos afecta a los demás y conlleva efectos negativos en la seguridad alimentaria.

Construyendo a partir de estos cimientos, será posible contar con sistemas de producción agrícola que permitan alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles 1 y 2, así como consolidar el trabajo de la FAO en la reducción de la pobreza rural, fortalecimiento de acciones normativas, sistemas de postproducción, resiliencia y generación de conocimientos.

Con estos comentarios, México aprueba el Marco Estratégico Revisado.

**Mr Clemence Taderera BWENJE (Zimbabwe)**

Zimbabwe is speaking on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. The Africa Regional Group welcomes and deeply appreciates the efforts that the FAO Secretariat has made in crafting the Reviewed Strategic Framework which includes FAO's Vision, Global Goals, and Strategic Objectives.

We note with satisfaction that this document is born out of the FAO Governing Bodies' desire for continuing in the strategic direction of the Organization, in light of several notable developments at the global level, including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its intercalated set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the entry into force of the Paris Agreement, among others.

We also note that the Reviewed Strategic Framework is the result of a consultative process that involved Member States, partners and FAO staff. Therefore, it is a product that we are happy with.

We appreciate the alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives and their Results Framework with Agenda 2030 and the related SDGs.

This undoubtedly will go a long way in assisting Member States to achieve their set targets in accordance with the Medium Term Plan.

We welcome the addition of Strategic Objective 6 in the Reviewed Strategic Framework. This enables FAO to deal with crosscutting themes such as climate change, gender, governance and nutrition in the design and delivery of Strategic Objectives.

We would like to comment particularly on Strategic Objective 5 which reads "to increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis".

Obviously in coming up with this objective, we had in mind smallholder or family farmers, especially in low-income countries. In this connection, FAO is encouraged to focus on capacity development of access to markets by these farmers. Furthermore, we encourage FAO to help smallholder farmers access appropriate technology that provides solutions to challenges they face in responding to climate-induced shocks to their livelihoods.

Many times they have had to adopt negative coping methods, such as disposal of their assets, simply because they have been ill-prepared to deal with challenges of that magnitude.

The Africa Group subscribes to often the poorest or most fragile. We therefore call upon FAO to equip governments to manage their impact on climate change in order to prevent or manage intra- or inter-country conflicts which are major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition in affected countries.

The Director-General of FAO, Mr José Graziano da Silva, is to be commended on the joint initiatives he has taken in collaboration with his colleague at the World Food Programme (WFP) in keeping the famine-affected countries in Africa and the Near East on the international radar and taking prompt and appropriate action to alleviate the situation.

Our final comment is on drought-induced famine. Mr José Graziano da Silva is on record as saying we cannot avoid droughts but we can stop them from becoming famine.

This statement underscores the need for countries to move away from crisis-laden drought responses to more proactive integrated approaches that build the resilience of communities and nations in drought-prone regions.

In this regard, we salute the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of the Netherlands and FAO for jointly organizing on 19 June 2017 here at FAO headquarters an international seminar entitled “Drought and Agriculture. Predict, Plan and Prepare: Stop Drought Becoming Famine”.

The seminar revealed that it should not be business as usual. It is incumbent upon us to adopt measures that effectively empower and build resilience of communities in the face of climate change.

With these remarks, the Africa Group endorses the Revised Strategic Framework.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Region, for your positive remarks and your endorsement and also I think highlighting the importance of how we deal with drought and I think the seminar indeed gave direction for future action.

#### **Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)**

We would like to thank the Secretariat for this document. China aligns itself with the statement by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group. We would like to add the following comments.

First, clear and comprehensive data are the basis of the Strategic Framework. China hopes that the report, when elaborating on agriculture, could also provide geographical distribution of people suffering from hunger and reasons behind it. We would also like to add the trends related to rural populations, in particular the proportion of people suffering from hunger and poverty in rural areas.

Food security challenges are mainly found in developing countries and to address this issue, it is necessary to focus mainly on developing agricultural production in rural areas in developing countries.

Based on the Strategic Framework and the Action Plan, we should have good tools. FAO, as the pioneer leading global efforts to fight hunger and poverty, should help promote packaged solutions to address hunger and poverty at global, regional and national levels and should make the best use of available resources to carry out joint actions to deal with hunger and food security challenges.

In Paragraph 108(c), we would like to seek clarification from the Secretariat on what concrete information Member States may be asked to provide. We would suggest to add the following words at the end: "...in accordance with international law and domestic legislation" after "it has the authority to request any Member Nation to submit information relating to the purpose of the Organization".

In Paragraph 109, Core Functions, we would like to add one core function, namely "a) promote a package of joint actions to address hunger and poverty at global, regional and national levels".

**Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

Trinidad and Tobago had an opportunity to speak on the Reviewed Strategic Framework during the Council and we supported it then. Our intervention on this occasion is to confirm our endorsement of the Framework as a sufficient analytical basis for elaborating the MTP 2018-2021 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

We underscore the importance of the conclusions deriving from the analysis of global and regional trends. In particular, we deem the ten challenges articulated as pertinent to influence the FAO mandate over the short and medium term, fit for purpose to underpin the Strategic Framework.

I do not want to repeat the many comments made by colleagues here, most of which I support. However, permit me to highlight one issue which at country level often gets short shrift but is perhaps the most daunting, and that is coherent, effective governance.

Its absence has the potential to render all other development interventions futile. The need for integrated policy and action cannot be overstated given the reach of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Indeed, within national borders – in particular Small Island Developing States – and increasingly also at the global level, all things connect, agriculture more than most.

As the document correctly observes, it will not be easy to design and get acceptance of the type of coordinated approaches required to respond to the wide ranging, complex challenges given the history of mostly sector-specific policy making and action, and deficiencies in national governance mechanisms, regulatory systems and monitoring and accountability frameworks. But quite frankly, experience has shown and we here all know this to be at the root of development failure, and national agricultural development is not immune.

Accordingly, the FAO country-level work must be anchored in an understanding of this contextual reality and a willingness to address it effectively if we are to have the sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries for which we all yearn and strive and which the millions of poor, hungry and malnourished deserve.

Vision 2030 provides an excellent basis for this and therefore we commend the Secretariat for using that as its fundamental framework.

With these comments, we endorse the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

**Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

I also would like to join others in thanking the Secretariat for introducing this Agenda Item and Brazil as a Member of the Council has already lent its support to the Reviewed Strategic Framework. At this juncture, I would just like to make two additional remarks. Brazil would like to associate itself with the caveat proposed by Argentina with regard to paragraph 86.

We believe that there is no need for the national guidelines recommended there on the consumption of red meat given that technological improvements are making it less of a climate prone impact. So you know, Embrapa, one of the world's renowned institutions, has already developed know-how for zero net emissions in livestock raising, so we are making progress significantly in that area. We associate ourselves with Argentina in saying that that line in paragraph 86 should not have been included. But that will not bar us from joining the consensus in adopting the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

I would also like to add a point with regard to the role of South-South Cooperation, which we believe needs to be emphasized in order to achieve the FAO Strategic Objectives; this way, contributing in particular to the improvement of partners, countries, institutional arrangements and policy frameworks.

Furthermore, Brazil encourages the strengthening of South-South Cooperation funding mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation systems aligned with South-South Cooperation principles.

With these two additional remarks, we reiterate our support to the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

**Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management)**

Once again, thank you to all of the Delegates who intervened, including for the Regional Groups, for your support of the Reviewed Strategic Framework. I would just like here to make four remarks.

First, the acknowledgement of the alignment of the Strategic Objectives with the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a very good basis for the results framework in the Medium Term Plan and the Strategic Programmes, which is what FAO actually does.

In this regard, in particular the comment by Estonia for the European Union, we have taken note of the expectation that we will have targets and be aligned with resources and in particular that we are able to better demonstrate how we address and use the crosscutting themes in our programmes.

Turning to the comment by Argentina which was also seconded by Brazil on paragraph 86 and the example of red meat, we have taken note of the fact that the example may not be fully representative, but what is important is that we recognize the need for research to understand the links between climate change, nutrition and diet.

Finally, China, you have made two suggestions for specific amendments to the document, first in paragraph 108(c) which is setting out one of the basic attributes of the Organization. This refers to the authority to request Members to submit information relating to the purpose of the Organization. Indeed, this has been part of the Strategic Framework since it was first approved in 2013 and the understanding is that any such request would be in line with national or international laws. Members can of course decline to provide information that is not within their own national authority.

Paragraph 109 sets out the seven core functions of the Organization which were approved in 2013 and are reiterated here. The suggestion to add one at this stage – a package of solutions – would need careful consideration but I would put forward to you that this package of solutions is more a programmatic issue that is part of the strategic programmes that cut across several of the core functions. Thus your proposal can be construed as also being part of several of the core functions relating particularly to policies, capacity development, and knowledge and technologies. So I think with that, we would hope that you understand that we in fact work across all of our core functions to provide solutions through our strategic programmes.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Distinguished colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, my summary conclusions for Item 23, *Reviewed Strategic Framework*, would be as follows:

The Conference: a) noted the clear exposition of the main challenges to be faced by countries in food and agriculture in the coming years;

b) noted that FAO's authority to request Member Nations to submit information relating to its mandate respects international and national laws;

c) noted that more research is needed on understanding the link between climate change and nutrition and diets;

d) appreciated the alignment of FAO Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals;

e) supported the refocused title for Objective 6;

f) encouraged FAO to set ambitious and realistic targets for its Strategic Objectives, paying special attention to resources available; and

g) approved the Reviewed Strategic Framework, reaffirming its support for FAO's Vision, Global Goals and Objectives.

That would be my proposal for the summary conclusions going to the Conference. Can you agree with this summary? I do not see any requests for the floor so thank you so much.

- Item 24. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (Draft Resolution on budget level) (continued)**
- Point 24. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 et Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget) (suite)**
- Tema 24. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2018- 19 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto) (continuación)**  
(C 2017/3 and related Information Notes; C 2017/LIM/4 Rev.1)

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

We will now discuss Agenda Item 24, *Medium Term Plan 2018-2021 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19* – the draft Resolution on the budget of FAO. You can find them in documents C 2017/3, Web Annexes 11 and 12, and the Information Notes 1, 2, 3, 4, and document C 2017/LIM/Rev. 1. I know because of meetings last week and also yesterday that this is an important issue and there are, as we have seen, differences of views. But at the same time, as I said this morning, I count on your support and flexibility to find compromises.

I would like to highlight document C 2017/LIM/4 Rev.1 which provides the abstract of the Report of the 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council and reflects amendments to the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget document in line with the guidance of the Council. So it is completely in line with what we decided during the Council.

I would like to express my appreciation for the meeting of the Independent Chair of the Council last Friday which was organized for the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Regional Group to address this issue. It was done also in the company of the Director-General. I think it was very good that we had that meeting, first of all, to explain that we went back to the decision of the Council for the text. Also, as I know there are two elements to process in the substance, and the Director-General clearly apologized for the process. He stated that it should have gone via the Finance Committee and via the Council. But at the same time, he explained why there are political arguments to discuss and take decision of the overflow of the budget. I think it is very important to keep in mind that we have a process issue for which we received the apologies of the Director-General and we have a clear substantial issue what we will do with the overflow. I think that was one of the reasons why we got the explanation note on what to do and the proposal on what to do with the overflow.

I think, as Commission II, we wish to express our gratitude to the Chairperson and Members of the Council for their hard work for achieving consensus and facilitating our job when it comes to the decisions. Our work of today is now to work together in a responsible manner to see if we can do it in the same spirit, whether or not we can reach consensus on all aspects of the proposed Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget for the 2018-19 biennium.

Of course, although I know that many delegates have some comments especially on the proposal and the Information Note, and we will give you the chance to comment, but first I would like to give the floor to Mr Haight to again give a very sharp presentation of what is at stake.

#### **Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management)**

I will provide an overview of the Director-General's proposed Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget and then also address the specific issue of the carry-over.

The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2018–2021 and Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium is a realistic and ambitious proposal aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The proposal builds on achievements over the past five years to make the Organization more focused, effective and efficient. As noted by the Chair, the proposal was supported by the Council and recommended for approval by the Conference, including the budget level. I will briefly highlight the main features of the proposal and the additional information provided by the Secretariat.

The Medium Term Plan sets out what FAO aims to achieve with Members over the next four years, the measurable results and impact of our work in terms of outputs, outcomes and objectives. The thrust of the strategic programmes to achieve this impact is shaped by the developments, trends and challenges set out in the Reviewed Strategic Framework which you just considered.

As highlighted by the Director-General yesterday, the most important feature of the Medium Term Plan is the alignment of our expected results with the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Strategic Objectives will be measured exclusively by SDG indicators. Overall, FAO's work will contribute to 40 SDG targets across 15 SDGs, with a focus on SDGs 1 and 2 to end poverty and achieve Zero Hunger, SDGs 8 and 13 for economic growth and climate action, and SDGs 14 and 15 on sustainable use of marine resources and terrestrial ecosystems.

The level of outcomes contributing to the Strategic Objective indicators have been simplified and will continue to measure the biennial level of change achieved and the extent to which countries have made progress through FAO's work. The level of outputs that FAO delivers follows a more standardized formulation around FAO's core functions, norms and standards, data and information, policy dialogue, capacity development, knowledge and technology, partnerships, advocacy, and communication, contributing directly to the outcomes.

The Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-19 sets out how the Organization will deliver its programmes and achieve the outputs with all the resources put at our disposal. As set out by the Director-General yesterday, this proposal has been developed around four main principles. First, the PWB 2018-19 maintains a flat, nominal budgetary appropriation of USD 1 005.6 million with no change in the overall level of assessed contributions compared with the 2016-17 biennium by absorbing cost increases and reinvesting savings in priority areas of work. Second, it identifies areas of priority, de-emphasis and savings. It reallocates resources in the form of technical capacity to address the identified priorities and it highlights opportunities for voluntary contributions to meet further demand. Third, within the flat, nominal budget, the PWB reallocates resources to bring the share of the technical cooperation programme to 14 percent of the net appropriation as recommended by the Conference. Fourth, the improved programme management arrangements will help to accelerate delivery of results at country level, particularly in helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I will now turn briefly to the additional information provided by the Secretariat and considered by the Council.

Information Note 1 elaborates on the priorities and resource allocations for technical capacity, including opportunities for voluntary contributions. It covers internal consultative processes used by Management to gather, review, rank and decide the 10 areas of priority and the resulting reallocation of USD 19.7 million for increasing technical capacity and for the Technical Cooperation Programme, as well as USD 4 million for improved programme delivery. This note also highlights additional technical capacity requirements that could not be met within a flat budget in relation to work on climate change, sustainable agriculture, food systems, statistics, One Health, poverty reduction, fisheries and forestry. As emphasized by the Director-General, these needs provide opportunities for Members to provide additional voluntary contributions to increase FAO's capacity and reach.

Information Note 2 elaborates on the areas of programmatic de-emphasis set out in the PWB, including the extent to which the areas identified result from reduced demand, and therefore can be reoriented or discontinued or can be streamlined in cases of overlap or duplication within the Organization or can be carried out through use of strategic partnerships. As for most cases, it is not a matter of stopping work but rather using more efficient and effective arrangements. The Director-General has demonstrated his commitment to finding savings and promoting efficiency. The PWB 2018-19 reallocates to the priority areas of work USD 23.7 million in savings found in staff costs, administrative and other efficiencies, and areas of de-emphasis. These savings are on top of the USD 116 million in savings found in the past three biennia.

Of the savings proposed for 2018-19, USD 4.6 million arise from measures to streamline the Conference services provided by the Conference Council and Protocol Affairs Division while maintaining the integrity of language services capacity. As elaborated in Information Note 3, the measures are aimed at safeguarding the parity of language and multilingualism and to ensuring high quality services in translation, interpretation and terminology.

Now if I can turn to the additional information that has been provided recently. Following the Council deliberations, two additional documents have been provided by the Secretariat.

First, I refer to document C 2017/LIM/4 Rev.1. Part one of this document is, as usual, an exact extract from the Report of the 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council on the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget, reproducing the Council's guidance and the recommended Draft Conference Resolution on budgetary appropriations for 2018-19. Part two of this LIM document sets out how some specific paragraphs of the MTB-PWB document should be read to take account of the guidance of the Council with respect to some priorities as well as references to peace building and the World Humanitarian Summit, and with respect to the title of the Partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division in the organigramme.

Secondly, Information Note 4, which was referred to by the Chair, makes a proposal for the Conference to authorize the Director-General to utilize any unspent balance of the 2016-17 appropriation to replenish on a one-time basis the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities. Allow me to elaborate on this proposal in terms of the process for authorizing the carry-over and the proposed use. Concerning the process, in a number of previous sessions, the Conference has approved the carry-over of any unspent balances of the budgetary appropriations for specific purposes. The decision to authorize the carry-over has been a matter decided solely by and within the authority of the Conference when considering the PWB for the next biennium. If a carry-over is not authorized, any unspent balance is surrendered to the General Fund through miscellaneous income.

Unspent balances arise due to the prudent management of the budgetary appropriation by the Director-General who, under the financial regulations, cannot overspend the authorized budget level. In order to address budgetary risks relating to fluctuating staff costs, income and commitments, and to ensure the best use of resources, there is usually a small unspent balance at the end of each biennium. For example, as set out in paragraph 2 of Information Note 4, the Conference at each of its last four sessions has authorized a carry-over of unspent balances for a specific one-time purpose. The unspent balance is known only after the closure of the biennial accounts have been in the range of USD 2.5 million to USD 9.4 million per biennium; that is less than one percent of the budgetary appropriation. Since the Council in April of this year, the Director-General now expects a small unspent balance in this same range at the end of the current biennium.

