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Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session - Cent cinquante-sixième session - session -
156.º período de sesiones**

Rome, 24-28 April 2017

VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Rome, 24-28 avril 2017

PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL

Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017

**ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL
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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2017 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| FIRST PLENARY MEETING PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 24 April 2017 |

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.42 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 42
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.42
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the first meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council to order.

I wish to welcome Council Members and observers to this session, especially those of you who have travelled to be here today. A special word of welcome to the Philippines as new Council Member to replace Thailand until 30 June 2018.

I wish to inform the Council that Venezuela is considered to have resigned from the Council under the terms of Rule XXII, paragraph 7 of the General Rules of the Organization regarding arrears in payment of financial contributions.

Before proceeding, I would like to ask the Secretary-General of the Council to make a short announcement.

Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you. I wish to bring to the attention of the Council that the European Union is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution.

I have been asked to inform you that the declaration made by the European Union and its Member States is contained in document CL 156/INF/3. I wish to draw the attention of the meeting to this declaration. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

I now wish to extend a warm welcome to the Director-General, who has joined us and I now invite him to address the Council.

Mr Graziano, you have the floor.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Mr Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council; His Excellency Papa Abdoulaye Seck, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Equipment of Senegal; Her Excellency Dora Siliya, Minister for Agriculture of Zambia; His Excellency Gauri Shankar Chaudhary, Minister for Agricultural Development of Nepal; Vice-Ministers; Ambassadors; Excellencies; Colleagues; Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my honour to welcome all of you and open this Session of the Council.

This week, the main subject for your consideration is the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2018-19. The proposed PWB for the next biennium was presented to you during an Informal Seminar held last month, and it was also discussed in the last Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees.

I thank the Members of the Finance and Programme Committees for supporting the proposal for the level of the budget in the next biennium, and for recommending this Council Session to endorse the budget level as proposed. I hope this can be done during this week.

If Council decides to endorse it, we will repeat the remarkable achievement we made two years ago and, for the second consecutive time, reach consensus on the budget level at the Session of Council preceding the Conference.

This will allow us to focus more on programmatic and substantive matters during the Conference to be held in the first week of July.

The PWB, the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Reviewed Strategic Framework, have been mainly designed to further align FAO's work with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our five Strategic Objectives will have the same targets as the SDGs, especially those to which FAO is most directly involved. The work of the Strategic Programmes will also be measured by SDG indicators.

This way, FAO's work is projected to contribute to the achievement of 40 targets of the 15 SDGs, which will be measured by 53 SDG indicators.

This full alignment has been possible because of the centrality of food and agriculture to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. And also because, over the last five years, FAO has adopted an integrated, interlinked and interconnected approach, similar to the SDGs.

In fact, to eradicate extreme poverty and achieve Zero Hunger, the overarching SDGs number 1 and 2, we have to act on many fronts. We have to tackle climate change, manage natural resources in a sustainable way, and build the resilience of poor family farmers and rural communities in the face of conflicts and protracted crises.

The combination of climate change and conflicts and protracted crises is a big challenge for Zero Hunger.

As we all know, famine is back. It has struck South Sudan. And other countries of Africa, such as Somalia and northern Nigeria, are on the brink of starvation. The same is happening in Yemen.

If nothing is done, some 20 million people could starve to death in the next six months in those four countries. And famine does not just kill people. It contributes to social instability, and also perpetuates a cycle of poverty and aid dependency that endures for decades.

I visited the Lake Chad Basin region earlier this month. Poor family farmers and rural communities are hopeless. These people were already struggling against the impacts of climate change, related droughts, and the lack of public investments and opportunities, especially for the youth. And then their lives and livelihoods have been devastated by conflicts and armed groups.

If we do not support these people, they will have no option other than to join local militias or movements of distress migration.

FAO and our main partners in the region – WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR – are already taking action. More than 1.2 million people in the most affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin will receive assistance from FAO and our partners in the coming months before the planting season starts.

Activities include the distribution of cereal seeds, animal feed and vaccinations, and the provision of cash transfers, just to name a few. We also envisage to start restocking the herds of pastoralists. Let me say that if we do not do this, those people will remain hopeless forever. They need to get back to their jobs, and FAO intends to help them do it.

The establishment of the new Subregional Office for West Africa will also contribute to this purpose.

On this, I would like to inform you that we have decided to start negotiations with Senegal to host the new Subregional Office. Earlier this month, we met the Representatives of all four countries that had manifested interest in hosting the Subregional Office to explain how the decision was taken.

I also thank Mr Ngirwa for his support during the whole process.

The PWB 2018-19 provides a list of ten priority areas for FAO to increase its technical capacity in the next biennium. Climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable agriculture production, poverty reduction, water scarcity management, migration and the support of conflict-affected rural livelihoods are among these priority areas.

We are also continuing the work that we are already doing on sustainable food systems, statistics, fisheries, forestry and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), following the previous request of Members.

We are bringing the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) to 14 percent of the net appropriation. This is the minimum requested by Conference for the first time in 1989, and then reaffirmed by Conference in 2015.

Within the regular budget, we have found over USD 20 million to reinforce each of these areas. These resources will mainly come from efficiency savings, from the reprofiling of administrative posts, and from specific activities that we propose to de-emphasize.

But let me stress two points here:

First, I will always be committed to finding more savings and promoting more efficiency, as I have done over the last five years. But I have already cut to the bone. There is no more fat left.

For any area or activity to be added to the list of priorities, we also need to indicate what should be replaced, discontinued or reoriented.

Another option is to finance FAO's work through extrabudgetary funds. And this is the second point I want to highlight: voluntary contributions are of vital importance to FAO. Now more than ever.

We have circulated Information Note 1 that further explains the priorities and indicates the areas and activities in which we are expecting to allocate the voluntary contributions.

By the way, you will discuss during this Council a new scale of assessed contributions. Many countries will pay more, and many others will pay significantly less in the next biennium.

For those who will be paying less, such as most OECD countries, I encourage them to keep their money in FAO as voluntary contributions.

Information Note 2, which we have also already circulated, aims to further clarify the areas of de-emphasis. We are de-emphasizing very specific activities where FAO does not have a comparative advantage; or where these activities are not a central part of our work; or can even be done in partnership with other institutions.

We are streamlining our work, focusing where FAO can make the difference.

Some countries have been concerned about resources allocated to some conventions and treaty bodies, specifically the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that was kept at the same level as the current budget.

On this, let me recall that the CFS receives equal contributions from the three Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). The three heads of the RBAs have the common understanding that these resources that we are providing are to sustain the work of the CFS Secretariat. Additional funding for their activities should come from voluntary contributions, not only from Member Nations but also from the private sector and civil society entities.

Also in relation to the three RBAs, I met the new WFP Executive Director, Mr David Beasley, to discuss cooperation plans for the coming months. I have also invited him to participate in the closing session of this Council that will discuss famine. He will try to participate by video-conference from Geneva next Friday.

Some time ago I also met the new President of IFAD, Mr Gilbert Houngbo. I am convinced that the three RBAs collaboration will be further strengthened in the future.

Let me refer now to the Independent Assessment of Technical Capacity.

The external consultants have provided the new version of the report for your consideration. The leader of the consultants, Mr Anil Sood, will present the report followed by a short intervention from Maria Helena Semedo, who coordinated the work of the Secretariat.

Let me recall that the report concludes that, in quantitative terms, FAO has increased its technical capacity in the period from 2012 to 2016, both at headquarters and in decentralized offices.

This has been achieved despite the flat budget, mainly thanks to efficiency savings and flexibility from the use of consultants.

I think this report is a good base line, not to say a very good one, for further systematic evaluations in the future, which could address more disaggregate data and a qualitative approach.

Making FAO a better organization, more efficient and more effective, has been a huge effort and I am committed to continuing on this path.

Focus, interlinkages, value-for-money, technical capacity and partnerships are today hallmarks that define FAO. This is a result of our work together. It does not benefit me or the Secretariat, but FAO, our Organization. I could not achieve any of these goals alone without your support and stimulus.

Now, more than ever, we need to stay together and act together to overcome the challenges to achieve Zero Hunger and promote sustainable development.

I would like to thank you for all we have done together, and also for all we have still do in the next two years.

Before concluding, let me inform you that I have selected Mr Laurent Thomas for the position of Deputy Director-General (Operations). Mr Thomas has vast experience and a long career as an FAO staff member. I am sure that he will continue to give important contributions to the modernization of the Organization. You will receive a note with his CV asking for your endorsement.

I would also like to bring to your attention the issue of FAO governance costs.

As I said before, Management will continue to look for additional savings and ways to improve the efficiency of the Organization.

In this context, I encourage you to reflect on the number of meetings of the Governing Bodies that we have every biennium. These meetings place extensive demands on the Secretariat in terms of preparation of documents and time dedication, as well as costs regarding interpretation and other procedures.

Let me give you some estimative numbers of the current biennium, 2016-17, when governance costs will amount to about USD 72 million.

This includes not only costs of secretariats for Conference, Council, technical and other committees (USD 18 million), but also the time of Senior Management and other staff in support of these meetings (USD 37 million), the related costs of CPA (USD 11 million) and also other aspects.

