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FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Request by the Italian Government that the offices of its Permanent Representation to the United Nations Organizations based in Rome be located within the premises of FAO

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

**Mr Antonio Tavares
Legal Counsel, Legal Office
Tel: +39 06 5705 5132**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Government of Italy has requested that the offices of its Permanent Representation to the United Nations Organizations in Rome be located within the premises of the Headquarters of FAO. The Director-General proposes that the matter be considered by the Finance Committee, taking into account that Italy is in special situation vis-à-vis FAO. The proposal is for temporary location of the office of the Representation within the premises of FAO, i.e. for as long as the Director-General will hold office, since he believes, subject to the views of the Finance Committee, that he should not commit his successors to the acceptance of the proposal that would be reviewed again at the completion of his mandate. The proposal is made on the understanding that it would not set a precedent in respect of similar requests which are made, from time to time, by other Members. An agreement to be concluded between FAO and the Government of Italy would further clarify a number of applicable conditions.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The Finance Committee is invited to review the information presented and report to Council on the conclusions of its review.

Draft Advice

The Finance Committee reviewed document FC154/22b). The Committee:

- **endorsed the proposal of the Director-General that the premises of the Permanent Representation of Italy to the United Nations Organizations in Rome be temporarily located within the premises of FAO, as described in the document;**
- **noted that costs arising from the implementation of the proposal would be covered by the Italian Government, as described in the document, and that it would not set a precedent in respect of similar requests which may be made in future by other Members.**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of Italy has requested that the offices of its Permanent Representation to the United Nations Organizations in Rome be located within the premises of FAO. The Director-General proposes that the matter be reviewed by the Finance Committee as described below.

BACKGROUND

2. Under the Headquarters Agreement between FAO and the Italian Government of 31 October 1950, the Government has placed at the disposal of FAO premises for the Headquarters of the Organization. Under the Agreement, “the Government grants to FAO and FAO accepts from the Government the permanent use and occupancy of the headquarters seat, as from the date of entry into force of (the) agreement. Such grant shall remain in force so long as the permanent headquarters of FAO shall be in the headquarters seat. (...) The passage of time shall not contribute to the acquisition by FAO of the freehold title to the headquarters seat” (cf. Article II, Section 3). Under Article II, Section 2 (b) “the Government shall not, while (the) agreement is in force, dispose of all or any part of the headquarters seat without the consent of FAO”.

3. As part of a general effort of containment of expenditures, the Government has requested that the offices of its Permanent Representation to the United Nations Organizations in Rome be located within the premises of the Headquarters of FAO. Some conveniently located physical space is available, allowing for the request of the Italian authorities to be accommodated.

4. In referring the proposal to the Finance Committee, the Director-General has taken due notice of the fact that Italy is in a special situation vis-à-vis FAO. The proposal is subject to two conditions.

- 1) The proposal concerns temporary location of the office of the Representation within the premises of FAO, i.e. for as long as the Director-General will hold office, since he believes, subject to the views of the Finance Committee, that he should not commit his successors to the acceptance of the proposal. Therefore occupancy would be until the end of the current term of the Director-General, i.e. until 31 July 2015. The renewal of the arrangements would be a matter for review by the Director-General to be elected at the Conference of June 2015, in light of all pertinent considerations.
- 2) The proposal is made on the understanding that it would not set a precedent in respect of similar requests which are made, from time to time, by other Members.

5. As regards practical arrangements for the implementation of the proposal, an agreement, in the form of an exchange of letters or other form, would be concluded with the Italian authorities. This agreement would, as required, deal with a number of issues.

- 1) The agreement would clarify the scope of the Headquarters Agreement in relation to the premises to be occupied by the Representation of Italy and, as appropriate, that the specific area occupied by the offices would not be under the control of the Organization.
- 2) The agreement would provide that any costs related to occupancy of the premises, including utilities and other expenditures, would be covered by Italy. This would include refurbishing costs, as well as possible costs of restoration of the premises to their original state at the end of the occupancy.
- 3) The agreement would provide that the location of the premises of the Representation of Italy within FAO shall be without any prejudice to the autonomy and independence of FAO and its secretariat in all matters pertaining to the institutional purposes and activities of the Organization.

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE

6. The Committee is invited to endorse the Director-General’s proposal, taking due note of the above considerations and information, including the fact that the proposal would not set a precedent in respect of similar requests which may be made in future by other Members.