Concerning the proposed use of the carry-over, the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities was established by the Director-General in 2016 under Financial Regulation 6.7. The Special Fund enables the Organization to meet the growing technical assistance needs of Members while engaging with special purpose investment funds related to food and agriculture, such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, as well as the growing regional development banks. The environment in which the Organization operates continues to evolve, particularly concerning the provision of development finance. Traditional grant-based official development assistant funds much of FAO's technical assistance work, particularly at country level. Achieving the 2030 Agenda will, however, require a substantial increase in investment.

More and more development finance, including in the food and agriculture sector, is being provided through special purpose investment funds and regional development banks. These institutions are calling upon FAO to provide technical assistance to our Members as they access and apply this type of development finance and the Organization is receiving more and more requests for such technical assistance from our Members. Therefore, the Special Fund has two components: a working capital component to provide advanced financing for technical assistance on a fully reimbursable basis with global funds and regional development banks and a revolving fund component to support the expansion of FAO's involvement in investment programme partnerships.

The Special Fund was supported by the Finance Committee and noted by the Council in May-June 2016. It has an initial target funding level of USD 10 million, but it has not received any contributions to date. One of the foreseen sources of funding is the transfer on a one-time basis of the unspent balance of the budgetary appropriation subject to the approval of the Conference. This is what we are seeking: approval by the Conference to use any unspent balance on a 2016-17 budgetary appropriation for a specific one-time purpose to replenish the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities. This proposal to authorize the use of the unspent current appropriation balance is in line with the past practice of the Conference when considering the proposed PWB. The proposed use is to meet the

growing technical assistance needs of Members through an established mechanism. The authority could be included in the text of the Report of the Conference on the MTP-PWB which has been set out in paragraph 15 of Information Note 4.

So to conclude, the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, including the proposed budget level of USD 1 005.6 million recommended by the Council and the authority to use any unspent 2016-17 appropriation balance, are for consideration and approval by the Conference.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Mr Haight, for your presentation. Of course, as you look to the legal aspects, you are completely right that it is the authority of the Conference to take decision about the carry-over of funds. But at the same time, I think, when it comes to process, it is also important how you arrive at a draft decision for the Conference. I think many of you stated last Friday that it would have been advisable to involve the Finance Committee and the Council as well. I think that was also the reason why at the session of the Independent Chair of the Council with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the regional groups that the Director-General apologized for the process. But I think this should not stand in the way of this Conference to take a decision about the carry-over of funds because we all know that we desperately are in need of funding for programmes and activities of this Organization to achieve our objectives and goals. So I do hope when you intervene this morning that you not only focus on the process but also on how we can arrive at a compromise so that we can take a decision at this Conference at the end of this week or Saturday morning.

With that, I would like to open the floor for your remarks and comments.

#### **Sr. Elias Rafael ELJURI ABRAHAM (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)**

Realizo esta declaración en nombre del Grupo de los 77 y China. En primer lugar, quisiera expresar nuestro agradecimiento por el espíritu de cooperación que llevó al Consejo a aprobar el presupuesto de 1005,5 millones de dólares americanos para el 2018-2019 por segunda vez consecutiva.

El G-77 y China considera que la Organización ha hecho un buen trabajo en mantener un presupuesto nominal fijo para el Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2019, lo cual es realista en vista de las condiciones macroeconómicas imperantes en todo el mundo.

Sin embargo, esto no debe ser un precedente para el futuro. El presupuesto puede aumentar en el futuro en función de las necesidades de la Organización, de su capacidad para ejecutar su Programa de trabajo, sin menoscabar la capacidad técnica de la sede principal y de las oficinas descentralizadas, especialmente para las Oficinas Regionales y del país, que no dispone actualmente capacidades técnicas adecuadas.

Hacemos un llamado a los donantes para que aporten contribuciones voluntarias para abordar las prioridades que no pudieron ser incluidas en los recursos netos de consignación del PMP, en un presupuesto nominal cero que se ajusta a la recomendación de la reunión conjunta de los Comités de Finanza y de Programa, teniendo en cuenta que la nueva escala de cuotas de las Naciones Unidas hará que los países en desarrollo contribuyan más al presupuesto ordinario a partir de este año.

Acogemos con satisfacción la decisión del Consejo de constituir el Programa de cooperación técnica (PCT) en un 14 por ciento del presupuesto de la FAO, de conformidad con las resoluciones 9-1889 y 6-2015 de la Conferencia. Reconocemos el gran esfuerzo realizado por el Director General y la Organización para lograrlo a pesar de las limitaciones financieras. Sin embargo, dado que la resolución 9-1989 pedía que el PCT no fuera inferior al 14 por ciento, esperamos que en el próximo bienio se incremente aún más este programa para satisfacer la creciente necesidad de los países en desarrollo.

Apreciamos que el plan intenta lograr una mayor coherencia entre los objetivos estratégicos de la FAO y el Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. Apoyamos las prioridades y la asignación de recursos, así como los objetivos estratégicos, incluidos los recursos asignados a la producción agrícola sostenible, la ecología, la diversidad, los sistemas de patrimonio agrícola mundialmente importantes, SIPAM y la biotecnología.

Hacemos un llamado para asignar más recursos para apoyar la labor de la FAO, especialmente en medios de vida rurales afectados por los conflictos de conformidad con el mandato a la Organización y en el ámbito del trabajo.

Destacamos la importancia del apoyo constante de la FAO a los países para abordar la cuestión de la escasez de agua. Confiamos en que la dirección de la FAO seguirá adoptando un proceso inclusivo y participativo en el desarrollo e implementación de iniciativas regionales y el examen de las iniciativas regionales en curso. Apoyamos la asignación de 1,1 millones de dólares para la reducción de la pobreza, en particular, la creación de capacidad en el desarrollo rural, incluidos los pequeños agricultores y la agricultura familiar. Además, observamos que la agricultura familiar es una de las iniciativas regionales que se están implementando y desarrollando en Europa y Asia Central, América Latina y el Caribe, el Cercano Oriente y el Norte de la África.

El área de Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular es una de las prioridades claves del G-77 y China. Hacemos un llamado a la FAO para que siga dando prioridad a la utilización de asociaciones que permiten a la Organización aprovechar sus ventajas comparativas, incluso mediante la Cooperación Sur-Sur y la Cooperación Triangular. El G-77 y China pide a la Secretaría que continúe sus esfuerzos para fortalecer las actividades de creación de capacidad, incluso mediante la Cooperación Sur-Sur y la Cooperación Triangular. El G-77 y China pide que se preste más atención a los temas de la biodiversidad, la tierra, el agua y la energía, que son de importancia clave, tanto para la protección de los ecosistemas, como para el desarrollo rural en todo el mundo. Por ejemplo, la energía es un elemento transversal para alcanzar los objetivos estratégicos de la FAO, la promoción de fuentes de energía limpia y eficiente, incluida la bioenergía, es esencial para mantener el calentamiento global muy por debajo de los 2 grados Celsius que nos comprometimos en lograr en virtud del Acuerdo de París. Pero el papel de la energía es mucho más amplio en el ODS 7, asegurar el acceso a energía asequible confiable, sostenible y moderna para todos, y es crucial para lograr la seguridad alimentaria y promover el desarrollo rural, entre otros objetivos importantes que están relacionados con la labor de la FAO.

Esta conclusión debería reflejarse adecuadamente en el documento, en particular en el gráfico cuatro donde el ODS 7 debería estar entre los objetivos e indicadores, los otros dos ODS incluidos en los resultados de objetivos estratégicos 2018-2019.

El suelo también está sub-representado en el PMP y el PTP, considerando su importancia para la agricultura, la seguridad alimentaria y la disposición de servicios de ecosistemas. A pesar del trabajo pertinente sobre el suelo llevado a cabo por la Sesión Mundial de Suelos, basado en la FAO, su gran dependencia de las contribuciones voluntarias hace que no se ha reflejado la centralidad del tema y su creciente relevancia para los principales objetivos de la FAO. Hasta ahora, el fondo de suelo saludable ha podido movilizar menos de un sexto del presupuesto previsto por un periodo de cinco años.

En cuanto al empoderamiento de las mujeres en el campo, G-77 y China recuerda que la mayor parte de la mano de obra agrícola en los países en desarrollo, en particular los menos desarrollados, es realizada por mujeres que trabajan en condiciones difíciles con baja productividad y enorme esfuerzo físico. El G-77 y China destaca que la FAO racionalizó los servicios lingüísticos de la CPA, mediante la subcontratación de trabajo de traducción, aunque estos ajustes redujeron los costos y aprovecharon la rápida evolución de la tecnología y la capacidad de los servicios lingüísticos en todo el mundo, el G-77 y China hace hincapié en que esto debería garantizar que la FAO siga prestando su trabajo de manera eficiente y eficaz.

El G-77 y China, por último, acoge con satisfacción la propuesta del Director General, que figura en la nota informativa número cuatro que fue publicada la semana pasada. Apoyamos la propuesta de autorizar al Director General a transferir cualquier saldo no utilizado del presupuesto 2016-2017 al fondo especial para actividades de desarrollo. El día 30 de junio del 2017, los Miembros del G-77 y China discutieron esta cuestión en su sesión plenaria, recibiendo comentarios positivos sin objeciones, donde destacaron la importancia de estos fondos para movilizar recursos voluntarios sobre las áreas prioritarias de apoyo técnico de la FAO a los Países Miembros, incluyendo el cambio climático. El Comité de Finanzas y el Consejo de la FAO han aprobado previamente la creación de este fondo, teniendo en cuenta que podría financiarse mediante el remanente de años anteriores. Llama la atención

que el saldo de este fondo sea de cero en este momento y es el deber de este organismo encontrar formas de financiarlo de manera que permita desempeñar sus funciones y alcanzar sus objetivos. Con estos comentarios, el Grupo de los 77 y China piden a que la Conferencia autorice al Director General a disponer del saldo no utilizado del presupuesto para 2016-2017 para el SFDA en el bienio 2018-2019.

**Mr Khaled EL TAWHEEL (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)**

We make this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. We obviously agree with the statement made by His Excellency, the Ambassador of Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China. We welcome the spirit of cooperation which has allowed us to arrive at this budget level during the Council in April last year for the second year running.

We appreciate the efforts of the administration to keep the budget level stable and we point out this means less resources for the TCP. We understand that the Organization is going through exceptional times but this should not be deemed to set a precedent which will recur each year.

At the same time, we forewarn regarding the adverse applications of this for the regional and decentralized offices. We express our appreciation for the Director-General's efforts to devote 14 percent of the Organization's budget to the Technical Cooperation Programme to support states in their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

We hope that this technical support percentage will increase in the future. During the next Conference, following discussion of the budget in the Programme and Finance Committees, we propose that we revisit the level of the budget. We also note that several priorities are very much consistent with those of our region, especially climate change and aquaculture.

We place emphasis on initiatives for combatting water scarcity and on the importance of South-South Cooperation.

We also agree with the recommendations from the two committees, the Programme and Finance Committees, and the Council. We hope that the donor countries will step up their contributions in order to achieve the Strategic Objectives of the Organization.

In the light of new contributions, a new scale of assessment determined by the United Nations, we also feel with the current financial period, although this issue was not discussed appropriately, in the light of the financial situation of the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities in developing countries, to step up the contribution of the Organization to the work of international financing institutions. We support the proposal in this area, especially as the authorization of the Director-General is nothing new. We have already made this recommendation to the Finance Committee which welcomed the development of this fund and we feel that we should re-examine the budget level at USD 10 million so that it may be increased in the future.

We hope that the Member States will display greater flexibility on this so that the issue is addressed objectively with emphasis placed on the role of this fund which would strengthen FAO's contribution together with regional development agencies in order to combat climate change.

**Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)**

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial, Angola, Zimbabue y Ghana hacen esta intervención en nombre de los países del Grupo Africano, los cuales sostienen la declaración de Venezuela en nombre del Grupo G-77 y China. El Grupo Africano manifiesta su aprecio por los considerados esfuerzos que ha desplegado la Dirección General de la FAO para conseguir elaborar un presupuesto sin variación nominal, sin cambio en la cuantía de las cuentas afinadas y las consignaciones presupuestadas netas en comparación con el presupuesto anterior 2016-2017, mediante la absorción de los aumentos de costos y la reinversión de los ahorros en las esferas de trabajo prioritarias. Comprendemos que el presupuesto se elaboró teniendo en cuenta la crisis internacional; sin embargo, esperamos que los próximos presupuestos puedan contar con más recursos para que los países en desarrollo, en particular los países africanos, puedan beneficiarse de la asistencia técnica necesaria, de la FAO para cumplir con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

Acogemos con satisfacción el aumento de la consignación correspondiente a la partida del Programa de cooperación técnica (PCT) de un 14 por ciento en la consignación presupuestaria neta, en aplicación a la Resolución 9/89 de la Conferencia y la recomendación formulada por esta en su 39.º período de sesiones.

Felicitemos a la FAO porque en el documento se prevé la absorción de la inflación esperada de 8.1 millones de dólares americanos en los costos de los bienes y servicios a través de las medidas de eficiencia y eficacia relativas a los gastos de los consultores, los viajes, las compras y las contrataciones. El Grupo Africano manifiesta su preocupación por la forma en que han sido distribuidas las asignaciones presupuestarias en cada capítulo, destinando más fondos a ciertas actividades que, a nuestro juicio, no merecen más atención que las demás. Pensamos que tenemos que concentrarnos más en las actividades de la erradicación del hambre, la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición, como objetivo primordial de nuestra tarea.

Por todo lo expresado, el Grupo Africano apoya la aprobación del proyecto de resolución de las consignaciones presupuestarias, al propio tiempo que respaldamos la propuesta para arrastrar el saldo no utilizado de la consignación presupuestaria para 2016-2017 a fin de reponer con carácter extraordinario al fondo especial para actividades de financiación del desarrollo.

**Mr Jianmin XIE (China)**

First of all, I will speak on behalf of the Asia Group and then I will speak in my national capacity.

China is honored to speak on behalf of the Asia Group. We welcome the proposed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 and express our appreciation for all efforts made before and during the 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council as well as the Programme and Finance Committees to achieve a better understanding through inclusive processes.

At the outset, we concur with the proposed flat nominal budget level of USD 1 005.6 billion and support the prioritized areas of the proposals in MTP/PWB documents endorsed by the Council. We welcome the increase in the TCP appropriation to 14 percent of the FAO budget and look forward to its full implementation, underlining it as the important supplement of South-South Cooperation.

We subscribe to the adjustments of South-South Cooperation from TCS to OPC with its name reflected in the new division. Maybe namely OPS, we nevertheless encourage FAO to continue fulfilling South-South Cooperation's important functions in this Division with the smooth transfer of staff and associated resources.

We welcome the two new initiatives, namely climate change and One Health to be formulated in Asia and the Pacific Region. Re-emphasizing that the adequate resources and technical capacity are the guarantee of smooth implementation in our region, especially at country level.

We reiterate that increased attention should be paid to our region and continued efforts made to address food insecurity and malnutrition. It is still a challenge for the developing countries in Asia to achieve SDG 2. According to the recently released 2016 Asia and the Pacific Regional Overview of Food Insecurity, only two countries would achieve the SDG end-hunger target by 2030 considering their performance over the last five years.

In Asia, the path of defeating hunger is slowing down while the paradox of hunger and obesity are becoming more complex. The diet is shifting more quickly but is unbalanced, and with climate shocks more deterioration occurs.

We encourage FAO to further stress the technical capacity in food security and to continue to facilitate the support of our region, including: first, enhancing the capacity of the smallholders, family farmers and fisherfolk who contributed to food security and nutrition to make them more effectively linked to value chains. Second, enhancing the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), including enforcement by governments. Third, stressing the need to increase sustainable agricultural production and productivity, reduce food loss and waste, and facilitate transparent, open and efficient trade of food to accelerate progress towards food security and nutrition in the region. Fourth, mainstreaming gender equality and promoting fertility in rural areas to support youth in agriculture.

Finally, the Asia Group is ready to work with the Director-General, the Secretariat, and all Members of other regions throughout the year and in the next biennium.

Now I would like to speak on behalf of China.

### *Continues in Chinese*

China endorses the statements of the Asian Group and the G77 and China. On behalf of China, I also have four points I wish to raise.

First, with respect to South-South Cooperation and GIAHS, we would like the Conference to adopt the changes proposed at the last meeting of the Council.

Second, regarding the name of the division to cover South-South Cooperation.

The third point in paragraph 100 on language services: China and the other concerned states have reiterated the importance of maintaining quality of translation and interpretation in all six languages and we would like to see an amendment to paragraph 100 which would say “Concerning language services, including official correspondence, interpretation, translation and terminology, permanent and stable teams should be established.”

China agrees with the Director-General’s proposal to assign savings to the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities. China welcomes requests for new funding resources by FAO, particularly working with regional institutions.

During the Council Session on conditions for donors and risk evaluation, there needs to be negotiations on this issue with the donor countries.

### **M. Boumediene MAHI (Algérie)**

Permettez-moi tout d’abord, du fait que ma délégation prend la parole au sein de cette Commission pour la première fois, de vous exprimer mes félicitations pour l’excellente manière dont vous dirigez nos travaux. Mes félicitations vont également au Secrétariat de l’Organisation, à sa tête M. le Directeur général, pour la très bonne organisation de cette Conférence et la qualité des documents de travail.