Of course that regular interaction between Management and Membership is fundamental, and it is also part of the operational life of any organization of the United Nations system.

But we should ask ourselves if such a number of formal meetings is really necessary for us to reach the decisions we need to take.

So I firmly believe that we have room for further enhancement of efficiency, and also for reducing costs, in the areas of meetings of Governing Bodies. This possibility should be explored in times of such financial constraints.

In this sense, we have decided to reduce by two days the next Conference in July. Instead of starting on a Saturday, as was the case in the past, it will begin on a Monday, from 3 to 8 July.

Time and money are valuable resources in our common quest to end hunger and extreme poverty by 2030. Let us use them wisely.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General. The Council has listened carefully to your presentation and we will take into account the issues you have raised during our deliberations this week.

We have also taken note of your invitation for the Council to confirm the appointment of Mr Laurent Thomas for the post of Deputy Director-General (Operations). I wish to remind Council that the relevant document is CL 156/LIM/5, which contains the *curriculum vitae* of Mr Thomas.

May I take it that the Council confirms this appointment?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. This will be reflected in the Report of the Council under *Any Other Matters*. I wish to congratulate Mr Thomas on his appointment. Do any Members wish to take the floor?

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique en réponse à la déclaration que le Directeur général vient d'adresser au Conseil.

Nous avons suivi avec attention les avis et orientations du Directeur général sur les questions que nous aurons à traiter au cours de cette session. Les positions de notre Groupe seront dévoilées au fur et à mesure de l'examen des questions soumises à l'ordre du jour.

Je voudrais cependant dire, comme le Président indépendant du Conseil vient de le faire, que le Groupe Afrique soutient fortement la proposition du Directeur général de nommer Monsieur Laurent Thomas au poste de Directeur général adjoint des opérations. Nous avons examiné le Curriculum Vitae de Monsieur Thomas - il parle de lui-même - et nous le trouvons suffisamment étoffé pour ce poste. Sa longue expérience à des échelons graduels au sein de la FAO l'a préparé à occuper ce poste.

Nous sommes donc contents que le Conseil ait entériné cette proposition.

Le Groupe Afrique, par ailleurs, à l'issue du processus de sélection du pays devant abriter le Bureau sous-régional de la FAO pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest, a accueilli favorablement le choix du Sénégal. Les quatre pays qui étaient candidats avaient certainement des arguments à faire valoir et nous les félicitons pour la qualité de leurs propositions. Le choix du Sénégal étant maintenant définitif, le souci du Groupe Afrique est de recevoir de la FAO l'assurance que, dans la répartition des responsabilités entre le pays hôte et la FAO, le Bureau bénéficiera de toute l'attention nécessaire et disposera des moyens idoines pour conduire ses activités.

Mr Joao Carlos DE SOUZA-GOMES (Brazil)

I am honoured to address you for the first time as the new Permanent Representative of Brazil.

As one of the largest agricultural producers in the world, Brazil attaches great importance to the foresight work of FAO to assist countries to ensure food security and better nutrition, as well as sustainable agriculture production and rural development.

Its five Strategic Objectives have anticipated in many ways the guidance provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Now, we must drive the Organization to better pursue its broad mandate in face of the emerging challenges of our time.

FAO must act in a scenario of climate change and growing scarcity of natural resources, such as water and fertile soils, which affects food security and agricultural production worldwide.

It must act in a world where people migrate in growing numbers to flee from conflicts and poverty.

This trend brings both difficulties and opportunities to host communities. However, it disrupts the agricultural-dependent economies and societies in the least developed countries, where migration fluxes are much higher.

At the same time, I would like to stress that domestic migration also adds to the challenge, particularly given the growing urbanization of our nations. I am sure that many Member States and the Director-General are also concerned with this issue.

FAO must act, in collaboration with other UN agencies, in the worst food crisis the world faces in 70 years, as mentioned by our Director-General. One hundred and eight million people are severely food insecure and the demand for humanitarian and resilience-building assistance will escalate as an increasing number of countries are at risk of famine.

FAO must also act to help countries promote sustainable food systems and address malnutrition in all its forms, especially in the context of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

FAO must act – and more efficiently – in order to support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal number 2, and implementing the Voluntary Guidelines to support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food, approved by this Council in 2004.

Brazil praises the wonderful job done by Dr Graziano as Head of FAO, and supports the Director-General's proposal for the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, with a few observations.

First, Brazil is glad that FAO's planning is overall aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, thereby placing the Organization at the core of this global agenda.

However, its planned activities on energy, soils and biodiversity could be better reflected in the PWB as part of the responsibility of the new Department on Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water.

As for FAO technical cooperation, Brazil praises the provision for increasing the budget appropriation share to 14 percent. This, however, is only the minimum percentage recommended by the Conference.

Brazil welcomes the Director-General's wise and realistic proposal to keep a zero nominal growth for the next PWB, given the adverse economic situation worldwide. We recognize that this containment is far from being ideal when FAO is required to assist countries to meet the ambitious goals agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitments made under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Brazil is certain, though, that the Director-General and his team will make all possible efforts to further increase FAO's efficiency in benefit of its core activities.

This flat budget should be taken as an extraordinary effort given the growing challenges the Organization faces. With the new scale of contributions, developing countries will have their share in the regular budget substantially increased in comparison to developed ones – Brazil, for instance, will raise by 30 percent its contribution to FAO.

The increased burden shared by some developing countries should be matched by ever more generous extrabudgetary contributions.

While we are confident that FAO will continue to make the best use of our resources, as the Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity has just confirmed, we would like to see a greater commitment from developed countries in financing FAO's activities through voluntary contributions.

The world seems to be evolving fast and to a not so clear direction. The global trends and constraints for agricultural development envisaged by FAO in its Reviewed Strategic Framework are an important reference but may be quickly surpassed by reality.

If the international community is faced with growing crises, FAO, as well as WFP and IFAD, may be called upon to respond to ever greater challenges in the near future.

Therefore, we must provide FAO with all means necessary to allow it to do its work as mandated by Member States.

Brazil is committed to do its best, and we are sure that all Member States will do the same.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

On behalf of the Asia Group, I would like to just make this brief comment. We have closely followed the issues highlighted by the Director-General in his statement. During the discussions which will follow in this Council, the Asia Group will be providing its comments on the matters that have been highlighted.

We would also like to congratulate Laurent Thomas on his appointment as the Deputy Director-General (Operations). I have known and worked with Laurent for many years and believe that with his experience and knowledge of the activities of the Organization, he will add great value in delivering the mandate of his area of responsibility.

We are pleased that the Council has endorsed his appointment.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I have called for the floor so that my colleague from Malta can make a statement on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Members.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

On behalf of the EU Presidency who represents the EU 28 Embassies and the EU Delegation, we wish to congratulate Mr Thomas on his appointment as Deputy Director-General (Operations). He has very valuable experience to bring to this role and we wish to assure him that he can count on the support of the European Union Group.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for those encouraging words.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before continuing, in the interest of the safety of all of us, I request your attention for a short video presentation on fire safety.

Video Presentation***Présentation video******Videopresentación*****CHAIRPERSON**

I now pass the floor to the Secretary-General to explain the procedure for asking the floor, and to provide us with an overview of document delivery for this session. Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind delegates that in order to ask for the floor, they simply need to press the red button located by their microphone. The light will flash until the delegate has spoken. The order of speakers will be automatically noted and displayed on the screen above the podium.

With regard to document delivery for this session, I wish to inform that out of 12 main documents, seven were published by the deadline of 27 March, one additional document was published within that same week and the four reports of the Council Committees, which took place after or just before the deadline for dispatch of Council documents, were published within the week following the end of their Session.

Finally, I wish to remind Members of the “PaperSmart” approach adopted by FAO, in line with the UN system-wide initiative, whereby a “Print-on-demand” service is available at the Korean Conference Service Centre for delegates requiring printed copies of Council documents.

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier****Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario**

(CL 156/1; CL 156/INF/1 Rev.2; CL 156/INF/3)

CHAIRPERSON

The first item on the agenda is the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable as set out in documents CL 156/1, CL 156/INF/1 Rev.2 and CL 156/INF/3.

Document CL 156/1 contains the Provisional Agenda which was distributed on 22 February 2017 to all Members of the Organization, together with the invitation to this Session.

Since our 155th Session in December, no invitations have been issued to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO meetings, nor have there been any applications for Membership in the Organization, hence sub-item 9.1, *Invitations to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions*, and sub item 9.2, *Applications for Membership in the Organization*, can be removed from the Agenda.

Are there any comments on the proposed amendments?

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroun)

Nous n'avons pas de problème avec la proposition d'amendement à l'ordre du jour.

Le Cameroun prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique pour solliciter l'ajout d'un point à l'ordre du jour qui traiterait du rapport de l'Année internationale des légumineuses.

Nous proposons pour ce faire un réaménagement du point 14 de l'ordre du jour, s'il plaît au Conseil, en lui donnant un nouveau titre: «Années et Journées internationales». C'est un titre que nous retrouvons déjà dans le Projet d'ordre du jour de la Conférence.