Ma délégation se joint à la déclaration faite par le représentant du Venezuela au nom du Groupe des 77 et la Chine, et se joint également celle de la Guinée équatoriale faite au nom du Groupe Afrique.

La délégation algérienne accueille avec beaucoup d’intérêt les observations introductives sur le Plan à moyen terme et le Programme de travail et budget, présenté par M. Le Directeur général de la FAO; elle note avec beaucoup de satisfaction l’engagement pris pour alléger les lourdeurs administratives et renforcer la transparence des mesures qui, nous en sommes convaincus, permettront à notre Organisation de s’acquitter pleinement de sa mission principale, qui consiste à libérer le monde de la faim.

Aujourd’hui, les États Membres, et les pays africains plus particulièrement, ont besoin de plus d’accompagnement technique, d’où l’importance d’une présence sur le terrain à même d’apporter une assistance adaptée aux besoins des Membres et à leurs particularités sur le plan du développement.

Il convient de souligner la place qu’occupent les questions de l’alimentation et de l’agriculture dans la réalisation des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD), notamment des cibles qui leur sont associées. À ce titre, notre pays est pleinement engagé dans l’intégration des ODD dans des programmes de stratégie nationale, dont celle portant sur le développement agricole avec tout ce qui se rapporte à la préservation et à la restauration des écosystèmes, la gestion durable des forêts, la lutte contre la désertification, et la préservation et la gestion durable de la biodiversité. Les pays africains, dont notre pays, comptent énormément sur le soutien de la FAO pour les accompagner dans la réalisation de ces projets.

L’Algérie perçoit la coopération Sud-Sud comme une marque de solidarité politique entre les pays du Sud, avec l’utilisation des complémentarités entre les pays en développement et la coopération directe entre les plus grands pays en développement et d’autres pays du Sud. Elle est pleinement engagée dans cette coopération et soutient le travail de la FAO dans ce domaine.

La gestion financière de l'Organisation et le Programme de travail et budget (PTB) 2018-2019 constituent une préoccupation majeure pour les États Membres du fait qu'elle conditionne la performance de notre Organisation dans l'accomplissement de sa mission constitutionnelle principale, à savoir libérer l'humanité de la faim, mais aussi contribuer pleinement à l'application des résolutions pertinentes des Nations Unies, notamment celles qui concernent les ODD.

Le PTB présenté pour l'exercice 2018-2019 laisse augurer une gestion financière rationnelle. Ma délégation appuie l'approche consistant à ne pas remettre en cause le soutien que doit apporter l'Organisation à ses États Membres, notamment aux pays africains, mais plutôt à travailler à les renforcer et à renforcer ce soutien.

L'augmentation de la part affectée au Programme de coopération technique mérite tout notre appui. Aussi, et afin de donner à notre Organisation les moyens financiers pour honorer ses engagements envers ses Membres, notre délégation se rallie à l'approche du Directeur général de la FAO qui souligne l'importance des contributions extrabudgétaires pour permettre le financement des domaines d'activité clé. Notre délégation, tout en saluant les efforts fournis par les pays donateurs, fait appel à leur sens d'engagement en faveur de la réalisation de la mission de la FAO et fait appel à leur générosité pour soutenir financièrement l'Organisation.

Pour conclure, la délégation algérienne soutient le Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 et le PTB 2018-2019, ainsi que le contenu du document C 2017/LIM/4 Rev.1; elle se joint également à la déclaration de la délégation du Zimbabwe en qualité de Coordonnateur du Groupe Afrique sur le Cadre stratégique révisé et approuve le document C 2017/7 Rev1.

**Mr Sid Ahmed M. Alamain HAMID (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)**

We would like to thank Mr Boyd Haight for his presentation. Sudan would also join its voice to the speakers before us, Venezuela and China on behalf of the Group of 77, and lend our voice to what was stated by the Representatives of the Near East Group.

We have several comments that we can sum up as follows:

Insofar as the proposal of the Director-General, consisting of spending the non-dispersed amount according to the framework document, the carry-over that is to finance the development activities, Sudan can only support such a proposal from the Director-General.

Secondly, the practice underway is for the Conference to adopt the carry-over from previous financial use and this holds for transfers of carry-over to special funds. Now these special funds are a crucial element in spending on development, special funds for development activities.

So the transfer must therefore take place in this area. We would like the budgetary programmes to take this into consideration. Moreover, these funds thus far have not seen any financing from contributors and we are supporting the Director-General's proposal.

We would not accept, under any circumstances, for these non-dispersed funds or carry-over to be put to anything other than the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities. Everything should be allocated to that. Sudan also reiterates its support to the Director-General and its support for the PWB.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much Sudan. I also count on your flexibility, if necessary, to compromise.

**Ms Juadee PONGMANEERAT (Thailand)**

Thailand endorses the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget. We are in favour of keeping the same budget levels and to determine priorities of FAO work in order to consistently meet the current situation.

We note with appreciation that the TCP budget lists the 14 percent levels achieved by previous Conference Resolutions. Thailand is in favour of eventually increasing the TCP budget without affecting other budget chapters since the TCP could directly benefit developing countries as it is operated by seed money for agricultural development.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

Afghanistan has no comment on the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget and follows what was said by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China and by Egypt on behalf of the Near East Group.

I wish to limit my comments only for the transfer of the balance, the unspent balance, to the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities (SF DFA). In this connection, we have to note that there is a growing diversity and multiplicity in the sources of development finance.

Each of these multiple sources has its own criteria, project size, project duration, terms of lending, co-financing, grant elements, etc. So it is a rather difficult area of work.

To cope with this diverse environment of development finance, many developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and landlocked countries, require technical assistance from FAO for upstream or downstream technical work to attract and facilitate investment from bilateral, multilateral and the private sector.

Such investment would be for promoting context-specific sustainable agriculture, creating viable systems for food systems, adaptation of smallholders to climate change, strategically focused capacity development initiatives, innovative pilot investment schemes, additional technical studies that may be required for scaling up on growing investment operations, South-South and Triangular Cooperation for technology transfer and knowledge sharing related to investment for rural infrastructure.

In the light of these demands on the services of FAO by many developing countries, we support paragraph 15 of Information Note 4 which requests the Conference to “authorize the Director-General, notwithstanding Resolution 4.2, to use any unspent balance of the 2016-17 appropriation resolution to replenish on a one-time basis, the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities”.

SF DFA is an ideal venue for promoting technical assistance in support of investment and needs to be replenished.

**Sra. Monica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)**

Apoyamos la intervención del G-77 más China, en particular, consideramos muy oportuna la propuesta formulada y que consta en la Nota Informativa número cuatro. Por ello, alentamos a la Conferencia a autorizar al Director General el uso del remanente de fondos del presupuesto 2016-2017 para financiar el fondo especial para las actividades de desarrollo, de las cuales nuestros países son los directos beneficiarios.

Para Nicaragua, es crucial poder contar con recursos adicionales que permitan la puesta en marcha de programas que coadyuven el esfuerzo de desarrollo de nuestros países en el sector de la agricultura y la alimentación, en línea con los objetivos y retos del Agenda 2030.

**Mr Thomas M. DUFFY (United States of America)**

First, allow me to express our thanks to the Secretariat and to Member States for being able to agree to a zero nominal-growth budget. My comments this morning are in connection with the carry-over discussion and the proposal contained in Information Note 4.

I would first like to express our concern about the trend we see of some countries, and in this case the Secretariat, raising issues at the Conference or sometimes on the floor of the Conference that may have been usefully first discussed and considered in Committees and in Council.

In consultation with the FAO Legal Counsel at last Friday's session, we learned that the decision on how to use carry-over in previous years is one of practice and is not specified in the regulations. The timing of the Conference making the decision on how to best use carry-over funds made sense when the Conference occurred at the end of the year as was the case for many years here at FAO; however, in recent years there has been a change, and so the Conference now occurs in the summer as we see occurring now, which means that there is some six months left in the funding biennium in the actual budget year. We believe that the Special Fund deserves careful consideration, although we wonder why no donor has stepped forward to voluntarily contribute to the fund to date.

We note that we have at least five to six months left to run in this budget year and none of us on this floor knows what the international situation will be at the end of this year or indeed how much will be in the carry-over fund. We wonder why the Conference is rushing to make this decision now. We believe it makes more sense for the carry-over issue to be discussed at the Joint Meeting which is already scheduled for November. We will have a much better sense of the state of the world and indeed a sense of how much money is actually in the carry-over account.

We would therefore propose that the Conference makes provisions to allow the Council, which is already scheduled in November, to make a final decision on the carry-over question.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

Let me add our voice also to the appreciation of the Programme of Work and Budget which we endorse.

Let me give some more data since I am going to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries of the European Union, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey also align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States approve the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 and support the four main principles. We also agree with the proposal that the flat, nominal budget should be maintained and we encourage the FAO Secretariat to continue its efforts to find savings and efficiencies. These savings could be partially used to increase the level of After Service Medical Coverage and the Working Capital Fund without the need to ask for supplementary funding from Member States as was initially proposed by the Secretariat.

As a general principle for FAO planning, the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget should focus on those areas that are the core of FAO's mandate, in particular on FAO's normative and statistical work. Moreover, looking ahead, we would like the Secretariat to agree on a principle whereby it must indicate what results will be achieved or not achieved in areas that are prioritized or de-emphasized. We welcome the areas of increased priority, particularly climate change, antimicrobial resistance, sustainable agricultural production, including agroecology, statistics, food systems and support to conflict-afflicted rural livelihoods. We look forward to FAO's Results Framework confirming what extra results will be achieved with the additional resources allocated to these areas. Furthermore, we encourage FAO to continue to mainstream gender into all its activities.

We also look forward to further work on completing FAO's Results Framework and welcome the use of SDG indicators. We also encourage FAO to include indicators of progress in its collaboration with the other Rome-based agencies. We wish to reiterate the importance to create the link between Strategic Objective 6 and the other Strategic Objectives dealing with the same topics, for instance nutrition and climate change.

As regards the Codex Alimentarius, we remain concerned that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure adequate support for the WHO/FAO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme in line with the conclusions of the Committee on Agriculture in 2016. We call on FAO to answer this concern while preparing its future Programme of Work and Budget, proposals through a bigger allocation of funds for the Codex Alimentarius. Meanwhile, we call on Member States to contribute voluntary resources to ensure this, as well the ability of this pre-eminent food standards-setting programme to deal with emerging issues, such as newly undertaken work on antimicrobial resistance.

FAO, IFAD, and the World Food Programme should better support the resourcing of the Committee on World Food Security. At the same time, we would like to highlight the importance of prioritizing and streamlining the CFS Programme of Work.

Regarding the areas of de-emphasis, we understand that the decrease of some specific activities in important areas of work, namely soils, nutrition, forests, including tenure, fisheries, does not mean that these are areas no longer core to FAO's mandate. This point could be clearly stated in the Conference Report.

As regards the proposal to carry over the unspent balance of the 2016-17 budgetary appropriation, we regret the fact that this proposal was tabled late without any prior examination by the Finance

Committee nor by the Council. We appreciate the efforts that have been made to accommodate the concerns expressed by us and others and to find a pragmatic solution that respects the basic governance principles of the Organization. We therefore are ready to accept the compromise whereby the Director-General of FAO would be authorized to carry over the unspent balance to the next biennium without pre-determining at this stage the destination of those funds. It would then be up to the Programme Committee and Finance Committee to examine this issue with a view to the Council taking a decision at its session in December 2017 without setting a precedent for future unspent balances.

On a more general note, we congratulate FAO on publishing expenditure information with the International Aid Transparency Initiative and encourage the Organization to continue working on improving transparency on all its work and supporting partners to do the same, helping to enhance accountability and decision-making for better results.

Finally, we wish to reiterate our commitment to supporting the important work of FAO. As its biggest funding provider, both in terms of core and voluntary contributions, the EU and its Member States expect FAO to continue improving its overall performance and efficiency and build on its global leadership as a knowledge-based organization in the field of food and agriculture, including forestry and fisheries.

**Mr Arief RACHMAN (Indonesia)**

At the outset, my Delegation would like to thank the Director of Office of Strategic Planning and Resources Management and his team for preparing the new information as a follow-up to the Council's request made last April. We have studied the new documents and would like to make the following observations.

We welcome the Organization's decisions to maintain a nominal flat budget for the PWB 2018-19 due to the global micro-economic conditions. We are pleased with the last statement yesterday morning when the Director-General informed the Conference that despite the nominal flat budget for the past three biennia, the Organization still managed to increase its technical capacity in headquarters as well as in the field. We should bear in mind, however, that the strong technical capacity of the Organization should translate into strong technical capacity of FAO member countries.

In this regard, we would like to highlight the importance of strong technical capacity of FAO in the field of sustainable agricultural production. As we learned from the additional information document C 2017/3 Information Note 1, particularly in paragraph 52(b), we do not find development of technical capacity on rural agriculture economies. My delegation is of the opinion that sustainability should include economic incentives for farmers, and it is important for us to provide greater attention to this area as we know how important it is to create economic incentives for farmers in rural areas. We heard the importance of this during our opening ceremony. As you are aware, strong economic incentives for farming would help or even prevent entirely urbanization as it provides opportunities for youth in rural areas.

**Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Nigeria)**

Let me seize the opportunity to congratulate you for chairing this meeting efficiently and effectively.

My delegation appreciates the work that has been done by the Programme and Finance Committees and all the efforts that have gone into getting consensus as organized by the Council. My delegation strongly supports the PWB 2018-19 with all the necessary trimmings that would make it effective on the ground.

With respect to increasing the appropriation of the TCP budget to 14 percent, if well managed and properly monitored, it will provide better assistance to the different nations that need it and it will make the work of FAO more visible.

I also appreciate the statements made by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China, and also the articulation of matters involving the Africa Group as presented by Zimbabwe.

On the issue of the savings or carry-over of 2016, I believe the best approach is to go the way of normalcy. I think we have heard from Member States some quite useful suggestions so as not to create a precedent that will generate problems, particularly while we still have some room for negotiation and discussions. I think once we can come to an agreement or consensus, then issues will be straightened out.

**Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)**

Australia has already recorded its views on the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget in the Council, so today I would just like to briefly emphasize a few main points.

Australia welcomes the flat, nominal budget and acknowledges the work of the FAO Secretariat and the Director-General in identifying savings and efficiencies across a range of areas and we strongly encourage this to continue. Identifying areas for emphasis and de-emphasis is a hard task, but it is an important one because it contributes to a sustainable FAO in a difficult economic environment.

As Members, we all here need to keep in mind that an important part of this effort is to support FAO in keeping and strengthening its emphasis on its areas of comparative advantage, including the normative and standard-setting work.

On the PWB, Australia previously noted its disappointment that it did not include additional funds from the identified savings for the normative work such as Codex. We appreciate the ring-fencing of the funding being retained, but it is widely acknowledged that the ring-fence funding is not enough for a world in which the volume and diversity of agricultural trade is growing and necessary.

We are pleased to see FAO's continued work in the Pacific, and we strongly support that, including preparedness and adaptation to climate change effects and natural disasters, Blue Growth, and on food security and nutrition. It is important in the Pacific to be looking at data gaps and we appreciate there is work being carried out on this. Agricultural statistics is not an easy job, but ultimately it will help those countries make evidence-based decisions about their particular challenges.

We appreciate recent work on Catch Documentation Schemes and ongoing work to implement the Port State Measures Agreement, both great examples of FAO using its expertise and comparative advantage to help Members. We continue to support the work of FAO as the pre-eminent international organization responsible for food and agriculture policy, statistics, norms, and standard setting, with a view to ending hunger.

I would like to briefly comment on the proposal to replenish the Special Fund, and note we appreciate the extra information provided last week and the opportunity for the informal discussion. We certainly appreciate that practice. We support the US and the EU comments about the potential benefits of using the governing body meetings later this year to further deliberate on the substance of that proposal. I would just note in passing the reference to the Finance Committee, the discussion of the Finance Committee and the record of their discussion emphasized the extrabudgetary nature of funds like this as set up under Financial Regulation 6.7 whereas I think the proposal we have before the Conference is to use underspends which would include some Regular Programme funds. I would appreciate any clarification the Secretariat could provide about that.

But perhaps a more important question is about what specific results we are seeking to achieve and having a stronger understanding of that with reference to the Strategic Framework that we have all just approved, the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

So with that it would seem appropriate for the Conference to essentially delegate this matter to the governing bodies later this year as I have mentioned.

We do have a precedent for that type of practice in the way that governing body meetings following the Conference usually are used to consider minor adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget.

**Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)**

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Group's statement delivered by China and welcomes the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

In particular, we appreciate the proposal of a flat nominal budget for the next biennium through prioritization of work by identifying areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and making cost savings.

We also welcome the inclusion of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in high priority areas of supporting sustainable agriculture production. Japan would like to continue to contribute to the GIAHS work at FAO.

On the other hand, as we have commented in the previous governing body sessions, we question the appropriateness of the use of some of the trade-related outcome indicators, namely 4.1.b, and expect FAO to review these indicators in the process of fine tuning the results framework towards the end of this year.

Japan also aligns itself with the comments made by the EU and Australia on the need to secure sustainable funding for the Scientific Advisory Programme.

We look forward to practical solutions to be proposed by the FAO Secretariat at the Open-ended Working Group for consideration.

Lastly, Japan would like to comment on the proposal put forward by the Secretariat in Information Note 4 to carry over any unspent balance of the budgetary appropriation of the current biennium to replenish the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities.

In this regard, we echo the concern expressed by the United States, the European Union and Australia. Japan also considers that it is too early to decide on the use of this unspent balance at this stage and we would prefer to discuss this issue at the Finance and Programme Committees and the Council toward the end of this year.

We also think that it may not be appropriate to use the unspent balance of the assessed contribution to finance this special fund which has been created for receiving voluntary contributions. So we encourage the Secretariat and other Member Nations to give this issue careful consideration.

**M. Michaël WÜRZNER (Suisse)**

La Suisse exprime sa satisfaction quant à l'orientation stratégique cohérente et harmonisée du Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 et du Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019 (PTB) avec le Cadre d'action globale que constituent le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et ses 17 objectifs de développement durable.

Nous rappelons dans ce cadre l'importance d'une collaboration plus inclusive et coordonnée avec les différents partenaires, notamment de la société civile et du secteur privé. Nous encourageons la FAO à s'impliquer dans les approches novatrices en matière de partenariats multipartites qui favorisent les interactions entre différents acteurs, la transversalité entre secteurs et la recherche de solutions communes.

La Suisse soutient les changements intervenus dans la structure organisationnelle de la FAO, en particulier la création d'un nouveau Département du climat, de la biodiversité, des terres et des eaux. Par rapport au PTB 2018-2019, nous rappelons l'importance d'assurer l'affectation de ressources supplémentaires pour la biodiversité, également du point de vue des ressources humaines.

De plus, les programmes et projets menés par la FAO dans des domaines tels que, par exemple, l'agro-biodiversité, l'agroécologie, les services écosystémiques, les ressources génétiques, l'élevage et les systèmes alimentaires durables doivent continuer à bénéficier d'un soutien adéquat.

Concernant le point relatif aux fonds non-dépensés du budget 2016-2017, la Suisse soutient la proposition de compromis qui vise à ce que la Conférence prenne une décision de principe, mais que les détails soient réglés plus tard dans l'année par le Comité financier et le Conseil.

**Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)**

As Canada is a Member of the Council, we already expressed our views on the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. So today I am just going to restrict my comment to the proposal to carry over any unspent balance and a draft resolution in this regard.

Thanks to Boyd Haight for the explanations about this proposal as well as the fund and having listened to various interventions, I would have a few comments or clarifications to ask regarding the two aspects that were mentioned.

On the process, I understand that there is no legal requirement for the Conference to authorize the purpose or the use of the carry-over of any unspent balance and I understand that the practice has been in the past that the Conference has authorized such use, but that the practice as well was that it was preceded by consideration by the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees and the recommendation by the Council.

So, what I understand as well from some discussions last week is that there is already a departure from practice because we have not had the chance this time to consider this proposal in the Joint Meeting and Council.

The second aspect – I just wanted to make sure that this was a correct understanding – was the use itself and looking at past uses of the carry-over, most of them were for governance issues or operational, capital expenditure, facility, and otherwise it was implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action or transformational change.

It looks like it is the first time that a programmatic use is proposed and there was this question asked because this fund was extra-voluntary in nature. What is the implication in terms of authorizing regular funding? If the unspent balance is only assessed contribution, then what is the implication of authorizing regular funding to something that was supposed to be extrabudgetary?

So we feel that in light of these clarifications and in light of past practice, the compromised proposal that has been put on the table regarding the Conference delegating its authority to the governing bodies of autumn, the Council would be in line with past practice given that Conference has always approved that based on a recommendation from Council in terms of the use.

We feel that this merits further consideration and will only benefit the discussions in the longer term.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

Nuestra Delegación quiere mencionar, en primer lugar, que ve con agrado este presupuesto 2018-2019, que se mantuvo invariable en términos nominales, y que además se hayan realizado ahorros y reasignaciones dentro del mismo.

En otro orden, respecto del Plan a Plazo Medio y el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto, la Argentina se congratula que ellos, así como el Marco estratégico revisado, hayan sido planteados teniendo en consideración los desafíos complejos e interconectados que plantea la realización de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Asimismo, Argentina se complace que la Nota Informativa uno, sobre las prioridades y asignaciones de recursos para la capacidad técnica, incluidas las oportunidades relacionadas con contribuciones voluntarias, haya incluido la necesidad de asignar capacidad técnica adicional a las biotecnologías para aumentar de manera sostenible la producción y la productividad agrícolas. La Argentina sostiene que la biotecnología y las nanotecnologías aplicadas al sector alimenticio permiten reducir costos y mejorar la eficiencia, lo cual permite a su vez un uso más sostenible de los recursos, la simplificación de tareas, la prevención de riesgos y el aumento de los volúmenes de producción, así como la calidad de los productos. De esta forma, la biotecnología cumple un rol central, a nuestro juicio, en los esfuerzos de garantizar la seguridad alimentaria.

Además de dar nuestro apoyo al Plan a plazo medio y al Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto, vamos a referirnos al tema en cuestión. Nos tocó formar parte de la reunión del viernes en la mañana de las Presidencias y Vicepresidencias de Grupos Regionales. Escuchamos con mucha atención el planteo de nuestro Director General y el carácter político, así lo mencionó él, que le otorgaba la aprobación de su propuesta. Consideramos que esta Conferencia es soberana, que se da además en un contexto mundial muy serio y muy grave, con retrocesos en los últimos dos años que el propio Director General hizo ver en su discurso, en cuanto a la situación de hambrunas, de hambre y de inseguridad alimentaria mundial. En ese sentido, y considerando los antecedentes que en cuatro ocasiones la Conferencia soberanamente autorizó estos remanentes, consideramos así que debemos darle el apoyo a la solicitud

del Director General para el uso de estos remanentes, por supuesto para áreas programáticas y para nada más que no sea áreas programáticas. Hacemos hincapié en estos antecedentes en la Conferencia soberana, en la petición que el Director General está haciendo para utilizar estos fondos para el desarrollo. Como país en desarrollo, por supuesto, consideramos más que importante que estos fondos de desarrollo comiencen a avanzar, pero si no fuera al fondo específico de desarrollo, que sea a una de las áreas programáticas.

Esperamos tener este respaldo para este uso de remanentes, en el mismo sentido que la declaración que leyó el excelente Embajador de Venezuela a nombre del G-77 y China.

**Sr. Benito JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)**

Agradecemos a la Administración la elaboración del presupuesto que estamos considerando que resuelve demandas encontradas, tales como las recepciones presupuestales de la membresía, así como mayor demanda de los servicios de la FAO.

México apoya a nivel de presupuesto presentado en la sección uno, relativa a las consignaciones para el 2018-2019, presupuestadas en 1005.6 millones de dólares, que refleja un crecimiento nominal cero. De las consignaciones presupuestales agradecemos los esfuerzos de la administración para que el Programa de Cooperación Técnica haya alcanzado un nivel de 14 por ciento.

Esperamos que esto sea el inicio de una tendencia creciente en beneficio de las necesidades de los países en desarrollo. Nos complace asimismo que el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto (PTP) apoya actividades para proteger y rehabilitar el sector agrícola, tanto después de desastres, así como de ayuda al desarrollo, lo cual es de primordial importancia. Otros elementos que apoyamos en el PTP son los sistemas importantes del patrimonio agrícola mundial y la Cooperación Sur-Sur.

Por otra parte, consideramos que la biodiversidad es uno de los fundamentos para los sistemas agrícolas sostenibles. Este es un tema fundamental para la FAO y en el futuro debería consolidarse.

En relación a la propuesta contenida en la Nota Informativa número cuatro, relativa al arrastre del saldo no utilizado de la consignación presupuestaria para 2016-17, estamos de acuerdo en utilizarla para el fondo especial para actividades de financiación al desarrollo.

Sabemos que hay posiciones diversas en este tema. Estamos dispuestos, estamos abiertos a alcanzar un compromiso. Quizá en el futuro esta cuestión se podría sistematizar; es decir, sistematizar que hacer con la cuestión de los remanentes. Con estos comentarios, reiteramos el apoyo al presupuesto puesto a consideración.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Mexico, for your remarks and certainly your last remark. I think we have to make it more systematic and prepare ourselves to be as good, efficient and effective as possible in the future.

I would like to thank you all for your important and constructive comments. I think what we see is that there is a consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget, and both the Programme and Budget for FAO in 2018 and 2019.

I cannot conclude this Item, although there is consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget. We have still one issue to tackle, and that is the issue of the carry-over from 2016 and 2017. I think there is the standard practice of the Conference as was explained by some of the Delegates, although there is no legal need. There is a standard practice of the Conference to take a decision on this.

We still have time as we do not yet know the exact budget of the carry-over. So what to do now?

I think we must find a compromise, which we can send to the Conference. I listened carefully to all of your positions and I hope that with a spirit of making a compromise but also allowing the possibility of the Finance and Programme Committee to give a final consideration to the substance and that the Council can take a final decision mandated by the Conference at the end of this year.

So, I will try to do some homework for you but give me five minutes to finalize the text and then I will circulate a compromise to you in this room, but please do not leave the room because I can only do it

if there is a quorum. I will lay before you a compromise which hopefully can meet your consensus depending, of course, on your willingness and flexibility.

When I read your statements, all the elements are there for compromise, we should maintain the practice of the Conference to give, when needed, authorization to the Director-General for carry-over. We are also discussing, as many of you said, the involvement of the Programme and Finance Committees and the Council. We do not yet know the amount which will be carried over, because we are still in mid-2017. I tried to capture everything in a compromise text and I will read it for you:

“The Conference authorizes the Director-General, notwithstanding Financial Regulation 4.2, to use any unspent balance of the 2016-17 appropriations for one-time use to support programmes of the Organization, including for the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities, in agreement with the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee and the Council at their meetings in November and December 2017. The amount and use of any balance carried over will be reported to the Governing Bodies in 2018-19 in line with established regulations”.

**Mr Khaled EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)**

Thank you again for the proposal. We believe it is a good one and takes into consideration most of the concerns expressed by some Members here.

We have one concern on the current language. When you refer “listening to all Members who supported this carry-over”, every specific Member stated that this money should be used for the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities. When we use the word “including” for the special fund, we believe this is weak language. All developing countries such as the Group of 77, Africa, Near East and the GRULAC vis-à-vis specifically refer to this.

I think this should be strengthened to give the indication that this money should primarily be used for the special fund and not for any other activity. We can work on the language but it should indicate that this money, if carried over, should be mainly dedicated to the special fund.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Egypt, but a compromise means that I have to take on board all remarks and although I know how many countries there are in the G77, but there are also countries outside of the G77 who made reference to broader considerations. For that reason, I tried to reflect on that in this text so let us hear other views.

**M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)**

Je sais que la question est très difficile à traiter, mais c'est en en arrondissant les angles que l'on peut trouver un compromis.

Monsieur le Président, je souhaite vous féliciter parce que vous avez bien synthétisé les discussions qui se sont déroulées. Je souhaite également féliciter le Secrétariat de cet esprit parce que vous avez traduit à la lettre les débats qui se sont déroulés dans cette salle.

Comme l'a dit le Nigéria, évitons de créer des précédents, procédons doucement pour régler la question. Je pense que le compromis que vous nous avez proposé recentre la question, le feu vert est donné. Le Comité qui va se réunir en novembre et le Conseil en décembre pourront mieux éclairer la question.

La délégation du Congo appuie le compromis que l'on peut accepter pour aller de l'avant.

**Mr Thomas M. DUFFY (United States of America)**

We would like to associate ourselves with the comments just made by Congo. We too think that the compromise language addresses our concerns and displays a clear understanding of the discussion here in the room.

We understand the concerns expressed by our Egyptian colleague but we would also observe that the same dynamics that help the G77 here at the Conference similarly helped the G77 in Committees and Councils. I anticipate that at the end of the day, the general political thrust that our Egyptian colleague talked about will still be preserved.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

Can I make a few suggestions? First of all, the word “use” in the second line, the use of funds cannot be that with an agreement with the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees because that will be micro-managing the work of the Director-General by the Joint Resolution, so instead of saying “use” say “to allocate”.

In the second line, “to support investment programmes of the Organization” and in the fourth line instead of saying “agreement”, “in consultation with Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees”.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Afghanistan, but we have to be very careful because I tried to capture the positions of many of you. For example, you want to change the word “use” but in your intervention you supported the proposal made by the Director-General in the explanation note and there it was also stated to use any unspent funds; so also there the word “use” was mentioned. Therefore, I took that over from the proposal of the Director-General. As I said before, it will be sent through the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

If we are now going to specify where it should go to and we still do not know the balance because we still have to know how much funding will be carried over, I think we have a long debate where it should go specifically. Therefore, I use the more general formulation that we say it has to be discussed when we know how much will be left over or we have to have clearer indication of what is over that then the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees can give the directions and the Council can finally take a decision.

Why did I say in agreement? I think last December in the Council we had a long debate on another issue as to what consultation meant. I think it is clear that most of the delegations agreed to mandate the Council to take the final decision. Therefore I used the word “in agreement” because “in consultation” we can have a debate about what consultation means; “in agreement” is clear because the Council has then to agree based on the mandate the Conference is giving the Council.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

Como dijo el distinguido Delegado de Congo, es un esfuerzo muy grande que Usted ha hecho y que ha demostrado que de verdad ha escuchado y ha contemplado a todas las delegaciones.

La Representación Argentina está en condiciones de aprobar el texto que Usted distribuyó, tal y cual Usted lo ha leído. Le agradecemos el esfuerzo y creemos que ha contemplado las posiciones diversas de todas las partes y la propuesta también del Director General. Felicidades por ese esfuerzo y le damos nuestro apoyo.

**Sr. Benito JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)**

Leyendo con cuidado su propuesta de compromiso, nos parece aceptable. Es difícil, como Usted sabe, recoger en unas cuantas líneas las posiciones diversas de la membresía. Llegó el momento de llegar a un compromiso y este nos parece que refleja las posiciones distintas. No es perfecto, se podría mejorar en el futuro, pero no somos Shakespeare en este momento. Con este compromiso estamos completamente de acuerdo y lo apoyamos.

**Sra. Rebeca CUTIÉ CANCINO (Cuba)**

Reconozco que Usted está llevando sus funciones magistralmente en busca de un consenso y yo pienso que el consenso es muy importante. Pero, siguiendo la línea de pensamiento que expresó el Delegado de Egipto, si vemos que todo el G-77 más China planteó que debía utilizarse este remanente en actividades de desarrollo, si lo sometiéramos a votación, pienso que estaríamos en mayoría los que estamos dándole a la Conferencia en la práctica, el derecho a ejercer este mandato que tiene y que se ha ejercido en otras ocasiones. Como el derecho es práctica, yo quisiera saber por qué en esta ocasión se quiere cambiar una práctica que se ha venido realizando con los remanentes. Y, por qué, si no está escrito que es el Comité de Finanzas el que decide sobre remanentes, se acuerda en este momento aplazar la decisión para noviembre y diciembre.

Tal vez, cuando se cambió la fecha de la Conferencia, no se tuvo en cuenta que el cierre financiero tenía que ser en julio. Entonces, hay varios obstáculos e irregularidades en esta decisión que Usted nos está proponiendo. Reconozco que Usted está actuando magistralmente, está buscando un consenso, pero yo quisiera saber por qué en esta ocasión no podemos hacer una práctica habitual que era mandato de la Conferencia.

**Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Nigeria)**

Just to say that in line with what Congo has said, Nigeria supports your efforts to put the ambience of the room into words. I am sure it is not double-Dutch. It is good English.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We appreciate your efforts. What we said on behalf of the 28 European Union countries is not exactly what is in this proposal, but we understand your many difficult tasks to achieve compromise in this and our objective is that we can go ahead with the budget. We can do activities instead of discussing endlessly administrative issues here. This is why we can say that we would accept this compromise.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Coming back to what was said by Cuba, I think we are now continuing our practice because the idea now is of course that we could continue our practice that we authorize in the Conference that the Director-General of FAO use carry-overs of the budget. But, given that we do not know the amount and given the process, I think we still have time to have a final consideration by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees as well as the Council. I think there we continue. We do not change the practice but we take the time to have the full consideration the moment we know the estimate of the carry-over.

**Ms Terri SARCH (United Kingdom)**

Of course we align ourselves with the European Union's support for this proposal.

My suggestion is to make the language a little bit more precise in the spirit of supporting the proposal. So I would suggest that in the last phrase of the first paragraph it says the following: "Consideration by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and agreement with the Council". I think that is a more precise reflection of what the Joint PCFC meeting will do and what we will be asking the Council to do.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I want to avoid this becoming a drafting session and I do not want to send it to the Drafting Committee because I think we need to get an agreement and consensus on the text here. Of course we can change the text by saying that it is following the consideration of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and in agreement with the Council. That is fine for me, but I do not want to have a lengthy discussion about the wording because I thought there was a majority going along with the text as I presented it and if that is the case I would stick to the text as circulated and read out.

Could we agree with the parcel as I presented it and as I explained to you why I made this proposal and given also access to your questions? So as the text is circulated, can we agree with this text?

**Mr Khaled EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)**

I would suggest that we come back to this after lunch to just finalize this wording. Again, the focus of the interventions for most of the developing countries was not about the carry-over but about the special fund and its management. In this regard, we might be able to live with this if we just make small changes. One of them was suggested already by Afghanistan, to make it to support investment and development programmes. This is one change. And the one we felt including for the special fund we would suggest to change it to be in particular for the special fund. This was that spirit or the essence of most of the interventions but, if this is not acceptable now, we are willing to work with other Members during the lunch break to come to a conclusion.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I do not want to carry it over after lunch because I think we are more or less there and we have a quorum now and I do not know whether or not we will have a quorum this afternoon.