Ce titre comprendrait donc deux sous-points: 14.1 «Année internationale des camélidés» et 14.2 «Journée internationale des légumineuses».

Je souligne en passant que si le Conseil accepte cette proposition, les documents y relatifs seront mis en ligne immédiatement.

CHAIRPERSON

Are there any comments on the proposed amendments? I see no comments.

I take it that Members have no objection to include the proposed agenda item submitted by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group on the declaration of the annual observance of World Pulses Day.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

CHAIRPERSON

With respect to the Provisional Timetable, you have before you document CL 156/INF/1 Rev.2. I should like to point out that the items on the Provisional Agenda have been scheduled to allow the Drafting Committee to convene its first meeting in the afternoon of Wednesday 26 April. This in turn should enable the Committee to finish its work in good time on Thursday and thereby enable the Report to be adopted by the Council on Friday afternoon.

Does this draft Timetable, with the deletion of item 9 and addition of a sub-item on the proposal to declare the annual observance of World Pulses Day under item 14, meet with the approval of the Council?

Thank you, the Timetable is approved.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to draw the Council's attention to my pre-session letter proposing that, as previous sessions, issues considered by the Programme and Finance Committees and their Joint Meeting, not be discussed under their respective items, but be deliberated upon as follows: input from the Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee on the Reviewed Strategic Framework, to be considered under Item 3; inputs from the respective Reports of the Programme and Finance Committees and their Joint Meeting on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, be considered under Item 4.

This approach will assist in focusing our deliberations and avoiding repetition.

Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee

Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction

Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to Item 2, *Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson have been received: Ambassador Claudio Rozencwaig of Argentina; Mr Lupino Lazaro of the Philippines; Mr Sanglin Yoon of the Republic of Korea.

If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons on their election

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

For the Drafting Committee, the Regional Groups have proposed Mr Khaled El Taweel of Egypt as Chairperson, and the following countries as members: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Japan, Lesotho, Mexico, Romania, Russian Federation, Sudan, United States of America.

Are there any objections?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, it is so decided.

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Monsieur le Président, veuillez nous excuser. Les discussions se poursuivant encore pour le deuxième membre de l'Afrique, pourriez-vous donner la parole à l'Angola pour que sa déléguée puisse nous faire le point sur la situation.

Ms Maria Esperanca Pires Dos Santos (Observer for Angola)

We are going to communicate the name in the course of the Council, or in the course of the day.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Angola. It would be preferable in the course of the day.

As mentioned in my pre-session letter, I wish to reiterate the need for interventions to be kept as brief and focused as possible, and that preference be given to interventions by representatives of regions whenever feasible, rather than single countries repeating comments already made.

I will now hand over the floor to the Secretary-General for some further information regarding submission of statements. Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I should like to remind Members that the full written text of interventions may be submitted for inclusion in the Verbatim Records of this Session, and a shorter version delivered orally in the interest of good time management.

Furthermore, may I also request that if you wish to make a statement during the meeting a copy of the text be provided to the Secretariat in advance. This will allow the interpreters to convey your ideas as clearly as possible. The relevant email address for the submission of electronic versions of statements will be projected on the screen behind the podium and is also given in the Order of the Day. Timely submission of texts is of considerable assistance for the work of verbatim reporters and ensures greater accuracy.

Finally, I wish to remind Members to speak slowly when making statements as this will ensure accurate interpretation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

I also wish to remind Members that following the discussions on each of the agenda items, I will draw up conclusions to facilitate the drafting of the report of this Session.

The Report will consist of conclusions, decisions and recommendations in keeping with the practice established at past sessions of Council. I invite you to point out any inadvertent omissions that you believe should be included in the draft report rather than waiting for the meeting of the Drafting Committee. In this way the task of the Drafting Committee will be made easier.

In addition, may I remind you that in the interest of good time management, it is important that we start each meeting punctually. Please ensure that you are here in the Red Room at the times indicated in the Order of the Day.

Item 3 Reviewed Strategic Framework

Point 3 Cadre stratégique révisé

Tema 3 Marco estratégico revisado

(C 2017/7)

CHAIRPERSON

We now take up Item 3, the *Reviewed Strategic Framework*. Please ensure that you have document C 2017/7 before you.

I now give the floor to Mr Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to present the report.

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

As part of the established programme planning process, FAO has carried out the quadrennial review of its Strategic Framework in light of global developments, global and regional trends and major challenges in the areas of FAO's mandate. The document before you presents the reviewed Strategic Framework, including FAO's Vision, Global Goals and Strategic Objectives, taking into account the comments provided by the Council in December 2016.

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, as well as the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change, 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 the current 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 has identified the main global developments and trends that will frame agricultural development over the medium term, 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. They 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 the Council to better reflect 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 with the Sustainable Development Goals in order to effectively assist countries to achieve their targets, as set out in the Medium Term Plan.

The Council is invited to review and recommend endorsement by the Conference of the Reviewed Strategic Framework, in particular FAO’s Vision, Global Goals and Objectives.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Ambassador Serge Tomasi, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to report on the discussions on this item during the 121st Session of the Programme Committee.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Le Comité du Programme a tenu sa 121^{ème} session du 27 au 31 mars 2017 au Siège de l’Organisation à Rome. Son rapport est présenté dans le document CL 156/3, et plus particulièrement au paragraphe 3 du document, s’agissant de ses conclusions relatives au Cadre stratégique révisé, qui avait déjà fait l’objet d’un examen approfondi à la session du Comité de novembre 2016.

Le Comité a noté que ce Cadre stratégique révisé intégrait les propositions de reformulation de l’objectif 6 proposées par le Comité et approuvées par le Conseil à sa dernière session. Il a aussi considéré que le document présentait de façon claire les principaux défis mondiaux. Le Comité a enfin souligné la pertinence et la cohérence de la vision et des objectifs stratégiques de la FAO, ainsi que la cohérence de ceux-ci avec les Objectifs de développement durable.

Je précise que plusieurs des membres du Comité ont exprimé des réserves sur certains éléments descriptifs du document, notamment par exemple la référence au Sommet humanitaire mondial ou aux questions relatives à la consolidation de la paix. Il n’y avait pas toujours un consensus parfait sur le langage utilisé par le Secrétariat dans la présentation narrative du document. Mais le Comité a considéré que l’objectif n’était pas d’approuver dans le détail le vocabulaire utilisé dans un document de 40 pages, car il ne s’agit pas d’approuver un texte négocié mot-à-mot.

Il s’agit au contraire pour le Conseil et la Conférence d’approuver la vision générale présentée, la liste des défis mondiaux et surtout de confirmer l’accord des instances de gouvernance sur les objectifs stratégiques de la FAO. C’est pourquoi le Comité a proposé à l’unanimité que le Conseil approuve ce

Cadre stratégique révisé tel que présenté dans le document C 2017/7, en vue de sa présentation à la Conférence de la FAO en juillet prochain.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to request the floor for Malta to give a statement on behalf of the EU and its 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer from Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Montenegro, as well as San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the Reviewed Strategic Framework, its clear structure and the analyses of the evolving global context and of the main challenges for food and agriculture presented in the document. In particular, we agree on the need to enhance sustainability, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. We appreciate the visible efforts to embed such transformations in FAO's Strategic Objectives and Outcomes.

We encourage FAO to continue to pay special attention to the links between the evolving global context, available resources and results. We appreciate the efforts to identify, develop and enhance FAO'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.

We appreciate the revision of the Strategic Objectives in order to respond to the challenges in the overall context of the SDGs.

We wish to highlight the centrality of the sixth objective in the Strategic Framework, underlining the continuing relevance of the cross-cutting issues of climate change, gender, governance and nutrition in the design and delivery of the Strategic Objectives, as well as the importance of the integration of the key area of statistics in the framework, also in light of the increasing role FAO will play in this area in the context of the 2030 Agenda. However, some further light should be shed on how FAO intends to incorporate these cross-cutting areas into the other Strategic Objectives. Last but not least, the sixth objective also aims at ensuring excellence of technical quality of FAO work and knowledge production and dissemination through technical leadership and quality control by technical divisions, which is pivotal for our Organisation and its normative role.

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

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group and we will not touch on the Medium Term Plan or the Programme of Work and Budget, which will come later.

The Near East Group welcomes document C 2017/7 and finds it to be well prepared. It wishes to underline the following seven features of the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

1. The relevance of the ten global development events and the implication of the 12 global and regional trends on the work of FAO, are presented soundly and convincingly (paragraphs 9 to 30 and paragraphs 31-61).
2. The articulation of the ten global challenges with which FAO has to deal with is well done and received with appreciation (paragraphs 67 to 106).
3. The alignment of the 20 Outcomes of FAO's five Strategic Objectives with 40 SDG targets is presented with clarity (paragraphs 113 to 149).
4. The title of Strategic Objective 2 has been simplified to provide better focus (page 27).