Since we are almost there and I think I saw a lot of people supporting it, what I would like to propose is, if acceptable to you all and also getting Egypt on board, is in taking over your proposal and speaking about “instead of, including in particular”. Would that be acceptable because I do not want to have many changes in the text because that will unravel the whole compromise.

Is that acceptable for all of you? I see no objections so is it then also acceptable for Australia?

**Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)**

As you put it a moment ago, that was a compromise position. We have not stated one way or the other. It just states “including”. I think that is open and it leaves it to the deliberations of the other governing bodies to sort out what “including” means and it seemed to be a reasonable compromise between the different views around the room.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think Egypt also made the proposal, at least listening to Egypt on behalf of the G77, because I tried to reach a consensus and I think if “including” is not meeting the consensus and “in particular” is not meeting the consensus, can we then work with the word “especially”?

**Mr Khaled EL Taweel (Egypt)**

We can live with this as long as we would add the addition that was suggested by Afghanistan which is investment and development programmes in the third line: “to support investment and development programmes”. Again, the reason we insist on “in particular” or “especially” is that we do not want to just export our lack of consensus here to the Joint Meeting. I think it is our job also to give them a clear delegation and guidance.

**Ms Yuri Kumagai (Japan)**

We accept this compromise draft resolution.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Which compromise? The original?

**Ms Yuri Kumagai (Japan)**

The original one, the one that is being handed out.

**Ms Mi Nguyen (Canada)**

Thank you very much, Mr Chair, and we really appreciate your effort to try to fix this. I just want to point out a solution already in the regular situation so it is not that we are trying now to depart from practice but there was just a slight departure from practice for which the Secretariat already apologized. But there was a recognition that we did not have time to consider the use of the proposed carry-over so we are trying to fix it in a way that is the most aligned with past practice and that makes more sense in terms of how we allocate resources.

I do understand that there was some strong support for the use of the special fund. There were also some questions about the use of regular funding for something that was extrabudgetary and there are broader considerations.

So, even for our delegation, we would have preferred not already prejudging the nature of the discussions and mentioning special funds so we can support your initial compromised proposal as a way forward but trying to qualify even further the language would defeat the purpose of having consideration in the appropriate governing bodies as per past practices.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

There have been different proposals regarding this compromise that we also suggest as a way of compromise to agree to the initial version.

**Mr Thomas M. DUFFY (United States)**

Thank you, Chair, for your efforts on this and efforts of colleagues as well. We would observe that “including” does not prejudice the eventual decision of the bodies at the end of the year but it also does not foreclose your options because we envisage a point where perhaps Member States led by the G77 at the end of the year might want to do something else with this.

By using the original language of “including”, you preserve your options both to move this forward but also you give yourself a bit more flexibility when we finally do have to make a decision and when we are able to look at what the situation of the world is at the end of the year and how much money we have. So we think that the word “including” was carefully chosen. We continue to support its use.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I want to make an appeal to you. I think as was explained by the delegate of Congo, I tried to take on board all of the positions in a compromise I proposed, and after this discussion, I think everybody can more or less live with this compromise.

Of course it is not the perfect compromise. We do not live in a perfect world so it will not be a perfect compromise. But I think this compromise could meet all of the concerns. And if we are going to redraft the text, I know for sure it will unravel where we are now.

I will make a strong appeal to you to go ahead with my original compromise proposal because what we heard afterwards, if you are going to change the wording, we will not arrive at a compromise consensus.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

Volvemos a apoyar el texto tal y cual Usted lo propuso inicialmente. Creemos que es una fórmula de consenso en posiciones diversas. Por supuesto que no está aquí reflejado todo lo que hubiéramos querido, porque si me dijera todo lo que hubiéramos querido, hubiéramos querido que no tuviera que llegar este tema a este debate en la Conferencia en un presupuesto de más de mil millones de dólares que el Director General tenga que solicitar esta autorización, porque creo que van a ser menos de siete millones o una cosa así.

Y si me dijera, que más hubiéramos querido; hubiéramos querido que no estuviera en duda en ningún momento o que existiera la palabra 'desarrollo' en el texto. Y tal vez algún país está haciendo también algún esfuerzo, o alguna región un esfuerzo, en que se diga que es para programas y más aún, para el fondo especial de desarrollo. Por lo tanto, creo que todos estamos haciendo un esfuerzo, pero creo que lo importante de este texto justamente es, y reitero las palabras de Congo, que Usted ha podido escuchar, ha podido comprender, y ha tratado de hacer un texto del que nos podamos ir sabiendo que la posición de ninguno ha quedado del todo reflejada. Pero lo que es más importante es que el Director General tiene aprobado el *carryover* que necesita para poder, llevar a cabo programas y está mencionado el fondo de desarrollo, que es lo que más nos interesa.

Luego, el tiempo nos va a decir si tal vez la propuesta de México sea la más atinada, si habrá que sistematizar esa excelente palabra que encontró el colega de México. Este tema, en adelante, en nuestro criterio, la Conferencia, y lo recalamos, es soberana. También no nos gustaría ver que quedara la Conferencia relegado su mandato y su potestad al Comité de Finanzas, al Comité de Programa y a ningún otro, pero entendemos que esta es la vía para que hoy y ahora el DG pueda disponer de ese *carryover*, que le permita aplicarlo en programas para nuestros países, para nuestros pueblos. Y esa será la batalla gentil, amable, amorosa y convencida que seguiremos dando de aquí a fin de año para que efectivamente podamos lograr hacer sentir el peso que tenemos los países en desarrollo en esta Organización para que estos fondos sean utilizados a favor de los que más sufren, de los que más lo necesitan en este mundo que se cae a pedazos.

Entonces, pediría un esfuerzo más para que podamos salir con este texto, así como está. Me parece que la situación lo amerita, y también que la administración impecable del Director General lo amerita, que le demos este *carryover* hoy.

**Ms Jiani TIAN (China)**

So firstly we would like to fully share the position of our colleague from Egypt. We think it is very necessary to strengthen the investment and the development in developing countries. As one of the developing countries, we really hope that FAO could focus on the capacity building of developing countries.

At the same time, I also hope our Egyptian colleague could agree with the compromised text proposed in front of us because there are a lot of opportunities in the future in the governing bodies where we are going to deliberate the issues and I am sure we are going to continue focusing on this necessity to contribute to the developing countries on investment and development.

**CHAIRPERSON**

So can we now all agree to the compromise? Are there any objections?

Thank you, Egypt, for your flexibility and sense of compromise.

*Applause*

*Applaudissements*

*Aplausos*

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you so much for your flexibility and your willingness to compromise.

Perhaps I can make your life easier for this afternoon because what I wanted to do, if the interpreters give me that flexibility, is to summarize now the whole conclusion of this morning, at least when it comes to the Programme of Work and Budget, so that for Commission II you will have a free afternoon and we can finalize our work tomorrow morning for the other issues.

My suggestion would be that I read out my conclusions on Item 24 based on your remarks, of course including the compromise, and then we break for lunch and we reconvene tomorrow morning at 9.30 hours in this room.

If that is agreeable to you, I would now like to read out the summary conclusions on Agenda Item 24.

The Conference considered the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. The observations and recommendation of the Council as well as additional information provided by the Secretariat in Information Notes 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Regarding the substance of the proposal in the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget, the Conference:

- a) welcomed continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium Term Plan and underlying Programme of Work and appreciated the close alignment of FAO Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals;
- b) supported the priorities and resources allocation as well as the identification of areas of programme de-emphasis for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6, and looked forward to including the impact of results in the future Programme of Work and Budget;
- c) approved the reformulation of definitions for priorities in paragraphs 52(b) and 52(g) as well as guidance in reading specific paragraphs in document C 2017/3 as indicated in document C 2017/LIM/4/rev 1;
- d) noted that the Council would be reviewing the Strategic Objectives, outputs, indicators, and targets at its December Meeting in 2017 as presented in the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19;

e) encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and triangular Cooperation and approved the new title of the partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division.

In addition, the Conference:

a) welcomed the proposed flat nominal budget level to carry out the full delivery of the Programme of Work and Budget as realistic and innovative, especially in view of the prevailing global macro-economic conditions;

b) appreciated the identification of report areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings with a view to reallocating the US dollar to USD 23.7 million to increase technical capacity in higher priority areas and to improve programme delivery;

c) encouraged Members to provide voluntary contributions to address priorities that could not be accommodated within the Programme of Work and Budget net appropriation resources in a flat nominal budget;

d) welcomed the increase of the share of the Technical Cooperation Programme to 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation in line with Conference Resolution 9/89 and recommendation in Conference Resolution 6/2015;

e) noted the ongoing discussion of the After-service Medical Coverage past service liability by FAO and the UN Common System and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to improve the longer-term financial situation, liquidity and reserves;

There is no point f) because it will be agreed text and I dare not read it out again.

The Conference adopted the following resolution as recommended by the Council and that is the same resolution that the Council approved in C 2017/LIM/4.

Can we agree to the summary conclusions?

I do not see any objections. Thank you for your compromise. We have concluded Agenda Item 24. We adjourn the meeting until tomorrow morning at 9.30 hours.

*Applause*

*Applaudissements*

*Aplausos*

*The meeting rose at 13.23 hours*

*La séance est levée à 13 h 23*

*Se levanta la sesión a las 13.23*



CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE  
CONFERENCIA

<p><b>Fortieth Session Quarantième session 40.º período de sesiones</b></p>
<p><b>Rome, 3-8 July 2017 Rome, 3-8 juillet 2017 Roma, 3-8 de julio de 2017</b></p>
<p><b>THIRD MEETING OF COMMISSION II TROISIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II TERCERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II</b></p>
<p><b>5 July 2017</b></p>

The Third Meeting was opened at 10.21 hours  
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La troisième séance est ouverte à 10 h 21  
sous la présidence de M. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la tercera reunión a las 10.21  
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Presidente de la Comisión II



**Item 26. Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization at Headquarters and in Decentralized Offices**

**Point 26. Évaluation indépendante des capacités techniques de l'Organisation au Siège et dans les bureaux décentralisés**

**Tema 26. Evaluación independiente de la capacidad técnica de la Organización en la Sede y en las oficinas descentralizadas**

(C 2017/26; C 2017/26 Sup.1)

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think we are now around 65, so we have a quorum. I hope that in the same spirit as yesterday morning, we can finalize our work in Commission II in order to start the Drafting Committee this afternoon.

We have only one more item to discuss, and that is Agenda Item 26, *Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity*, documents C 2017/26 and C 2017/26 Sup. 1, Management Observations.

The Council at its 156<sup>th</sup> Session held from 24 to 28 April 2017 noted the increase in technical capacity of the Organization during the period 2012–16 both at headquarters as well as in the decentralized offices in spite of the flat, nominal budget and overall decline in number of positions. We noted that the Council requested regular monitoring by the Secretariat of the technical capacity also in conjunction with workforce planning exercises. We recommended that future assessments provide a qualitative analysis and exposition of this greater data. Of course, we also remember the opening statement of the Director-General on Monday 3 April 2017 where he referred to the qualitative analysis.

It is now my pleasure to give the floor to Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General for Climate and Natural Resources, for a brief introduction of the item.

**Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO, Deputy Director-General, Climate and Natural Resources**

I am pleased to present Item 26 on the Independent Assessment of Technical Capacity of the Organization. The report represents the first quantitative assessment of FAO's technical capacity. Its findings will constitute a solid baseline and guide for our future work and systematic improvements. Let me first briefly outline the road map followed.

The assessment was requested by the 153<sup>rd</sup> Council held from 30 November to 4 December 2015, which asked FAO to undertake an independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization both at headquarters and in the decentralized offices, the findings to be presented at the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference in 2017. This is what we are doing now. Preliminary findings were presented at an informal seminar for Members in February 2017.

Following discussions at the 121<sup>st</sup> Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees held from 27 to 31 March 2017, the 156<sup>th</sup> Council in April welcomed the main findings. They requested FAO to look for greater collaboration among the Rome-based agencies (RBA), and that the Organization internalize a review of its technical capacity on a regular basis, including quantitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data, possibly with the involvement of the Office of Evaluation, while cautioning against introducing costly and cumbersome tracking systems.

The assessment was undertaken by three independent, highly qualified experts with the scope to analyze the evolution of FAO's technical capacity during the 2012–16 period in quantitative terms. This approach was chosen based on the limited time available to undertake the assessment as well as limited availability, comparability and reliability of structure and standardized data and key indicators. We now have a clear definition for FAO technical capacity, which is not easy to find as is the capacity to mobilize the knowledge and expertise that are necessary to meet FAO's Strategic Objectives and the needs and priorities of its Members.

From the methodological point, the assessment covered two dimensions: human resources and the delivery dimension. I will not go more into detail here, but instead mention a few key points.

The human resources (HR) dimension assessed FAO technical capacity at headquarters and decentralized offices provided through all sources of funding, including consultants, national project personnel and other technical non-staff human resources. In addition, age, years of experience and level of education of staff were also included. Three categories of functional capacity: core technical capacity, enabled technical capacity and administrative or support capacity. Administrative capacity was excluded from the assessment and the regional breakdown for HR data was not possible at this time. The delivery dimension assessed the delivery of FAO products, services and outputs in support of its Strategic Objectives.

What were the main findings and recommendations of the Independent Assessment of Technical Capacity?

Total technical capacity increased by close to three percent. Importantly, core technical capacity from the General Fund increased by about 19 percent. This was possible through the realization and redeployment of significant efficiency gains and administrative streamlining. Technical capacity was increased in a number of areas, including nutrition and food safety, economics, technical cooperation, information and knowledge management, as well as an increase of 169 posts overall. There was a small decline in some areas, such as land and water management, livestock, land tenure and statistics; resulting in a decline of seven posts.

Technical capacity, including trust funds, has increased at both headquarters by 244 positions, 30 percent, and in decentralized offices by 213 positions, 5.6 percent. The General Fund financed non-staff human resources, mostly consultants, increased by 233 positions, which amounts to an increase of about 33 percent between 2014 and 2016. This data has not been available since 2012.

Three external reviews of FAO were carried out during this period by the Multilateral Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, and by the UK Department of International Development (DFID). They all noted and marked improvement in FAO's performance during the period covered by this assessment.

In its Management Response, FAO welcomes the findings and recommendations of the report. As the Director-General, in his opening remarks highlighted on Monday morning, we are grateful to see that member countries are officially recognizing that today FAO is much more efficient and effective.

The recommendations from the report are clear. In its Management Response, FAO identified the following: continue to improve the matrix management approach so as to strengthen both programme delivery and technical capacity; improve the planning and monitoring of technical inputs and outputs; pursue opportunity to leverage FAO technical expertise in work with other UN agencies, in particular Rome-based Agencies such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP); further supplement and reach its technical capacity through partnerships and South-South Cooperation; introduce the institutionalization of both qualitative and quantitative dimensions of future assessments with the involvement of the Office of Evaluation; continue the planning, monitoring, and adaptation of the necessary technical skills mix to better deliver normative and programmatic products and services.

I thank you for your attention.

**Sra. Marycel PACHECO GUTIERREZ (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)**

Realizo esta intervención en nombre del G-77 y China. El Grupo de los 77 y China acoge favorablemente las constataciones del Informe sobre la Evaluación Independiente de la Capacidad Técnica de la FAO. En particular, su conclusión de que a pesar de un presupuesto nominal cero y la reducción general de los puestos, la capacidad técnica de la FAO, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas, ha aumentado mediante la reinversión de reducciones administrativas en puestos técnicos y en recursos. Nos complace que el aumento de la capacidad técnica esté en consonancia con el Marco Estratégico de la FAO.

Tomamos nota de que las principales conclusiones de esta evaluación son coherentes con las de otras recientes evaluaciones independientes y externas de la FAO, como aquella realizada por el Grupo de la Red para la Evaluación del Desempeño de las Organizaciones Multilaterales (MOPAN), el

Departamento de Desarrollo Internacional del Reino Unido y el Ministerio Federal para el Desarrollo Económico de Alemania, la cual reconoció un aumento en el rendimiento general de la FAO en los últimos años, acreditando el resultado positivo a una visión estratégica clara, a una instructora de gestión modernizada y a los ahorros de eficiencia.

El G-77 y China apoya las conclusiones del 156º período de sesiones del Consejo sobre este tema del Agenda. En particular, destacamos el valor de las asociaciones y la Cooperación Sur-Sur en la capacidad técnica general de la Organización y la sugerencia de una mayor colaboración entre FAO, FIDA y PMA en las esferas administrativas para la reducción de costos y eficiencia. El Grupo de los 77 y China también apoya que las evaluaciones futuras de esta naturaleza sean internalizadas e incluyan el análisis cualitativo y la exposición de datos desagregados. También apoyamos la petición de que la Secretaría debería supervisar la capacidad técnica de la Organización de forma periódica, incluso en relación con los ejercicios de planificación de las fuerzas de trabajo y la consiguiente presentación de informes a los Miembros.

En conclusión, bajo el punto de vista del G-77 y China, no hay duda de que los resultados positivos de esta Evaluación Independiente demuestran el éxito de los cambios en la dirección estratégica de la Organización, la cual fue aprobada por Miembros de la FAO en el año 2012. Asimismo, felicitamos a la Administración de la FAO por la gestión de todo el trabajo realizado y la exhortamos a que continúen esta dirección, con el fin de alcanzar una mayor eficiencia y uso óptimo de los recursos, la entrega continua de sus productos clave y la preservación de sus conocimientos y capacidades para el trabajo técnico sobre normas y estándares, así como la cooperación y asistencia técnica.

**Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)**

The technical capacity of FAO goes right to the heart of the core functions of the Organization, how it delivers its mandate. Technical capacity goes right to the heart of FAO's comparative advantage and is almost synonymous with its comparative advantage. As we all know, it is the normative work, standards, statistics, technical and policy advice that helps governments develop and grow their agricultural sectors and address the broader issues that affect food security.

These comparative advantages include global public goods for which FAO headquarters has a central role and working with governments and other international organizations. Those global public goods in turn allow FAO and other partners to implement programmes at the country level. They are the underpinning and enabling inputs. Therefore, it is logical that an organization understands, monitors and continuously works to strengthen its core capacities. Doing so will give us assurances of what is working well and teach us new things about how we can better achieve our collective mission.

Organizations that do not learn, do not adapt. Therefore, Australia greatly appreciated the work of the FAO Secretariat in conducting this review.

We were pleased at the strong support of Management for the recommendations, including the commitment to institutionalize qualitative and quantitative aspects. We particularly appreciate the commitments from the Secretariat to continue and build on this practice, including the use of the Office of Evaluation.

We look forward to, and hope for, continued engagement with the Governing Bodies as this process is internalized and we keep on strengthening the capacities of the Organization that are so crucial to achieving its mandate.

**M. Georges GANONGO (Congo)**

La République du Congo prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique, qui appuie la déclaration du Venezuela prononcée au nom du Groupe des 77 et la Chine. Cette intervention est articulée en sept points.

Le Groupe Afrique accueille favorablement les principales conclusions du rapport sur l'évaluation des capacités techniques de l'Organisation et exprime sa satisfaction du fait que la Direction de la FAO ait approuvé les prochaines étapes proposées dans ce document.

Le Groupe Afrique félicite l'équipe chargée de l'évaluation des capacités techniques pour avoir mené cette activité conformément au mandat donné par l'Organisation et les pays membres. À l'occasion, nous notons en particulier que l'aspect quantitatif est mis en avant, comme demandé par les Membres, et que cette évaluation, étant la première du genre, constitue dans ce domaine une étude de référence pour l'avenir.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite également que les conclusions du rapport de l'équipe correspondent à celles d'autres évaluations indépendantes externes de la FAO réalisées récemment, notamment par le Réseau d'évaluation de la performance des organisations multilatérales (MOPAN), le Ministère britannique du développement international (DFID) et le Ministère fédéral allemand de la coopération économique et du développement (BMZ), ce qui montre à suffisance la pertinence des résultats de cette évaluation.

Le Groupe Afrique note par ailleurs avec satisfaction l'augmentation, observée pour la période allant de 2012 à 2016, des capacités techniques de l'Organisation, tant au Siège que dans les bureaux décentralisés. Il saisit l'occasion pour féliciter la Direction générale de les avoir alignées sur le Cadre stratégique de la FAO, et ce dans un contexte de budget à valeur nominale inchangée, et d'utiliser des ressources humaines hors personnel pour assurer une certaine flexibilité.

Le Groupe Afrique félicite la Direction générale pour avoir apporté souplesse et innovation aux procédures de recrutement, qui ont permis de rendre l'Organisation plus efficace dans un contexte économique plus difficile et de plus en plus incertain.

En ce qui concerne les prochaines étapes proposées dans le rapport, dans un contexte économique difficile et face aux nombreux défis auxquels l'Organisation est confrontée, notamment l'élimination de la faim, de la pauvreté et de la malnutrition, ainsi que la lutte contre les changements climatiques, le Groupe Afrique recommande qu'à l'avenir, le Secrétariat assure le suivi régulier des capacités techniques de l'Organisation en liaison avec la gestion prévisionnelle des effectifs et que les futures évaluations présentent une analyse qualitative, ainsi que des données ventilées par région et par sexe.

Compte tenu de l'importance de la question, le Groupe Afrique recommande également que les prochaines évaluations de ce genre soient institutionnalisées avec la participation évidente du Bureau de l'évaluation pour garantir un suivi régulier des capacités techniques devant aboutir à un rapport aux Membres.

Avec ces commentaires, le Groupe Afrique approuve le rapport sur les capacités techniques de la FAO et recommande à la Direction la mise en œuvre des différentes recommandations.

**Ms Jiani TIAN (China) (Original language Chinese)**

China agrees with the remarks by the Group of 77 and China.

China welcomes the opinions of the report and Management observations. China commends and supports this Independent Assessment Report and believes that it is necessary for the objective evaluation of FAO's technical capacity. We support the continuation of such work.

China appreciates that South-South Cooperation is an important component of the assessment and there are detailed lists of indicators and specific outcomes. We have read the English text for the technical capacity delivery dimension.

It is mentioned that technical workshops organized by FAO increased by 55 percent and the number of South-South Cooperation (SSC) beneficiary countries by 73 percent.

This is a great achievement for South South Cooperation (SSC). Table 4.1 clearly notes that in 2016 the SSC beneficiary countries increased from 36 to 76 from 2012 and the number of agreements increased from 27 to 38, yet the number of professional staff seconded from donor organizations fell from 222 to 100. This is a noteworthy movement.

We hope that FAO Management can provide an explanation as Professional staff seconded from donor organizations are important technical support for SSC and for all the staff that receive training as part of SSC agreements. It is a pity that there is no data in this assessment report. According to Chinese

statistics, we have sent 1 041 experts for SSC which has benefitted over one million trainees and farmers.

Inspired by this report, China hopes that FAO and other countries could further their support to SSC and urge countries and other international financial organizations to increase external funding for SSC. All countries could dispatch experts and technicians to developing countries to work in the field with local farmers to strengthen direct exchanges among farmers of developing countries.

In the Management observation, China appreciates that at the end of paragraph 4(b) it states that the use of partnership and SSC, which do not figure prominently in the report, provide an opportunity for the Organization to increase its technical capacity. We appreciate that FAO Management recognizes that SSC is an important new driver for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG). I hope that the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) could highlight the role of the SSC, enhance technical capacity and service as well as deliver more outcomes for FAO.

I hope that this could be reflected in the report.

**Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)**

Japan is completely in line with the statement delivered by Australia earlier, and would like to reiterate the importance of maintaining and further strengthening the technical capacity of FAO for this Organization to remain at the centre of knowledge organizations in the area of food and agriculture.

Japan appreciates the Secretariat's efforts to conduct this Independent Assessment, and looks forward to future assessments of technical capacity carried out by building upon the results of the present assessment as the baseline.

In so doing, it is important to include qualitative analysis and more disaggregated data on human resources, as has been proposed by Management.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

As you said, I make this statement on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the European Union, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and the Republic of Turkey, as well as San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

Technical capacity is essential for FAO. It is its foundation as a knowledge-based organization. FAO Members rely on the Organization's knowledge and technical expertise. In this context, we thank the consultants for their work on the Independent Assessment and take note of the report.

We believe the assessment could have benefitted from a more precise categorization, for instance, between core and enabling technical capacity, and from greater consideration of potential problems related to the high vacancy rate in the recruitment process, in addition to the increased use of consultants, which could over time undermine the Organization's capacity and the preservation of its institutional memory.

Looking ahead, we encourage FAO to continue monitoring technical capacity on a regular basis through an inclusive process. Thus, involving the Office of Evaluation, the Programme and Finance Committees and the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), as well as FAO Members who should be adequately consulted.

Future exercises need to include in-depth qualitative analysis as well as gender and national disaggregated data that allow FAO Members to have comprehensive knowledge of the available technical capacity of the Organization and its challenges.

We welcome the Director-General's announcement that a qualitative approach will be undertaken at the next possible opportunity. We also support the recommendation concerning sharing administrative services and decentralized offices with IFAD and WFP. We encourage FAO's Management to ensure that the Organization maintains a critical mass of expertise, in particular at headquarters, only thus could FAO continue to fully play its important role as a knowledge-based organization and retain its comparative advantage in the UN System.

Finally, let us take this opportunity to thank all FAO staff members for their recognized commitment towards our Organization. They are FAO's strongest asset.

**Sr. Benito JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)**

Nos complace que las conclusiones de la Evaluación Independiente han sido en general positivas respecto a la capacidad técnica de la FAO, a pesar de un nivel de presupuesto sin incrementos. Esto es signo de que la Organización es capaz de hacer más con menos, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas. Las conclusiones son consistentes con las opiniones de la MOPAN y de entidades de desarrollo del Reino Unido y de Alemania.

Como se concluyó en el Consejo pasado, compartimos la opinión de que los sistemas de seguimiento de la capacidad técnica no deben ser costosos y engorrosos. Finalmente, apoyamos que se institucionalice un seguimiento regular de la capacidad técnica de la FAO y si se decide realizar un análisis cualitativo en el futuro, el marco de referencia deberá ser definido con claridad y precisión.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

Firstly, Afghanistan associates itself with the statement made by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China.

Secondly, Afghanistan welcomes the final report of the consultants on the pertinent assessment of FAO's technical capacity.

We wish to draw the following four conclusions from the report of the consultants:

Firstly, between 2012 and 2016, the core technical capacity under the Programme of Work and Budget increased by 124 posts. For the non-Programme of Work and Budget, the increase was 34 posts, leading to a total increase of 158 core technical posts.

Afghanistan considers this as progress toward the enhancements of FAO's technical strength.

Secondly, the percentage of core technical posts to total D and P posts under the Programme of Work and Budget arose from 68.3 percent in 2012 to 73.4 percent in 2016. Afghanistan considers this as good progress, as it demonstrates the shift from enabling technical posts to core technical posts.

The enabling of technical posts declined from 358 posts in 2012 to 235 posts in 2016. That is a decline of 23 percent.

Thirdly, from Table 3, the technical capacity at headquarters increased by 14 posts and for the decentralized offices by 71 posts. The larger increase in posts is appreciated as it conforms with the demands made by member countries in each of the five regional coverage areas.

Lastly, Afghanistan considers the qualitative assessment, if attempted, should focus on one key question, namely the current level of FAO's technical staff at headquarters and decentralized offices and its composition by technical discipline. This is in line with the responsibility of FAO to fulfil its mandate and enable it to make effective contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With these comments, Afghanistan endorses the report.

**Mr Anton MINAEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

We express our gratitude for the presentation and the findings of the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization at headquarters and in decentralized offices and also Management's response to this document.

We take note of the conclusions set out in the assessment report, according to which the Organization, between 2012 and 2016, was able to strengthen its expert capacity despite an overall reduction in the number of staff posts in the Secretariat.

Also, through the re-profiling of administrative posts into Professional posts in specific sectoral areas.

We welcome the trend to increase the technical sector experts in the Secretariat. However, we invite FAO Management to take a measured approach to the re-profiling of those posts to ensure the steady

flow of work of the Organization as a whole, in particular to avoid reducing staff numbers in the translation and interpretation service.

We believe that the assessment has provided useful information, which will be a baseline reference for similar assessments in the future.

With regard to the proposal made by the authors of this report to introduce a time-recording system for staff, we are not inclined to support this proposal. Its implementation, and implementation of similar initiatives, carries a risk of unjustifiably increasing the bureaucratic and financial burden of the Secretariat.

We agree with the recommendation of the 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council on the usefulness of involving the FAO Office of Evaluation in the preparation of such reports in the future.

**Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)**

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Estonia on behalf of the European Union.

We were a bit reluctant to ask for the floor because we do not intend to prolong unnecessarily the debate today. However, as the Secretariat and several interventions have referred again to the study commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, we feel it is appropriate to make a few remarks in this regard.

We are wondering which of the delegations that referred to the German study actually had the opportunity to read it. We suppose, if any, only very few because the study has never been published. Actually, the consultants who prepared the assessment report on FAO's technical capacity received the study from the FAO Secretariat who in turn got it from the Permanent Representation of Germany in Rome.

This being said, we express our astonishment that the study in question is referred to as a piece of evidence for FAO's strong technical capacity. In this regard, without going into details, I would like to share just a few quotes from the Executive Summary of the study.

There it reads for instance, "FAO performs moderately well in the delivery of results. The consultant sources agree that FAO's main weaknesses relate to its strategic and performance management and its cost and value consciousness".

Further down, "Improvement is also needed with regard to results and performance-based budgeting and human resources management". Well, this is a moderate score, not more.

Against this backdrop, we think the reference to the German study as a piece of evidence to prove FAO's technical capacity is rather the result of a very generous interpretation on behalf of the consultants. We think it is important to highlight this in order to put the record straight.

**Mr Sid Ahmed M. Alamain Hamid ALAMAIN (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)**

There are many colleagues who took the floor before me. As such, I do not wish to repeat what they said and I would like to be very brief and associate Sudan with the statement delivered by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China Group. We commend the increase in the technical capacities of the Organization between 2012 and 2016, noted in the Report of the Independent Assessment. We feel that the Organization received a good assessment and hope that the performance will improve in the coming reports.

With regard to the assessment of headquarters and decentralized offices, we reiterate the importance of increasing the technical capacities of decentralized offices. We feel that this is an issue of utmost importance.

According to the discussion that took place at the last session of the 156<sup>th</sup> Session held from 24 to 28 April 2017, we stressed the importance of an internal assessment of FAO for two main reasons.

First of all, savings. If we conduct the assessment internally, savings in terms of financial and human resources. It would be advisable to rely on staff members who work in the Organization on a daily basis in order to assess the functions of the Organization.

However, we do not want to overburden them with the issue of assessment. According to the statement delivered by the Director-General in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, there should be regular assessment of FAO's technical capacity.

We want a clear definition of the term "regular" and we need to take into consideration the financial and human resources that would entail such regular assessment.

In conclusion, we want to reiterate the importance of an independent assessment. However, it should include a qualitative assessment in addition to the quantitative assessment.

**Sr. Junior ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)**

Quiero agradecer a la Señora Semedo por la presentación que nos hizo, al igual que sumarnos a la declaración hecha por Venezuela en nombre del Grupo de los G-77 más China. Durante el Consejo de abril de hace dos meses, hemos tratado abundantemente este tema. Tampoco yo quería hacer una intervención en este momento, pero yo quisiera recordar los debates que tuvimos durante ese Consejo. Me quiero quedar en dos puntos muy importantes que debatimos en ese momento que no están en discusión.

En primer lugar, que no obstante el presupuesto nominal invariado que tiene nuestra Organización, hemos visto a través del resultado del Informe un aumento de la capacidad técnica de la FAO, tanto en la sede como en el terreno.

En segundo lugar, y es un punto muy importante para mi delegación, es reconocer el proceso que se llevó durante este periodo para llegar a alcanzar este Informe. Consideramos que la presente evaluación responde y respondió al alcance y términos de referencia solicitados y acordados por nosotros mismos, los Miembros del Consejo. Por ello apreciamos también a la dirección por la apertura y la transparencia del proceso de evaluación, misma que se ha constatado con la debida información mediante la presentación de los hallazgos principales en el seminario informal en el cual hemos sido convocados en su momento.

Pero mi delegación quiere ver más allá, quiere ver hacia el futuro. Y por eso es que estamos de acuerdo con la recomendación de que la evaluación y las observaciones de la administración sobre la utilidad de internalizar estos tipos de ejercicio de evaluación en el futuro, se realicen. Al respecto de este punto, la Oficina de Evaluación podrá garantizar una evaluación coherente e independiente, ampliando el actual ejercicio - este ejercicio que es el primero que realiza esta Organización. Es claro que hay mucho que se puede mejorar, se tendrá que trabajar mucho para ampliar el ámbito de este ejercicio. Pero esta es una base muy importante que tenemos que reconocer.

Por lo tanto, creemos, que en primer lugar queremos reconocer que también esta primera Evaluación Independiente fue realizada para analizar la evaluación de las capacidades técnicas de nuestra Organización en un periodo definido, que era del 2012 al 2016. No hay duda de que los resultados demuestran el éxito de los cambios. Tenemos que reconocer que hay mucho trabajo por hacer, pero que aquí tenemos la base y que la oficina independiente, la Oficina de Evaluación de nuestra Organización, tendrá que trabajar en ese sentido junto a todos los miembros.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

Muy brevemente, porque tampoco iba a hacer uso de la palabra, pero sí quisiera agradecer a la Doctora Maria Helena Semedo por su informe y señalar sobre la Evaluación que nos ocupa que la misma concluida en líneas generales en que la capacidad técnica de la FAO aumentó entre 2012 y 2016 en el contexto de un presupuesto sin cambios. Y además ha habido un descenso general del número de puestos, principalmente mediante la reinversión de ahorros procedentes de la simplificación administrativa en puestos y recursos técnicos. Esa capacidad técnica aumentó, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas, y en términos generales se ajusta al marco estratégico de la FAO, cosa que reconocemos.

Además, la mayor parte de los indicadores relativos a la calidad y la experiencia del personal mejoró, así como la realización de productos y la prestación de servicios claves que impulsan la labor normativa y la consecución de las realizaciones del Programa de Trabajo y de Presupuesto. Por lo tanto, la Delegación Argentina considera pertinente señalar que estima muy valiosa este tipo de

evaluación, así como su institucionalización como mecanismo de la Organización para supervisar la flexibilidad y adaptación a los cambios de la capacidad técnica de la FAO. Agradecemos nuevamente el Informe de esta Evaluación Independiente y a Usted por concedernos el uso de la palabra.

**Ms Maria Helena M.Q. SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General, Climate and Natural Resources)**

I would like to start by thanking all of the Members and all of the interventions for the support received regarding the report but more than the report, on the way forward. I think this is most important.