5. Three new Outcomes have been added, one each for SO1; SO3; and SO4 (namely, Outcomes 1.4, 3.4 and 4.4). All the three new Outcomes are intended to build the capacities of member countries and in improving the implementation of the three mentioned Strategic Objectives (paragraphs 126; 138 and 143).
6. The articulation of the 20 Outcomes has improved considerably (paragraphs 126, 132, 138, 143 and 149).
7. Improvements have been made in the presentation of Objective 6, its four cross-cutting issues (climate change, gender empowerment, governance and nutrition) and the strengthening of the statistical capacity of FAO and of Member Nations (paragraphs 150 to 172).

To conclude, the Near East Group takes the position that the Reviewed Strategic Framework reflects further consolidation in FAO's programming effort, provides good framework for implementation and results-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. We thank the Secretariat for the good job done as well as the Programme Committee for its reflection on the Reviewed Strategic Framework (paragraph 3 of CL 156/3).

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

Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairuddin MOHD (Malaysia)

Malaysia has the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We thank the Secretariat for the presentation and preparing document C 2017/7, *Reviewed Strategic Framework*.

The Asia Regional Group commends FAO's 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 that 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 as well as benefit the discussions in each of the FAO Technical Committees.

We welcome and appreciate this effort particularly in addressing the impact of increased climate variability and enhanced exposure to extreme weather. The task is becoming greater as extreme weather is expected to worsen; at the same time the challenge to sustain agriculture production is greatly needed as global population rises, including in our region. Food security remains the top priority we need to 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 pushing forward the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

We urge FAO to continue to prioritize its work where it maintains a comparative advantage by supporting member countries especially in the Asia Region through policy advice, technical information and standard setting. This includes the protection of plant resources from pests and diseases through appropriate development and implementation of phytosanitary measures; agriculture policy advice; increasing agricultural productivity through knowledge sharing; and building resilience of farmers affected by climate change, through knowledge sharing and carrying out innovative practices for sustainable agriculture production, such as those listed in the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems.

On that note, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

Ms Dora SILIYA (Zambia)

Zambia speaks on behalf of the Africa Group and appreciates the work and efforts that the FAO Secretariat has made in coming up with a reviewed Strategic Framework that is in line with the demands and expectations of Member States.

The Africa Group commends the broad, inclusive and thorough process undertaken in reviewing the Strategic Framework. We commend the five Strategic Objectives of the framework as they offer a way forward that does not shy away from the complexity of today's challenges but recognizes the need for comprehensive approaches in order to best respond.

I would like to appreciate and comment on the fourth strategic objective that highlights the post-production aggregation, processing, distribution and consumption of goods that originate from agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The Africa Group appeals for innovations that integrate agri-business models in the agri-business supply chains of the smallholder farmers as the links have become increasingly important to guarantee food and nutritional security, as well as income and job creation.

It is, therefore, essential that farmers learn about value addition, group marketing and financial literacy in order to be able to negotiate financial services that are appropriate for their needs. They must also be enabled to access innovation and business management training, in order to better manage farming as a business.

There are clear indications that agro-industries have a significant global impact on economic development and poverty reduction, in both urban and rural communities. However, the full potential of agro-industries as an engine for economic development has not yet been fully realized in many developing countries, especially in Africa.

Finally, the Africa Group is particularly delighted with the sixth objective as it highlights the need to strengthen the collection of high quality statistics. Statistical data is vital for informed policy decisions and we appeal for technical support in the area for reliable data collection tools.

We also welcome the two cross-cutting themes of gender and governance and note that there is substantial effort to integrate them across all Strategic Objectives.

Mr Jon Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden align themselves with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

The Nordic countries can endorse the reviewed Strategic Framework with the following comments:

We appreciate the close alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. There is now a clear line of sight between FAO's work and the 2030 Agenda.

We would like to emphasize the centrality of the crosscutting issues, the sixth objective, the climate change, gender, governance and nutrition, when delivering on the strategic objectives. Strong focus on the crosscutting issues is fully in line with the 2030 Agenda and the centrality of the inter-linkages between the SDGs and their indivisibility.

Further, when FAO is taking measures in response to the international migration flows, we would like to highlight the importance of addressing the root causes of involuntary migration, with a set of policies that foster inclusive structural and rural transformation and economic growth.

M. Dominique AWONO ESSAMA (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun prend la parole sur ce point de l'ordre du jour pour soutenir la déclaration faite par la Zambie au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

La réflexion stratégique qui a conduit au développement de ce Cadre stratégique révisé a montré son efficacité en ce sens que le processus, qui a permis une consultation large des membres, a grandement bénéficié des contributions de notre groupe régional. Ce document, qui conclut cet autre cycle de planification du travail de la FAO, rencontre l'adhésion totale du Groupe régional Afrique, d'autant plus qu'il intègre les priorités et les initiatives régionales de l'Afrique, identifiées lors de la Conférence régionale tenue en 2016 à Abidjan, en Côte d'Ivoire, notamment l'élimination de la faim à l'horizon 2025, l'intensification durable de la production, le développement des chaînes de valeur et le renforcement de la résilience dans les zones arides.

Par ailleurs l'arrimage de ce Cadre révisé aux Objectifs de développement durable du Programme à l'horizon 2030 a été sollicité par les membres afin que les futurs Cadres de programmation pays puissent s'appuyer sur cet arrimage et renforcer la cohérence des objectifs nationaux de développement.

Consciente de ce que le défi majeur de pouvoir nourrir une population toujours croissante se posera davantage en Afrique que dans les autres régions du monde, en raison de son taux de croissance démographique le plus élevé, mais aussi soucieuse de ses capacités limitées à assurer l'exploitation optimale des ressources pour accroître la production agricole, l'Afrique veut pouvoir compter sur les actions menées dans ce Cadre stratégique pour donner une impulsion déterminante à la lutte contre la pauvreté et à son ambition d'éliminer la faim dans le continent.

Nous ne saurions insister davantage, au regard des tendances actuelles (volatilité des prix, demande croissante de nourriture, crises prolongées, variabilité des systèmes alimentaires, emplois décents des jeunes...) et de la vulnérabilité de notre région aux aléas climatiques, sur la nécessité d'une croissance inclusive et partagée. C'est en cela que nous appuyons le travail de la FAO en matière de genre (parité hommes-femmes et autonomisation des femmes), de nutrition, de statistiques, de renforcement des marchés et de développement de chaînes de valeur ouvertes et équitables, de renforcement de la résilience et évidemment de changement climatique.

Nous faisons nôtre la proposition du Comité du Programme d'approuver la transmission de ce Cadre stratégique à la Conférence pour adoption.

Le Groupe Afrique a accueilli favorablement le résultat du processus de sélection du pays devant abriter le Bureau sous-régional de la FAO pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest, ayant abouti, pour ce faire, au choix du Sénégal. Les quatre pays candidats avaient certainement des arguments à faire valoir. Nous les félicitons tous pour la qualité de leurs propositions. Le choix du Sénégal étant maintenant définitif, le souci du Groupe Afrique est de recevoir de la FAO, l'assurance que, dans la répartition des responsabilités entre le pays hôte et la FAO, le Bureau bénéficiera de toute l'attention nécessaire et disposera des moyens idoines pour conduire toutes ses activités.

Sur une note tout à fait personnelle, le Cameroun tient à informer le Conseil que la mise en œuvre progressive des accords pour le fonctionnement du Bureau de partenariat et de liaison en République du Cameroun est effective. Le Gouvernement a déjà mis un nouveau siège à la disposition de la FAO et le déblocage de la première tranche du financement des programmes est en cours d'exécution.

Mme Evelyne TOGBE-OLORY (Bénin)

Le Bénin s'associe bien entendu à la déclaration du Groupe Afrique et souhaite néanmoins apporter quelques remarques complémentaires.

Le Bénin reconnaît la valeur du Cadre stratégique révisé ici présenté par la FAO qui est clair, qui relie bien le contexte de travail et les 5 + 1 objectifs stratégiques au contexte mondial, à savoir le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 ainsi que l'Accord de Paris sur le changement climatique. Le Bénin apprécie particulièrement l'accent mis sur le développement des capacités, tant à l'échelle régionale qu'à l'échelle des pays, notamment pour le suivi de la mise en œuvre des objectifs de développement durable par nos pays en développement.

Le Bénin loue par ailleurs le fait que la FAO fasse ressortir la gouvernance comme l'un des quatre thèmes transversaux, les trois autres thèmes étant le changement climatique, la parité hommes-femmes et la nutrition, et nous applaudissons fortement le fait que le thème de la parité hommes-femmes apparaisse de façon explicite dans quatre des cinq objectifs stratégiques.

Cependant, malgré toutes ces louanges, le Bénin voudrait partager avec le Conseil quatre réflexions principales.

La première réflexion concerne les dix défis décrits dans ce document. Ils sont immenses et il nous semble que le niveau de ressources additionnelles requis, tel que l'ont identifié les trois organismes romains, au paragraphe 48, et qui serait de 265 non pas millions mais bien 265 milliards d'USD, donne matière à réflexion.

Deuxièmement, le Bénin reconnaît que la plupart des dix défis identifiés par la FAO sont des défis majeurs auxquels l'Afrique sub-saharienne devra faire face. Nous voudrions, cependant, en souligner deux d'importance non moindre pour l'Afrique qui, du reste, viennent d'être rappelés par le Cameroun, à savoir, les défis que représentent le taux de croissance de la population en Afrique et son impact sur la productivité agricole qui subit une demande toujours plus forte, ainsi que sur la proportion des jeunes, des 15-25 ans, que nos pays doivent intégrer sur le marché du travail, ou encore l'impact des changements climatiques sur la malnutrition en Afrique. Nous, Africains, craignons que ces défis ne soient pas résolus d'ici 2030 et nous voulons rappeler qu'en effet, l'Agenda régional africain est à l'horizon 2063.

Troisièmement dans la section B2.7, les paragraphes 49 et 50 que la FAO intitule "Ralentissement de la croissance des échanges agricoles et retour à une régionalisation du commerce", il nous semble, à moins que je ne me trompe, percevoir une certaine critique implicite à l'option choisie par certains pays en développement, comme mon pays, lorsque nous voulons mettre l'accent sur des accords commerciaux régionaux plutôt que sur des accords mondiaux. Dans un contexte où les négociations multilatérales de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) ont pour l'heure échoué, avec notamment l'incapacité, reconnue dans ce document par la FAO, de conclure les négociations liées au Programme de développement de Doha, si le repli de certains pays en développement, comme le Bénin, sur des accords régionaux semble décrié, nous restons très modestement à l'écoute d'autres options ou de meilleures alternatives viables que pourraient nous suggérer nos partenaires multilatéraux.

Comme quatrième et dernier commentaire concernant les aspects liés au genre, le Bénin note que, malgré une claire reconnaissance de la féminisation de l'agriculture, malgré le thème de la parité hommes-femmes, retenu comme un thème transversal et intégré dans tous les objectifs stratégiques de la FAO, lorsqu'on en vient aux résultantes listées dans ce document, excepté l'objectif 3, aucun des autres objectifs ne liste la parité hommes-femmes dans ses résultantes. Nous faisons cette remarque non pas dans un sens de polémique, mais plutôt parce qu'on constate que la FAO intègre bien les aspects genre et qu'il faudrait que cela ressorte dans tous les objectifs.

Sur la même lancée, à propos de la parité hommes-femmes, au paragraphe 163, lorsqu'il est fait référence, je cite, "le secteur agricole ne fonctionne pas de façon optimale dans de nombreux pays en développement parce que la moitié des agriculteurs, qui sont des femmes, ne bénéficient pas d'un appui suffisant...", etc., fin de citation. Nous nous demandons si la proportion à laquelle il est fait référence, c'est-à-dire la moitié, est correcte. Ne faudrait-il pas plutôt dire que plus de la moitié des agriculteurs sont des femmes? Dans mon pays, le Bénin, les femmes représentent non pas la moitié, mais bien 80 pour cent de la main d'œuvre employée dans la production agricole, et des documents de la FAO indiquent que, de façon générale en Afrique sub-saharienne, les femmes représentent 60 à 80 pour cent de cette main d'œuvre. Nous invitons donc la FAO à corriger cette proportion au paragraphe 163.

Avec ces commentaires, le Bénin est heureux de recommander au Conseil la présentation des 5 + 1 objectifs stratégiques proposés, pour l'approbation du Cadre stratégique révisé par la Conférence de la FAO en juillet 2017.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

We welcome the reviewed Strategic Framework and we note that the strategic framework was aligned to the 2030 Agenda and its relevant SDGs.

We appreciate the thorough analysis of the main challenges facing Member States both at the regional and the international levels.

We note in particular the attention given to issues of increasing importance such as nutrition, climate change, governance, statistics, commodities' prices volatility as well as the causes of migration.

We appreciate the main reference to recent international developments in particular the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Decade of Action on Nutrition, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement.

Nevertheless, we express our reservation to the reference to the World Humanitarian Summit which was not a UN mechanism nor with universal membership.

While we endorse the strategic framework, we call on FAO to ensure that, in any future reviews, reference should not be made to mechanisms that are not part of the UN system and not recognized by all Member States.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación de Argentina acoge con satisfacción el documento C 2017/7, Marco Estratégico Revisado y su coherencia con la Agenda 2030 y sus 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Reiteramos la importancia de incluir la perspectiva de género en todos los desafíos y no solamente en el desafío número 4. En cuanto a los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO, deseamos llamar la atención sobre la importancia del Objetivo Estratégico número 3, *Reducción de la pobreza rural*, por el posicionamiento estratégico de la FAO para ayudar a los Gobiernos a mejorar la vida de los hogares pobres rurales.

Este Objetivo contribuye de modo significativo al logro de los ODS 1 y 2, dado que hablamos de empoderamiento de la mujer rural, de las organizaciones rurales, de acceso al empleo al trabajo digno, de sistemas de protección social y de acceso al crédito. En síntesis, hablamos de avanzar en la cohesión social rural.

Con respecto al desafío número 5, *Poner fin al hambre* y a todas las formas de malnutrición, deseamos hacer una nueva referencia, tal cual lo realizamos en el Comité del Programa, al párrafo 86 del cual se desprendería la idea de que la carne roja no es saludable. El ejemplo brindado sobre el consumo de las carnes rojas deja de lado el aporte de nutrientes de las mismas que contribuyen a mejorar significativamente la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición en muchos países en desarrollo productores ganaderos. Estos alimentos contribuirán así a poner fin al hambre y a la malnutrición (ODS 2) cual es el desafío global del contexto del cual están mencionados.

Según el informe de agosto del 2016 del Grupo de Alto Nivel de Expertos del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, si bien el consumo de alimentos de origen animal debe disminuir en algunas zonas y entre algunas poblaciones, sin embargo debe aumentar en otras. Asimismo, en dicho informe se señala la función económica que la ganadería tiene en muchos sistemas alimentarios al proporcionar ingresos, riqueza y empleo, y por lo tanto contribuyendo a la erradicación de la pobreza, (ODS 1). Reiteramos por ende una vez más, la importancia de la ganadería para la lucha contra la inseguridad alimentaria y su rol en el trabajo juvenil y del arraigo a la tierra a los efectos de desestimular el proceso de urbanización.

Mr Hari PRIYONO (Indonesia)

At the outset, allow me on behalf of my delegation to congratulate you on your assumption as the Chairperson of the 156th Session of the FAO Council. We believe your vast diplomatic experience will guide us through our work effectively and produce fruitful deliberation and lead to positive outcomes. My delegation is ready to work closely with you and members of the Bureau.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group.

My delegation would also like to extend our appreciation for the hard work done by FAO in reviewing the FAO strategic framework. The global community is faced with many common challenges and we believe the Reviewed Strategic Framework will maintain the relevance of FAO's works amidst those challenges. We support the reference to the Sustainable Development Goals, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Paris Agreement, Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Decade of Action on Nutrition, Port State Measures Agreement, and other relevant agreements in the Reviewed Strategic Framework. The reference to these important agreements will ensure the consistency between the work of FAO with the obligations of FAO member countries under these agreements.

My delegation welcomes the addition of Strategic Objective 6 in the Reviewed Strategic Framework. We believe this is an invaluable addition to the overall strategic objectives of the Organization in addressing cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, gender mainstreaming and nutrition, which would in turn benefit FAO member countries. Maintaining the high quality work of the FAO would undoubtedly help FAO member countries in attaining their priority programmes in the field of food and agriculture.

The FAO regional/country offices play a crucial part in ensuring the successful attainment of FAO goals and objectives. One of FAO regional/offices' core functions is to facilitate partnership between FAO and its member countries. This core function holds the key to meeting the strategic objectives of FAO as laid out in the Reviewed Strategic Framework. In this regard, we believe both FAO and member countries would benefit from further strengthening the work of FAO regional/country offices in this aspect.

My delegation believes by further strengthening the work of FAO regional/country offices in this aspect, member countries should have greater access to means of implementation, including finance, investment, market access, capacity building programmes, transfer of technology as well as policy support.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We are grateful to the Secretariat for drafting this reviewed Strategic Framework of FAO, which takes into account several comments provided on many occasions. We are confident this document provides an overview of the key problems which the world agro-industrial sector risks facing. We welcome the close linkage between key provisions of the draft and those strategic development goals that come within the purview of the FAO.

This should aid the Organization to make a worthy contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are pleased to see that FAO has received the role of coordinator within the UN System to monitor 21 out of 232 SDGs indicators, and will participate in the work of some other indicators too.

We agree with the relevance and urgency of the current FAO global strategic goals. In this respect, we take a positive view of the inclusion in the title of Strategic Objective 2 of a dimension of the agricultural productivity. Also worthy of our support is that the document expresses the issues of combatting poverty, strengthening social protection, combatting diseases of plants and animals and combatting agricultural pests along with dealing with the so-called triple burden of malnutrition, and providing statistics by sector. We note the importance of the standard-setting activities of FAO, consolidating knowledge, know-how and new developments in the different sectors. In our view, the Organization must keep at the centre of its attention the issues of sustainable mechanisation and intensification of agriculture, development of the agrarian infrastructure and the rational use of land and soil. This last issue is totally in tune with FAO's mandate and with its comparative advantage.