The report, in our view, responds to the terms of reference. The report came up with some ways for FAO to improve and, we all agree, it is missing a qualitative analysis and that, because of the lack of consistent data, we do not have an analysis by headquarters and a decentralized regional analysis and maybe gender disaggregated data. But I think we all agreed on that and we all agree that the report and the findings of the report constitute a baseline for the Organization.

We now have a consistent baseline for 40 years which we can use for Management improvement, Management decisions, how we will manage our human and financial resources and how we can improve.

This is how we see the report. We agree in the Management Response that we will be continuing to do this assessment. We will be including in the future assessment the qualitative analysis and it will be done by the Office of Evaluation. When the Office of Evaluation undertakes any evaluation, it is carried out with a consultative process where the member countries and all the stakeholders are associated from the beginning up to the evaluation.

Once the evaluation is finalized, it is presented to the Programme Committee. This is how the process is and the Programme Committee will make recommendations and we will implement the recommendations and go back to the Programme Committee on how the recommendations are implemented.

I think we already have a process institutionalized and this is the process we will be following and the process is an inclusive process.

Second, we believe that now we cannot have an analysis from the report regarding geographic location and where the technical capacity is not. We need to have a critical mass for the Organization which is required throughout the geographic location of the Organization.

Third, regarding the remark from Germany, I think what has been said is not that the report said FAO is great. What I said is that the findings of the consultants' report is consistent with what the BMZ report states and I do not think it was said that FAO is great. They are consistent findings. This is what I refer to in my intervention.

Another point is the use of South-South Cooperation. We have already South-South Cooperation in place. You are using South-South Cooperation to increase our capacity and I believe it is a priority of the Organization. Maybe my colleague Dan Gustafson can elaborate further, but I believe it is an instrument we are using to increase FAO technical capacity and it is really welcomed and well appreciated not only at FAO but by all FAO member countries.

We thank you for your comments. We took note of the recommendations and will be further reporting on how we are implementing the recommendations coming from the Conference. I will ask my colleague, Laurent Thomas.

**Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)**

It is clear that for the Management of FAO as much as for the Membership, this assessment has been extremely important. There were several references to baseline and indeed I think it was the first time that this was undertaken. It is a study that will be made good use of by the Management of this Organization.

There were references to the need to internalize the follow-up. I think that is extremely important. When an organization that does not learn or adapt was referred to, and I think for us the internalization

is about the lesson-learning dimension of the follow-up. It is extremely important that our evaluation of this takes the lead now to see how we build on this evaluation and how we take on board the different recommendations that were made in terms of disaggregation of data, in terms of qualitative analysis for the future because, at the end, it is about how this Organization will be able or not in the future to address the challenges of Agenda 2030.

So we are looking forward to this work with the Office of Evaluation. I think the Office of Evaluation has demonstrated even recently how much, in the review of the Strategic Framework, they are able to come up with analysis and recommendations that can then be discussed in the Programme Committee and useful for the Membership and for Management.

Another important point is the external assessment. There were references to the German external assessment and to the British Multilateral Development Review (MDR), the MOPAN. We take this external assessment very seriously and we can reassure all of you that we are not complacent. Even when there is moderate satisfaction, or no satisfaction on what this Organization is doing and in our delivery, we want to improve. We have the occasion. There is a new MOPAN exercise that is starting. We had a number of meetings with the MOPAN teams that are piloted by a large number of our main resource partners, and we believe that it would be another occasion to see if we are on the right track.

The last comment I would like to make is related to the comment made at the Council and was repeated today by the European Union regarding the partnership with the Rome-based Agencies. I am sure that most of you attended the side event on Zero Hunger where the signal from the top was reaffirmed once again. The three Heads of the Rome-based Agencies wish to work more closely together in the future. In fact, they met on 17 May to define a number of strategic priorities for their executive management to take on board.

We met with WFP and IFAD at the level of the Deputy Directors-General one week ago to look at how we can transform this political vision of our leaders into concrete action in 2017 and there will be very concrete action. There are a number of things that are being done. I will give you two examples.

We are working right now on a review of our enterprise resource planning in FAO and we are in intense dialogue now with IFAD and WFP to see the possibilities of international ability of our system. That is important. That is key for the efficiency savings.

We also signed an MoU with WFP in March 2017 where we committed to strengthen collaboration and synergies, not only at global but also at country level and it means working on our strategic priorities, joint programming. We also signed an agreement with IFAD in 2013 for hosting IFAD in FAO country offices.

This has been translated into concrete results. We have already eight countries where IFAD teams are co-hosted with FAO. It means that there is an opportunity for not only being together and making savings but exchange of information, joint advocacy, increased resource mobilization and strengthening the programming together.

Those are the types of things that I think the Membership is expecting from us and we are working intensively on.

**Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)**

There are just two larger issues that I would like to touch on because I think it is really an excellent opportunity to look at the larger implications and the trends of what we are seeing in this report. It is a snapshot, of course, of a shorter period of 2012 to 2016, but the longer term view is really important to have in sight. I hope I do not sound pessimistic on this because I think I am genuinely very optimistic, but we need to be realistic.

The first point is on the use of consultants and the institutional memory. I think the question of the use of consultants is only part of the story. I think the larger question is the use of voluntary-funded inputs that are not permanent. I think it would definitely be good if we could have more long term, permanent staff in the Organization. I think we would all in a lot of ways like to see that. I do not think this is a personal view, but realistically I do not see any reason to think that we will have an increase in real

terms in our budget, of which about 75 percent goes to staff, in the next, I do not know what my time horizon would be, but at least 20 years.

I do not see a realistic expectation that we will have an increase in staff from an increased regular programme budget for the foreseeable future. The same is true for, I think, for most of your governments. We are in a situation where we are not going to get large increases, with some exceptions, as priorities change. But basically the line may not be flat completely over the medium term, but it is not going to be rising very much. The real challenge for us is to understand how to maintain and thrive in delivering our results within a context where more and more of our staff are not on the traditional assessed contribution funded portion of the budget. This is relatively new for us, and I think we have already completely internalized it.

The situation that comes to mind in my own experience is that of the land-grant, publicly-funded universities in the United States. I worked at one from 1988 to 1994, and then when I was back in the Liaison Office in Washington from 2008 to the end of 2011 had a lot of interaction with really very good universities. I think we from the US are really proud of the quality of the education and research of those. But over that 15-year period, the percentage of budgets of the core of research and teaching staff that were funded out of the state contribution shrank remarkably, again because of cost increases not just in salaries but in equipment and health care, etc. So the percentage of the salaries of tenured faculty that actually were funded by the core budget as opposed to funded by projects, in a number of cases, was less than 10 percent. Therefore tenured faculty in a lot of strong university departments is, in fact, funded in their overwhelming majority by project funds and they have to incorporate project funding into the way that the programmes work.

I do not see FAO moving hugely in that direction as the universities were forced to do. But I raise it only as an illustration of how I think we need to begin to think seriously about how to maintain institutional memory, quality control, continuity in a situation where an increasing number of our staff at headquarters in particular, and in the Regional Offices, perhaps in the technical areas, are going to have to be at least partially funded by voluntary contributions. There is a way we can do this. I am sure we can thrive in doing it. But I think we are going to have to go in that direction.

The reason, as the report points out, that we have used more consultants is purely financial and how to deliver more with the existing, at best flat and probably at worst decline in real terms, budget is a different mix of staff. I think that while it is possible that there were – not that it was not the right mixture of staff versus consultants. However, I think the mixture of the voluntarily funded portion of that versus the core is going to increase and we need to understand and deal with that and plan for how that is going to happen. I think that is a very interesting challenge. In my personal view, I think it is inevitable. I am sure we can do it but it is something we have to deal with.

Then the second aspect that this report highlights is the role of evaluation and how the Office of Evaluation has been working. There again I have a really optimistic view. I have for some time chaired what we call the Evaluation Committee, which is our internal committee where the Office of Evaluation staff report to or present their reports to a mix of the departments on the Committee, representatives on the Committee, and discuss back and forth on that in the way that the Programme Committee does. That has improved in a number of ways in the last several years. I am really very pleased with that evolution; while retaining independence, becoming much more strategic as a partner in looking at these difficult challenges and issues and kind of working together in a less sort of adversarial way. I think the same is true for the interaction with the Programme Committee.

In particular is the part that I am most interested in these days: the evaluations of the Strategic Objectives. We have now finished two and there is one remaining that I believe has not yet been started. I do not think we have started Strategic Objective 2. But the others we are all quite a ways through. I think the discussion internally and the discussion with the Programme Committee that we have seen so far has been really constructive. I think that the way we are working now is much different than how we worked some years ago. I think we are on a positive trajectory.

So, with that in mind, while certainly I appreciate the concerns raised by Estonia on behalf of the EU on a more inclusive process, but I have to say I am a bit nervous about changing that process. I would hope that you would not want us to move in a way where this specific aspect had a different

arrangement than what we are doing. If the reports from the Office of Evaluation and the way that we do that are not up to what you would want, then, by all means, I think you should as usual be constructively critical on this or critical in what we should do better. But I think we are on really quite an interesting path in looking at how we evaluate these larger issues with the joint reporting of the Office of Evaluation. Changing that model, either in general or for this topic in particular, I think is something that we should look at with a lot of caution.

### **CHAIRPERSON**

Now I would like to present to you the summary conclusions for Item 26, *Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization*.

“The Conference, in considering the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization, welcomed its main findings:

- a) Appreciated the increase in technical capacity of the Organization from 2012 to 2016 both at headquarters and in the decentralized locations in spite of a flat, nominal budget level and overall decline in number of positions in the period under review;
- b) Noted the value of partnerships and South-South Cooperation in the overall technical capacity of the Organization;
- c) Appreciated that increased technical capacity was aligned with FAO's Strategic Framework;
- d) Noted the report's conclusions were consistent with those of other independent and external assessments of FAO, such as the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID);
- e) Welcomed the suggestion for greater collaboration between FAO, IFAD, and WFP on administrative areas for cost reduction and efficiency and to leverage FAO's pre-eminent position as the repository of technical capacity;
- f) Requested that in future there be monitoring by the Secretariat of the technical capacity of the Organization on a regular basis, including in conjunction with workforce planning exercises and ensuring reporting to Members;
- g) Requested that future assessments include qualitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data, including gender data;
- h) Of the Office of Evaluation, the Programme Committee, and where possible Members of FAO.

These are my proposals for conclusions. Can we agree to them?

### **Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We generally agree with what you picked up; however, we would like to make an adjustment in the first point. This says we appreciate the increased capacity, but we would like to add in *quantitative terms* because everybody agreed that a qualitative assessment is still necessary.

### **Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

In response to the suggestions just made by the EU, I would prefer that we refer to the terms of reference that were agreed. So instead of adding *quantitative*, we could say “In accordance with the agreed terms of reference” because there was such an agreement.

I would also like to make a comment on h) in which you referred to the Member Nations. I do not quite grasp the implication of this formulation. It seems that you would imply that Member Nations would be involved in the future evaluations. It is quite an open statement, so perhaps you may wish to rephrase that to say “and report accordingly to Member Nations”, so that we are sure of what is our role in the future assessments. Not that we are going to conduct the assessments on behalf of the Secretariat but rather to be informed of the outcome.

**Sr. Junior ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)**

Era precisamente sobre el Punto H que queríamos apoyar la posición de Brasil, porque efectivamente el término de la última frase de su resumen nos parece demasiado abierta.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I do not see any other requests for the floor, so I will take up the proposals. Is it agreeable for the European Union to make a reference in a) “in accordance with the terms of reference”, because that we agreed? There was a suggestion from Brazil to include “in accordance with the agreed terms of reference”.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

First of all, I would like to add two more points. First, we said in our statement that we would like FAO to maintain the critical mass of expertise; that this is very important. Also talking about who should be involved in the assessments in the future, that also the Finance Committee should be mentioned. Finally, to the first point under discussion here, we would like to insist on quoting that we accept the increased capacity in qualitative terms.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

Just to respond to my colleague from the European Union who I think referred to critical mass. I think that critical mass will depend on what the qualitative analysis says. We still have to do the qualitative analysis.

**Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)**

Simplemente para apoyar las dos posiciones de Brasil, tanto sobre el Punto H como sobre incluir de conformidad con el mandato.

**Sr. Junior ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)**

Quiero retomar el optimismo del Señor Gustafson cuando hizo su presentación.

En primer lugar, ha quedado, como fue expresado también por la Señora Semedo, la importancia de esta primera Evaluación Independiente. Nosotros discutimos ampliamente este tema en el 156.º período del Consejo en el mes de abril y en ese momento, mi país, que es Miembro del Consejo, tuvo una posición bastante flexible en el sentido que reconocíamos que este informe era una base muy importante para el trabajo futuro que pueda realizar la Organización. En ese sentido, compartíamos la idea que la interiorización, como se dice, o internalización de este mecanismo dentro de la estructura de la FAO a través de su oficina de evaluación, fuera la vía o el mecanismo más idóneo para continuar en este proceso de mejoramiento.

Como decíamos también en ese momento, el *micromanagement*, no creemos que ahora mismo sea una vía que pueda alimentar al mejoramiento de este mecanismo. Por lo tanto, creemos que esta Oficina de Evaluación será la que tendrá que aumentar su capacidad, también general, para poder rendir a nosotros, o sea los Miembros, los respectivos insumos para poder mejorar. Creemos que estos procedimientos que se tendrán que continuar trabajando en esta oficina, lo que nos va a producir, es que continuemos evolucionando en el mejoramiento de este mecanismo y sobre todo, garantizando su independencia.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think we had a lengthy discussion about this item during the Council and arrived at a conclusion there. I think it would not be effective if we continued and reopened the discussion at the Council. What I tried to do in my concluding remarks is to capture the main elements of what you said this morning based on the consensus which we reached during the Council so that we have a clear decision of the Conference. Therefore, I would like to ask your flexibility to see whether we can arrive at a consensus of these summary conclusions.

When we speak about the first part, the increase of technical capacity, I think we do agree on the terms of reference. The terms of reference are stating that it is a quantitative analysis, but they are stating

more. I think if we bring all the elements of the terms of reference now in the summary conclusion, I think we will have a very lengthy summary conclusion. Therefore, I think a reference to “in accordance with the agreed terms of reference” captures also what we agreed when we speak about the quantitative part of the assessment. Later on in the summary conclusions we clearly state that future assessments should include qualitative analysis. I am still trying to reach a consensus on a).

I look now to Estonia and Switzerland whether or not they can go along with the reference to the agreed terms of reference which includes that it was a qualitative assessment but it includes more because we stated in the terms of reference more elements of the assessment.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

Chair, we appreciate your efforts and we confirm that we are close to agreement. In the way of compromise, we agree that it could be mentioned in the first bullet that we appreciate the technical capacity increase according to the terms of reference and in quantitative terms.

**M. Michaël WÜRZNER (Suisse)**

Nous considérons qu'il faut nommer un chat un chat, et donc qu'il faudrait mentionner, maintenir la terminologie: «en termes quantitatifs». La dernière proposition formulée par l'Estonie nous semble bonne.

En tout état de cause, nous nous réjouissons également qu'une évaluation qualitative sera faite et que dans les conclusions cet aspect sera mentionné pour prendre en compte le contexte actuel, notamment la digitalisation en cours, qui confère des possibilités importantes en termes de simplification des procédures et de gains d'efficacité.

Sur ce, je confirme que la proposition de l'Estonie nous semble cohérente et un bon compromis

**CHAIRPERSON**

I do not think we will arrive in this way at a consensus on a) because I think taking out one element of the terms of reference, of course you can say including, etc. I already saw some quite concerned reactions, at least non-verbal concerned reactions. Of course, I am in your hands. Everybody can agree “in accordance with the agreed terms of reference and quantitative”, it is fine. But I am looking in the room whether or not there is agreement on that text. Can we agree on “in accordance with the agreed terms of reference and quantitative”?

**Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

It is awkward because it does not read congruently. Of course, the terms of reference that were agreed set out the kind of analysis that we expected. That was recognized to be a quantitative analysis. I do not understand what the intent of the European Union is in insisting on stressing that it was a quantitative analysis. Of course, the EU can call a cat a cat as many times as they want, but it will not change its nature. It is also an animal that has its complexities. I could be enlightened and perhaps I will agree to quantitative if it makes any sense. I just do not see how you can add “*and quantitative*” and still make sense of this sentence.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think yesterday we had a very good spirit of compromise. I look again because I have in front of me the terms of reference which were agreed and which refer to the quantitative aspect of the work done. So I think it includes also the quantitative aspect, what is proposed by the European Union.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We understood and we very much appreciate that Brazil was ready to accept this quantitative, although not with pleasure. But I would like to add another point in the first point we mentioned this Finance Committee also that this is still not in. Otherwise we would be happy with this.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Let us keep this pending. I think then we still only have suggestions for h). I will try to strike a new compromise, taking on board what was said by Brazil and some others as well as the European Union

and my proposal would be “agreed that future assessments be internalized and recommended, the involvement of the Office of Evaluation, the Programme and Finance Committees, and be reported to the Members of FAO”.

**Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

I would like to call attention to the fact that the channel of reporting from the Secretariat is through the Finance and Programme Committees, so in a way when you mention reporting to Members of FAO, you are actually referring to them indirectly because the Secretariat would not be able to do so in another fashion.

Of course I do not want to imply that the Finance Committee will conduct the assessment because that is not under its purview and we are not trying to amend the mandate of the Finance Committee. But in reporting to the Member Nations, necessarily the Finance Committee and the Programme Committee will be involved.