However, unfortunately that word "*soil*" is not mentioned in the document a single time. We agree with a special emphasis on food safety to provide for food security and to preserve human health as reflected in paragraph 100 of the draft. In this respect, questions arise from the fact that in paragraph 89 of the document there is a reference to the fact that food standards do not carry enough weight in the supply chain.

This problem and the next of the associated issues, including antimicrobial resistance and wholesome food, will be discussed at the International Conference on Food Safety and Risk Analysis, which has been jointly organized by Russia and FAO on 18 and 19 May this year in Sochi. We welcome all interested countries to participate in this event. We are pleased to see that the draft reflects the cross-cutting issues by FAO which is climate change, nutrition, governance and gender issues.

When we talk of gender, we view those positively with stress on extending the economic empowerment of women farmers, giving them training with the policy on health and nutrition and social protection in rural areas. We call upon the Secretariat to retain this balanced approach, which is first and foremost, based on the core competencies of the Organization.

The adaptation of the agrarian sector to climate change and its contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change is one of the key themes of this document. We are confident that the expert professional capacity within FAO will be activated not only to strengthen the resilience of agriculture in a world of climate risk, but also for the maximum use of any possible advantages from climate change as forecasted in the short term. We note in paragraph 16, which quite rightly stresses the important part played by forest in the global climate agenda, we are confident that in its work the Organization will

devote the necessary attention to all types of forests, including boreal and temperate zone forests. We are expecting that to be the case.

We support FAO's work under Strategic Objective 5 on resilience of the agricultural sector, along with the disaster risk reduction (DRR), making emergency help to aid. We are forced to point out yet again, as Egypt has just done, that the results of the World Humanitarian Summit to which references are made in the document under discussion were not agreed and adopted in the intergovernmental format. For that reason, they cannot become the basis for the Strategic Framework on an equal level with the results of the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. We note that the 156th Session of the Council already adopted a decision on this subject which is reflected in paragraph 8 f) of its report.

In this respect, we propose that we delete from the text all references to that Summit and so-called FAO "commitments" as declared by the Secretariat at that event without having been agreed with Member Nations. This affects paragraph 9, 26 and 147 of document C 2017/7.

I would request that you, Mr Chairperson, should reflect this fact in your summing up of this agenda item.

If the above comments are taken into account, we are ready to support that this draft of the Strategic Framework should be passed to the 40th Session of the FAO Conference.

Mr Shengyao TANG (China) (Original language Chinese)

I would like to say thank you to the Secretariat for the documents provided as well as for the interventions. Just now we have heard about the discussion. Malaysia has made an intervention on behalf of the Asia Group. The Chinese Delegation would like to agree with what Malaysia had said. The Chinese Delegation overall endorses the vision, global goals and framework proposed by document C 2017/7.

We would like to comment as follows. First of all, at the executive summary section of page 4, there is a final paragraph about actions recommended to the Conference. China would like to propose to change it based on the recommendations proposed by the Council Members on the package solution to the world food security and nutrition through the South-South Cooperation framework. FAO shall further revise the Strategic Framework. This is the first comment.

To add to the following words after paragraph 86, the population in developing countries continues to grow. The pressure of equal protection has been intensive continuously. Within such a context developing countries can no longer address hunger population and poverty in rural regions themselves, although there was a clear advantage of South-South Cooperation. However, compared with the severity of tasks to address the challenges by developing countries, it is clearly not sufficient. Climate change and poverty are clearly interrelated. So it requires us to provide local employment, link trade channels, provide policy environment and develop science and technology talents. In this regard, we do not have sufficient consensus. Therefore, we need to adjust the wording to form a voluntary code to provide market trade processing, storing, marketing, and talents, infrastructure and all these serious issues.

By doing so, can we provide further innovation and support to the South-South Cooperation? During the intervention of Malaysia just now, the emphasis was put on GIAHS importance and its results, therefore we would recommend to add equal friendly farming models in paragraph 109.

We would also recommend that addressing the root causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition requires that a number of elements be in place, mainly political commitment. We would like to recommend to add something behind political commitment: supporting South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation by innovation and joint actions to coordinate parties in various forms of cooperation.

In paragraph 126, we recommend to revise 1.1 to countries that made explicit political commitments to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition by 2030 through innovation and joint actions to coordinate resources of governments, international financial institutions, non-government organizations, civil organizations and private sectors to better fulfil the comparative advantages of the South-South Cooperation on addressing hunger and poverty.

So based on the above recommendations of revision, China would be prepared to endorse this document on Strategic Framework.

Sra. Martha BÁRCENA COQUI (México)

Es un honor tomar la palabra por primera vez como la nueva Representante Permanente de México ante la FAO y ante su Consejo.

La Delegación de México se suma a la aprobación del Marco Estratégico Revisado y en particular a la inclusión del Objetivo Estratégico 6 ya que éste contribuye a alcanzar los demás Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO y la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. La aprobación del Marco Estratégico constituye un gran esfuerzo para alinear los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de las Naciones Unidas. Por ello, es digno de encomio el trabajo que han realizado al respecto tanto la Secretaría como los consultores externos y el Comité del Programa.

La Delegación de México quisiera enfatizar algunas de las áreas que se mencionan en la evolución del contexto mundial y que muestran claramente el compromiso de México con esas áreas. Como es de conocimiento de los distinguidos delegados, en el mes de mayo habrá en Cancún una conferencia de seguimiento al Marco de Sendai para la reducción de desastres y riesgos.

Por otra parte, el Gobierno de México está ampliamente comprometido con el seguimiento de la Cumbre sobre refugiados inmigrantes y copreside el grupo que está negociando el Pacto Mundial para migraciones seguras. La Delegación de México saluda especialmente la inclusión del Objetivo Estratégico 6, como ya mencioné, y en particular la inclusión de los temas transversales de cambio climático y género. En el mes de agosto, se llevará a cabo un seminario en México sobre la relevancia de las mujeres indígenas en el combate a la pobreza rural y en la garantía de la seguridad alimentaria. Asimismo, la delegación desea subrayar la importancia de la creación del nuevo Departamento de la FAO para Clima, biodiversidad, tierra y agua que se encargará de apoyar a los países a adaptar sus sistemas alimentarios al cambio climático y a la conservación y sustentabilidad de la biodiversidad.

En este contexto, quisiera llamar la atención de este Consejo sobre la Declaración de Cancún en relación a la integración de conservación y el uso sustentable de la biodiversidad para el bienestar, aprobada por la 13ª Reunión de la Conferencia de las Partes (COP 13) del Convenio de Diversidad Biológica celebrado el pasado mes de diciembre en México. En la misma, 196 países se comprometieron a tomar acciones e hicieron recomendaciones para avanzar en la FAO en los sectores de biodiversidad y agricultura, pesca y bosques. En particular, la biodiversidad es la base de la agricultura al ser el origen de todos los cultivos. El ganado domesticado y la variedad entre ellos, y la pesca y la acuicultura, dependen del uso sostenible de la biodiversidad y los ecosistemas para mantener los beneficios económicos, sociales y ecológicos a largo plazo.

No podemos más que congratularnos de que la FAO esté otorgando una importancia relevante al cambio climático y la biodiversidad en sus programas futuros.

Mr Sompong NIMCHUAR (Observer for Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group. We join others to thank the Secretariat for a well prepared document.

We have two specific questions for clarification.

First, paragraph 110 relates to core functions of FAO in the last sentence: "This requires FAO to be a global policy setter, facilitator, partner and coordinator, as well as doer". Can the Secretariat explain a little more about the role of FAO as a "doer"? We would think that the word "initiator" or "starter" would be more appropriate. In certain circumstances, not business as usual, FAO can play the role as a "doer".

Second, in Strategic Objective 3 (Reduce rural poverty), paragraph 138, we notice that FAO has outcomes related to gender in Outcome 3.4. We wonder why do not have outcomes related to gender in Strategic Objective 4 (Ensure more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems). "Gender" under SO4 will be broader and better reflect in cross-cutting issues.

Sr. Oscar PIÑERO (Uruguay)

Uruguay apoya lo expuesto por la delegación de Argentina sobre lo que expresado en el párrafo 86, así como con respecto al sesgo que contiene. Concomitantemente solicita su revisión, de acuerdo a dichos comentarios. Cabe recordar además que la II Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición (CIN2) se refiere a dietas saludables, pero también equilibradas y diversificadas. No se hace mención a productos específicos, los que en muchos casos, como en el de las carnes rojas, presentan una variedad importante de calidades y de diferencias en los métodos de producción.

Esta preocupación por dietas equilibradas y diversificadas, no habilita a hacer declaraciones generales del tipo "un menor consumo", que no reflejan la complejidad de la realidad.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

On behalf of 15 members of the CARICOM sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago wishes to congratulate FAO for an excellent document of the reviewed Strategic Framework. We feel insightful and pragmatic. Moreover, for small countries, it is an excellent methodological approach that can be adopted in countries as we seek to integrate the international, regional and national perspectives in developing the agricultural sector.