**CHAIRPERSON**

You can agree then, what I tried to do, because I spoke about the involvement of the Programme and Finance Committees. That part you can agree with?

**Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)**

I would say that when you use reporting, then you can add the Finance and the Programme Committees, if you want, and report to the Members of FAO through the Finance and Programme Committees.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much but that gives another meaning to what I proposed.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We were happy with your proposal.

**Sr. Junior ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)**

Con optimismo, quiero apoyar la declaración de Brasil en el sentido que ese es el procedimiento que se tendría que seguir en este caso.

**Sra. Rebecca CUTIE' CANCINO (Cuba)**

Apoyamos la posición de Brasil y esperamos que el resumen no sea tan explicativo que se convierta en un término de referencia de la próxima evaluación de la cual se está hablando, porque estamos detallando demasiado a quién debe rendirse cuenta, quiénes deben estar involucrados, y una evaluación depende de los términos de referencia. Es un equipo profesional encargado de llevar a cabo este trabajo y no debemos tampoco maniatar el futuro de esta solicitada evaluación por algunos Miembros, y pensamos que debemos tener un lenguaje más concreto para saber, en fin, cuál es el camino y la ruta a seguir.

**Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)**

La Delegación de la República de Guinea Ecuatorial manifiesta su apoyo a la postura de Brasil.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you but now we still have two opposite positions so I have to see how we can find a compromise between the negotiated proposals. Give me one minute.

Distinguished delegates, dear friends, if we could have reached an agreement yesterday on, in my opinion, a much more difficult point of the carry-over, I think we must be able to find a compromise on this as well. So my idea would be the following because what I understood is it is now linked to both so we include in a) “in accordance with the agreed terms of reference”.

Then h) “agreed that future assessments be internalized and recommended the involvement of the Office of Evaluation and Oversight by the Programme and Finance Committees”.

Can we agree to that? At least I saw some more smiley faces. I see that Brazil can accept this. Can Estonia accept it as well?

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

The second one, yes, regarding the first point, the involvement of the Finance Committee. But can you read the full first bullet again because basically what we are saying is that we accept the appreciation of the technical capacity increase in qualitative terms. We would want to see whether it is in there.

**CHAIRPERSON**

It is in there because you make reference to the agreed terms of reference. It would read as follows:

“Appreciated the increase in technical capacity of the Organization from 2012 to 2016 in accordance with the agreed terms of reference”.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

Well, as you might understand, we were insisting on this quantitative term. It was mentioned in the Secretariat’s report that the assessment was done in quantitative terms. Why should we not be able to mention it in the first point, that appreciation is given according to the figures which show that there are really increases and, in some points, quantitative terms. But nothing is said about the qualitative terms.

If you say only we appreciate the increase of technical capacity, this is not an adequate reflection of the situation.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I will give it another try. At least we make full use of our time this morning.

My proposal – the compromise of the compromise of the compromise - would be we keep a) as it was with no reference to “according to the terms of reference”. Then we go to g) where I originally proposed that “Requested future assessments include qualitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data, including gender data”.

We put a sentence before it and we say “noting that the current report was quantitative in nature in line with the terms of reference and requested that future assessments include qualitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data, including gender data”.

Can we agree on that?

I see Brazil nodding so now I do make an appeal to the flexibility of the European Union to agree with it as well.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We need three minutes. As you understand, the European Union is not one country.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I know who the European Union is, but I will read it out again so that you know exactly what I am proposing because I have taken on board also your suggestions, and at least one European Country is laughing.

“Noting that the current report was quantitative in nature in line with the agreed terms of reference and requested that future assessments include qualitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data, including gender data”.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We agree with the fourth point but as a mode of compromise we suggest in the first bullet point to say we *note* instead of *appreciate* and everything else will be fine.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Now I see a problem because I think there was a consensus in the Council and the paragraph we agreed in the Council started with the words *appreciated the increase*. So I think all of the Members of the Council including the Members of the European Union agreed to the terminology *appreciated*.

It would be strange if now the Conference says we do not appreciate the conclusions of the Council and we now say we *note* because it is the exact language which I took over from the Council. So I think we should not, as I said before, and I listened to many interventions this morning, and almost all of you spoke about *appreciation* of the increase of technical capacity.

*Noted* I think would not be neat to all of the others who refer to *appreciated*. As your neutral Chair, I tried to capture everything and to stick to the language we had already agreed in the Council.

I really hope that the European Union will not insist on now changing a) where we speak about appreciation and hopefully can go along, because I included your concern when it comes to the quantitative nature of the current report. I do hope that you could be flexible this time and agree with the language I proposed.

I think I see everybody taking their seats again so do we have white smoke?

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

We could consult with most of the Member States, and we should say that of course this is not exactly what we have said or expected. But we, in the way of compromise as we understand most of the other delegations can appreciate, can reluctantly agree with the proposal.

*Applause*

*Applaudissements*

*Aplausos*

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you, Estonia, on behalf of the European Union, for your flexibility and also of course Brazil and others for your flexibility to accept the compromise and, with that, we have also concluded our work with consensus on Agenda Item 26, *Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity*.

With that we have concluded our work in Commission II. The Drafting Committee will meet this afternoon at 14.30 hours and then we have to adopt the Report of Commission II after the Drafting Committee. We all speak about efficiency and effective organization and normally I would have called you back to the Red Room, but at the last three sessions, though many of you are here, we could not reach a quorum.

So what we will do is bring the report on Friday morning to the Plenary but then we transform the Plenary, hopefully for not more than five minutes, into Commission II because the Plenary will have a quorum as there will be an important election. Commission II will adopt the Report and then we transform Commission II back to the Plenary.

That is my proposal to you. Can we accept that? Then I am looking forward to Friday morning. This meeting of Commission II is adjourned.

*The meeting rose at 12.19 hours*

*La séance est levée à 12 h 19*

*Se levanta la sesión a las 12.19*



CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE  
CONFERENCIA

<p><b>Fortieth Session Quarantième session 40.º período de sesiones</b></p>
<p><b>Rome, 3-8 June 2017 Rome, 3-8 juin 2017 Roma, 3-8 de junio de 2017</b></p>
<p><b>FOURTH MEETING OF COMMISSION II QUATRIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II CUARTA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II</b></p>
<p><b>7 July 2017</b></p>

The Fourth Meeting was opened at 9.44 hours  
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La quatrième séance est ouverte à 9 h 44  
sous la présidence de M. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la cuarta reunión a las 9.44  
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,  
Presidente de la Comisión II



**Adoption of Report / Adoption du Rapport / Aprobación del Informe  
(C 2017/II/REP)****CHAIRPERSON OF THE CONFERENCE**

I should like to invite the Chairperson of Commission II, Mr Johannes Hoogeveen of the Netherlands to take the Chair of this meeting as Commission II.

**CHAIRPERSON**

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to report on the work that has been done by Commission II. We started Monday afternoon in the Red Room and we completed our work on Wednesday by lunchtime, really way ahead of our schedule. A record achievement was only possible thanks to the very constructive atmosphere and expert cooperation of all the Members of Commission II and also the willingness to find compromises. Yes, we did find good compromises.

I think it was because of the excellent preparatory work done by the Independent Chairperson of the Council, His Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, our colleagues in the Council and also the excellent support to and preparation of the Members by the Secretariat.

Allow me also to congratulate Mr El Taweel, Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, and the colleagues in the Drafting Committee for the very smooth running of the Drafting Committee.

The text was adopted in one session. I think that was the atmosphere not only in Commission II but also in the Drafting Committee. Well done.

In the deliberations of Commission II, we confirmed the recommendation of the 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council for approval by the Conference of the budget level for 2018-19 of USD 1 005.6 million, agree that the Conference authorizes the Director-General to carry over unspent funds from the current biennium to support programmes in 2018 and 2019, including the Special Funds for Developing Finance Activities in agreement with the Programme and Finance Committees at their sessions later this year.

The Commission also provided a strategic direction for FAO's work in the realm of mid-term work to be done as well as indicators and other important planning and monitoring issues, including evaluation matters.

Last but not least, supported the outcomes of the Independent Assessment of Technical Capacity of the Organization and provided clear guidance for future assessments, both quantitative as well as qualitative.

Now I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission II so that he can provide the necessary information for the adoption of the report.

**Mr Khaled EL TAWHEEL (Chairperson, Drafting Committee Commission II)**

Let me start by expressing my appreciation for giving me the opportunity to report on the work carried out by the Drafting Committee of Commission II. It was an honour and pleasure for me to chair the Drafting Committee on Commission II of the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference and to work in the Committee with the distinguished delegates of Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The Committee concluded its work in one meeting on Wednesday afternoon and reviewed five agenda items which are Programme Implementation Report 2014-15, Programme Evaluation Report 2017, the Revised Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019, as well as the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization.

The atmosphere in the meeting was very constructive and engaging, with good spirit on the parts of all Members. I would like to stress that the job of the Drafting Committee was made easier by the leadership of the Chairperson of Commission II who spared no effort in finding consensus.

The extensive deliberation, the spirit of consensus and the clear summing up of the discussion really facilitated the job of the Drafting Committee.

I would like to state that, personally, I am proud to be part of the process that led to the adoption of the budget for FAO for 2018-19 which was previously approved by the FAO Council for the second time in the history of FAO.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank all Members of the Committee for the cooperative spirit and the very good comments provided to improve the text of our report.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat for providing clarification on any query raised and also the interpreters for their dedication. All of this contributed to smoothly reaching agreement on all agenda items of the document before you, C 2017/2/Draft Report, which I am honoured to present to you today and which I propose to the Chairperson to suggest to adopt *en bloc*.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Mr El Taweel, not only for your report but also for the excellent chairing of the Drafting Committee.

I think we should sit more often in this room because for the first time in the sessions of Commission II, we did not have difficulty with a quorum. But again I would like to thank you for the positive spirit in the way Commission II has done its work.

I think it could be an example for the way forward, how we have to work within FAO to achieve what we have to achieve: Zero Hunger, leaving nobody behind. With that, I would like to invite Commission II to adopt its report *en bloc*.

*Applause*

*Applaudissement*

*Aplausos*

#### **Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

May I recall, Chair, the Report on Commission II, Item 23(a), page 3, that the first paragraph reads “the Conference *noted the clear description of the main challenges expected to be faced by countries in food and agriculture in the coming years*”.

Totally agreed with, but I would respectfully suggest that we add a few words at the end of that sentence. I have a proposal to the Chair and for the consideration of Members gathered here this morning. The words are “and the demands for increasing country level technical support from FAO especially by SIDS”.

In my view, the observation on the challenges are insufficient unless demands are in respect of what we are to do about it. I respectfully suggest that particularly for the SIDS Community this addition be added.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Could you please read out again your concrete text suggestions so that everybody can note it?

#### **Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

At the end of item 23(a) add “and the demands for increasing country level technical support from FAO especially by SIDS”.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much for your proposal. Of course it was not part of the Drafting Committee session so I think we can only include it if there are no objections from the floor. I give the floor to the Seychelles.

**Mr Antoine-Marie MOUSTACHE (Seychelles)**

I would like to strongly support this proposal, Chair. We had a chance to meet together at the SIDS side event and we appreciated very much the peculiarities of SIDS in the context of food and nutrition security. Somewhere in this document we need to reflect the peculiarities of SIDS and make special reference to them.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Are there any objections to this proposal? If not, can we therefore adopt it?

**Mr Hinrich THOLKEN (Germany)**

We very much welcome the idea that is suggested with the language that is proposed by the colleague from Trinidad and Tobago but, as mentioned, this was not subject of the discussion to my knowledge at Commission II. We were just wondering whether it should be taken up in the Report reflecting a meeting if this has not been discussed in this very meeting.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Of course we can reflect it in the Report of Commission II because then it is clearly noted, not only the remarks but also I think the reflection and with reference to the side event.

**Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

I just wanted to intervene to indicate that I was a Member of Commission II and I recall intervening in the discussions in Commission II in which I made reference perhaps not in the same words but in the spirit in which these words are presented.

**Mr Khaled HNAIFAT (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)**

We would like to welcome the proposal made by Trinidad and Tobago. However, in this text I believe that it is not fair to talk about the SIDS only.

If you want to give specifications of one group of countries, then let us have specifications about other countries and other groups of countries as well, so what about the Near East? What about other parts of the world? So if we start specifying regions and groups of countries across the world, then it would only be fair to add several other groups as well.

I would suggest therefore to leave the text general as it is and have no specifications.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you very much, Jordan, for trying to find a compromise and it was the spirit which we have and hopefully still have in Commission II.

**Mr Nilkanthsing JAGARNATH (Mauritius)**

Mauritius would like to support Seychelles and Trinidad and Tobago. I think the case of the SIDS is well-known worldwide and especially at the level of FAO. The special vulnerabilities of SIDS are stated in all conferences. We would support the suggestion of Trinidad and Tobago and Seychelles very strongly. I do not think that will do any harm in adopting the proposal of Trinidad and Tobago in this regard.

**Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)**

I am not sure I can speak on behalf of all the Member States because we did not have proper time to discuss it and we did not have proper time either to read the reports which were told to us would be available only in the afternoon.

Regarding this item of the discussion, we very much support the idea that the SIDS should be supported by technical assistance. I think it is reflected in various parts of many other documents that FAO and the European Union Member States also do it.

As Trinidad and Tobago is also a Member of the Committee, there was an opportunity to add this text there as well. But, in a matter of compromise, we might accept this proposal.

**Mr Thomas M. DUFFY (United States of America)**

We support the concerns and the substance of the issue under discussion but again it is a procedural point. There were points at which this could have been precisely and adequately addressed and those points were not raised so we have both a procedural concern in agreement with our Jordanian colleague. We would note that there are other areas of the world that deserve special attention too, so we would therefore support our Jordanian colleague's proposal to keep the language as is, which in our view would both redress the procedural question but also not get into the point of singling out specific territories.

**Mr Spyridon ELLINAS (Cyprus)**

As a compromise instead of using the word “especially”, we could use the word “including” maybe, so “including SIDS”.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I think Commission II is still in session so until the end of Commission II and from a legal point of view we can look for options to add text.

At the moment it would be before it is adopted although I think we have to be very careful also from the procedural point of view. We are not going to reopen the text which was carefully drafted in Commission II as well as in the Drafting Committee as this issue was not raised in neither of the two.

It is of course addressed in the text, but before going forward with the proposal Bangladesh is at the last moment asking for the floor.

**Mr Kaikobad HOSSAINI (Bangladesh)**

I would like to also support the statement made by the United States and Germany. The question is the procedure. We know the importance of technical assistance for the SIDS countries.

We definitely can agree but our position is that, as it was thoroughly discussed in Commission II, probably our colleague from Trinidad and Tobago in Commission II, I do not know whether I was fully present in that time when it was discussed. So therefore the question is procedural. If it was discussed over there, our colleague could clearly bring it into the Report of the Commission.

Also when the summary was made by the Chair of Commission II, I do not know whether it was raised in that point or not. But in terms of compromise we can go along with the proposal made by Cyprus, so it could be “including” so we can support the proposal made by Cyprus.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Of course after this discussion is clear that we have to be very careful not to unravel the compromise and agreement we had in Commission II as well as in the Drafting Committee.

So my first question and I think everybody in this room knows how important the small island developing states are and the challenges they are facing. I think it was clearly addressed in the discussions we have had but we also have to find a way forward. Given this discussion now, it is clear that it will be reflected in the verbatim of Commission II, the attention asked by some of the SIDS and of course supported by others.

My question would be whether or not that would be the right way forward also because of some of the procedural issues which were raised. Before giving the floor to Trinidad and Tobago, I see that now also Italy and Jordan have asked for the floor. Then I would like to close the discussion because what I understand is that the Chair of the Conference is willing to give a free Saturday so I think that is a very good incentive but then of course we have to finalize our work on Commission II as soon as possible.

**Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)**

Italy aligns itself with the statement made by Estonia on behalf of the European Union. We think the compromise proposal made by Cyprus and Bangladesh is a very good way forward.

**Mr Khaled HNAIFAT (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)**

As a compromise, we think that we should not change the text because the text needs to remain general so we should not mention any particular region. We are not against mention of some regions in some places but here this was a general principle that was discussed in the plenary and here we think we should not specify any country or region specifically. This is following on from the discussions which took place in the different Commissions of this Conference.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Now I look to Trinidad and Tobago whether or not, given this discussion and knowing that it will be taken up in the verbatim of Commission II and a special request ask for special attention to the small island developing states, would that be enough for you so that we can agree with the text as it is?

**Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)**

Trinidad and Tobago, in the spirit of compromise the way the Conference has gone thus, is satisfied and that the issue having been raised has generated a concern that it wished to have generated.

I would have preferred if it had remained in the text, to be quite honest, but in the circumstances it would be reflected as so in the documents of the Conference, we would be satisfied.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you, Trinidad and Tobago, for your flexibility but also for raising the issue and special attention on SIDS and also saying to Jordan it is not only related to SIDS but to more specific regions.

Can we then adopt the Report as it is? We know that the issue raised is in the verbatim records, so can we adopt the Report?

*Applause*

*Applaudissement*

*Aplausos*

Thank you so much again for this excellent spirit of compromise. I am looking ahead for the important work we have to do. With that I would like to give the floor back to the Chairperson of the Conference.

*Applause*

*Applaudissement*

*Aplausos*

*The meeting rose at 10.09 hours*

*La séance est levée à 10 h 09*

*Se levanta la sesión a las 10.09*



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