We also support the way the document has been presented and framed within the context of SDGs. It offers an excellent opportunity for FAO to work with the UN country teams in helping to get the message across that, at the national level, agriculture should be addressed in a much more coherent horizontal framework. One of the critical issues that the small countries have, I believe it is the same for many countries, is the fact that there is a siloization that exists within the public administration where ministries and departments operate sometimes in complete ignorance of each other. I think this document presents an excellent framework for what I call "smashing the silos".

I want to refer to the global and regional trends. We are grateful that particular vulnerabilities of the small island developing states (SIDS) are observed and recognized in paragraph 42 as it relates to the climate variability and other events. I think a good case could be made on reflecting the identified trends as a particular position of the SIDS and the challenges that the countries face. One of the critical issues that will arise as we go forward in the implementation is the fact that SIDS face the same problems but with much less resources and much less capacity. The extent to which they get the support of the FAO at country and sub-regional levels would be extremely important.

In this regard and with those comments, we wish to endorse completely the approach taken in the reviewed Strategic Framework.

Sr. Elias Rafael ELJURI ABRAHAM (Observador de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

Agradecemos la presentación del documento C 2017/7, "Marco estratégico revisado", el cual compartimos y apoyamos.

En el 2015 la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas aprobó la Agenda para el Desarrollo del 2015 y el documento final titulado "Transformar nuestro mundo: la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible". Allí se anunciaron los 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible y las 169 metas. Presentada como una agenda de carácter integrado e indivisible, que conjuga tres dimensiones del desarrollo sostenible: la económica, la social y la ambiental.

Hoy la FAO nos presenta su Marco Estratégico Revisado, alineado en perfecta sintonía con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible. Los objetivos de dicho Marco se centran sobre una Agenda Global de Grandes Desafíos: Pobreza, hambre y desnutrición, Cambio Climático, Problemas de Productividad Agrícola, Cambios Demográficos, Migraciones derivadas de Conflictos bélicos, Genero entre otros.

En el Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2018-19 observamos que la FAO enfrenta dos grandes retos en su Agenda Institucional, por un lado la Implementación y ejecución del Plan a plazo medio y Programa de trabajo, y por el otro el custodio de 21 indicadores en el marco de los ODS. De los 21 indicadores, cuatro fueron clasificados como nivel 1, seis como nivel 2 y once como nivel 3; es decir, que por la mitad de los indicadores no se dispone de fuentes de información y de metodología.

El reto estadístico que deben enfrentar los países es de gran complejidad por la insuficiencia de recursos humanos y económicos, el bajo estadístico de algunos sistemas estadísticos nacionales, la ausencia de marcos y directorios para realizar encuestas entre otros.

La FAO debe realizar sendos esfuerzos para que los países, que así lo requieran, logren acortar la brecha en poco tiempo, ayudando al fortalecimiento de sus sistemas estadísticos nacionales. Esto es garantía de que los recursos que se inviertan, sigan aumentando la disponibilidad de fuentes oficiales nacionales y no se haga uso por parte del sistema de Naciones Unidas de estimaciones de grupos de expertos.

Creemos necesario como país, que a pesar de que la FAO debería crear una instancia (pudiese ser un Comité o Sub-comité) donde se discuta las cuestiones estadísticas en el marco de los ODS orientado hacia la planificación, el diseño, la construcción, la recolección, el procesamiento; así como el análisis, la difusión, evaluación y la gestión de archivo. Esto contribuiría enormemente a compartir buenas prácticas estadísticas.

Además, hacemos un llamado a incrementar la Cooperación Sur-Sur como un mecanismo para la asistencia técnica y transferencia de conocimiento.

Con estas palabras, La República Bolivariana de Venezuela apoya el Marco Estratégico Revisado.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

En premier lieu, je retiens de ces échanges que dans l'ensemble le Conseil soutient largement les grandes orientations de ce Cadre stratégique révisé et je m'en félicite; en effet je pense que ses orientations sont assez pertinentes. Je note en outre que beaucoup d'entre vous ont souligné l'importance des questions climatiques, des questions de biodiversité, de la question des sols, et comme la Chine, de la question des modèles d'agriculture respectueux de l'environnement. Il me semble que c'est un des grands tournants de ce Cadre stratégique et du travail qui a été accompli depuis quelques années à la FAO. L'importance de la protection de l'environnement et du capital naturel sont bien mieux pris en compte.

La Fédération de Russie a noté que la question des sols n'était pas vraiment abordée dans le Cadre stratégique révisé, ce qui est vrai. Cela aurait peut-être pu être fait, mais le Cadre stratégique révisé se situe à un niveau très général des objectifs globaux. En revanche, la question des sols est bien abordée ensuite dans le Plan à moyen terme (PMT) et dans le Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019, et je me félicite que dans les notes d'information qui ont été produites par le Secrétariat, notamment sur les secteurs qui devraient bénéficier de contributions volontaires, la question des sols est citée, notamment celle du stockage du carbone dans les sols qui n'est pas simplement un enjeu d'atténuation du changement climatique, mais aussi d'amélioration de la fertilité des sols.

Je suis, pour ma part, tout à fait favorable à la proposition qu'a faite la Chine d'intégrer une référence aux modèles d'agriculture respectueux de l'environnement. Cela me paraît le grand défi que nous aurons à relever dans les cinquante ans qui viennent. Cela dit, là aussi, la question est notamment abordée dans le Programme de travail et budget avec la référence à l'agroécologie.

Je voudrais finir sur deux remarques qui ont été faites par le Bénin et me paraissent importantes. La première porte sur l'intégration régionale. Peut-être qu'effectivement, c'est un sujet qu'on ne valorise pas suffisamment. Tous ceux qui ont travaillé sur la crise alimentaire en 2008-2009 savent combien, notamment en Afrique de l'Ouest, le manque de convergence des politiques agricoles et fiscales a créé des distorsions de concurrence et des problèmes d'approvisionnement sur les marchés et a nuit à la complémentarité entre l'hinterland et les pays côtiers. L'intégration régionale est donc certainement un sujet prioritaire, notamment à travers les initiatives régionales.

On a souvent critiqué la Politique agricole commune. Il est de bon ton de critiquer l'Europe, y compris en ce lieu. Moi je n'oublie pas que quand je suis né, il n'y a pas si longtemps, on avait faim en Europe. On avait un déficit alimentaire majeur, et c'est la Politique agricole commune qui a permis, par des gains de productivité, d'arriver à une autosuffisance et même une balance alimentaire excédentaire. Nous n'aurions jamais pu le faire sur des bases purement nationales. La coordination des politiques agricoles et l'intégration régionale doivent donc être soutenues.

Dernier point, sur une autre remarque du Bénin à propos de la déconnexion entre les défis que nous avons à relever et le budget dont nous disposons. Je le soulignerai tout à l'heure dans le cadre des priorités du Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019; les ressources additionnelles que nous dégageons pour le prochain Programme de travail et budget, s'élèvent à une vingtaine de millions de dollars. Cela doit nous amener à être très raisonnables dans la définition de ces priorités et à ne pas les multiplier. Toute la difficulté d'une enceinte composée de 194 États Membres, c'est d'éviter l'agrégation de priorités pour parvenir à un consensus avec des ressources si modestes.

Je voudrais aussi en profiter pour faire une remarque sur quelque chose qui a été dit ce matin dans les remarques introductives sur la gouvernance de cette institution et sur le coût de cette gouvernance. J'appelle chacun à la plus grande sagesse sur ces questions-là. Au moment où nous devons mobiliser beaucoup de contributions volontaires pour parvenir à financer notre Programme de travail et budget, je crois que rien ne serait plus contre-productif que d'ouvrir un débat sur la gouvernance de notre institution. C'est le pire des signaux à envoyer aux donateurs. Certes on nous a dit que le coût de la gouvernance s'élevait à environ 72 millions de dollars sur l'exercice biennal; 72 millions rapportés à un budget de 2,5 milliards, c'est trois pour cent. Je ne crois pas que trois pour cent soit excessif pour assurer la bonne gouvernance d'une institution multilatérale comme la FAO. Pour ma part, en tant que Président du Comité du Programme, un comité de gouvernance important, j'ai fait des propositions pour essayer de réduire un peu la durée de nos deux sessions annuelles et d'organiser une troisième réunion pour aller au fond de la réflexion, que ce soit sur la politique d'évaluation mais aussi sur le cadre de résultats où le Comité du Programme manque à l'évidence de temps pour faire un examen approfondi des produits, des résultantes, des indicateurs et des cibles proposés par le Secrétariat.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

Let me say on behalf of my colleagues at the table and those who have worked on the Strategic Framework, thank you very much for your careful reading of this document and the various comments and improvements you have suggested, which will be useful going forward for our Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget.

This is your framework. It is a framework that you set the goals and objectives to be obtained by Members with the assistance of FAO. I heard in many of the comments a very clear buy-in and agreement with these objectives. Of course, they are very closely related to the Sustainable Development Goals that have also been agreed in the international community.

I think my colleagues at the table may be better placed to provide explanations on some of the issues raised. I would just like to clarify one issue that was raised by Thailand on Paragraph 110 on the core functions, concerning what we mean by FAO being a "doer". Quite simply, the core functions are a mix of areas of work around, on the one hand, standard setting, policy advice, evidence-based decision making based on statistics, as well as providing capacity development to countries, facilitating the transfer of technology, advocacy and communications – the "doer" part of the core functions.

If we only set policy, if we only set standards, but we do not build capacity for countries to provide and use, we are not going to achieve our goals and objectives. That is the way the core functions have been built as a good mix of norms and development.

May I suggest my colleagues may wish to respond to some of the other issues raised.

Mr Kostas STAMOULIS (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

I would like to refer to a few questions that were raised. First of all with relation to gender: Gender is referred to in many of the challenges as it is relevant to in the document. Also within the Strategic Framework, gender is a cross-cutting issue and there are indicators across the Strategic Framework that monitor the integration of gender across the Strategic Objectives.

Thirteen outcome-level indicators that allow tracking of important results related to gender including two under Strategic Objective 6, 20 output-level indicators, inclusion of gender perspectives and approaches applied to specific activities integrated in the Strategic Objective work plans and projects. Also the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget in paragraph 287, you can see exactly how gender is integrated in terms of substance in the strategic programme.

Now the other question I would like to take; there is an issue about gender statistics in terms of women farmers. In this document it is not included, but what we have in the longer document, which constitutes the basis for this, is the table "Future Food and Agriculture" that shows in which countries there is feminisation of agriculture. Women's share of the economically active population in agriculture is increasing over time. Now there are two parts to the figures: one is women farmers, that is women who are involved one way or another in farming on their own farms, and then there are women workers who are economically active. These are two different types of data so I do not think we have any contradiction regarding the data.

Regarding international trade and regional trade arrangements, it is my understanding that in paragraphs 49 and 50, with more analysis in the longer document, what we are saying is exactly what Benin mentioned: that due to various factors mentioned in paragraph 49, including the fact that the multilateral trade negotiations on agriculture stalled there, is the proliferation of regional trade arrangements. As we see here, these have the potential to further liberalize agriculture trade and inject different disciplines in the rules that countries follow to ensure food policy, etc. So we are not condemning any of this.

In every regional trade arrangement there is trade creation and maybe some trade diversion. The question is how those will be related to the tariff structure arising from the most favoured national programmes, but we consider it fairly and, in all these big trade arrangements mentioned here and others in the longer document, agriculture is actually included. Historically, a lot of regional trade or sub-regional trade arrangements usually left agriculture out but not now. I think a lot of these big trade arrangements leave agriculture in.

I would like also to pick up the issue of paragraphs 85 and 86 and the issue of livestock. We are not saying that livestock is not a fundamental part of nutrition. Let me remind the Members that paragraphs 85 and 86 talk about how healthy diets and dietary patterns could actually become in harmony with achieving better sustainability in the management of resources, especially those related to livestock. There is a lot of evidence for this and I fully agree with the statement of Argentina that not one size fits all and that there are some parts of the world where livestock production is not sustainable while there are others where it is practiced sustainably and it can expand in a sustainable manner.

In a document like this we cannot cover the diversity of situations like in a longer document. There are parts of the world where industrialized systems of livestock production are more environmental and sustainable but no industrial system per unit, per animal head in all this data. What we are saying here, and it is said in paragraph 86, is for instance there are dietary guidelines to recommend lower red meat consumption. There are plenty of cases, especially we say particularly among high consuming groups, that this could help also promote environmental issues. That is all we are saying. We are not saying that we are promoting the across-the-board consumption of less red meat or other types of meat. Absolutely not. Actually in several parts of the world people eat too little of it. So we cannot just put everything under the statement of "eat less red meat".

I think the paragraph says that, within the context of what it is trying to address, it is consistent with the fact that there is no such thing as a blanket recommendation to reduce meat consumption, especially in places like Africa where overall it is hard to obtain meat. Consumption is only ten grams of meat a week, on the average, so we could not propose something like a reduction in this case.

I think I have exhausted some of the questions that were raised.

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

I would like maybe to start where Mr Stamoulis concluded regarding the livestock sector and to assure you that FAO has a positive discourse regarding livestock.

But the challenge we have is a growing population. We know that we have an increased middle class and we will be having more consumption of meat, globally speaking. Knowing that livestock production can have consequences on the environment, we said that we have to support sustainable solutions on how we can sustainably produce and manage the livestock sector. FAO has provided solutions in this regard; this is what we state within FAO and it is on the side of supporting production.

Regarding the consumption side, the discourse is, as Mr Stamoulis said, that we need to have a more balanced and more diverse diet. Maybe in some regions people eat too much red meat, while in other regions people eat too little red meat, so how can we really have a balanced diet and a balanced consumption of meat?

Let us say that in FAO we have a really positive approach to the sector development in the way that we need to have sustainable management and consumption of livestock and red meat.

The second question is coming from the comments from Russia and China. Again, our appreciation for your comments, but we said that maybe soils are not talked about enough here, but for us soil is when you refer to natural resources. But when you go to the Programme of Work and Budget, you can see that in some areas to emphasize the importance we give to soils and other natural resources.

Our assumption is we need to produce more but we need to protect the environment so how should we preserve biodiversity, genetic resources and ecosystems services?

Linked to that, I would like to thank the new Permanent Representative of Mexico for her intervention saying that as we discuss the platform, we will have to really mainstream biodiversity through the agricultural sectors. Furthermore, the establishment of the platform will bring together all of the sectors, environment and agriculture, forests, and fisheries, how we can really have an integrated and a sustainable approach.

But again you remember that, in February, we organized in FAO a symposium on soil organic carbon and how we can really manage soil below ground. This is something new but very important to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and for climate change. I am sure during the Programme of Work and Budget we will be further discussing on these important areas.

Regarding seeds, as you can see, it has been an area where FAO has been supporting more and more and we have the Global Action Programme on Food Security in the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, the linkage with healthy diets and also protection of the environment, and I am sure in the Programme of Work and Budget we will see how important both vulnerability and seeds are in the FAO Programme of Work.

Regarding food standards and food systems, we thank the Russian Government for organizing the International Conference on Food Safety and Risk Analysis in Sochi. For sure FAO will participate as already agreed and it is very important for standard setting and how we can have sustainable food systems and, as Boyd said, FAO provides the standard setting and the guidelines through the Codex.

I believe those are the points I would like to make some comments on.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

I would have just one comment in response to Russia's remarks on the World Humanitarian Summit. Certainly we agree. I think we are all in agreement that the World Humanitarian Summit was not an intergovernmental meeting. It was not an agreed text. What came out of the World Humanitarian Summit is not the basis for action in the way that the Sendai Framework and other things are. That is for sure and that is certainly not the intent in the document.

Nevertheless, I think that the discussions leading up to and at the World Humanitarian Summit provide a particularly interesting reference point, especially now. I believe what will be remembered relates to our current context of food security crises and the call to pay more attention to breaking down the gaps between humanitarian work and development work and the need to see those as one common set of problems. That is to say, the need to address prevention, the need to address policy, planning, to reduce risk, to prepare communities, countries, and households to reduce vulnerability and to be able to withstand vulnerable shocks including of course climate shocks.

In that regard, the discussions at World Humanitarian Summit are these days referred to quite often around the development humanitarian nexus that is in fact I think at the heart of many considerations about the current response to the crises that we see unfolding.

Besides, the other important aspect again as a reference point, but not of course as an agreed intergovernmental document is the commitment among the eight, now nine UN Agencies. It was eight UN Agencies plus the International Organization for Migration, which is now a full UN member, on

what was called the new way of working and often referred to shorthand as the new way of working, of how we collaborate more, of how we spend more explicit attention on capacity development of national capacities and governments in order to be able to respond. Moreover, the considerations were focused on how we work together in common assessments, how we cooperate for greater transparency on other issues. Then, those references do come out of the World Humanitarian Summit that I think are in fact useful in the context of what we have here.

Yet, we absolutely agree that it is not an intergovernmental agreement and not a basis for action as would other intergovernmental agreements be in that sense.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me thank you again for these very important interventions you have made. This is a result of your involvement in all of the stages of the development of the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

At various Council sessions, Members have given guidance to this subject and today this is reflected in our discussions.

Several comments on guidance have been given but, as always, we cannot include everything. We have also the records that we can always refer to.

Having said this, I hope we can come now to the end of Item 3. Allow me to make conclusions as follows:

The Council welcomed the reviewed Strategic Framework, and:

- a) noted that the document provides a clear understanding of the main challenges expected to be faced by countries in food and agriculture in the coming years;
- b) reaffirmed its support for FAO's Vision, Global Goals and Objectives;
- c) appreciated the alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- d) noted with appreciation that the Strategic Framework continued to include a sixth objective, with a new title to better reflect 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;
- e) cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit, as a basis for action;
- f) endorsed the reviewed Strategic Framework, in particular FAO's Vision, Global Goals and Objectives, for approval by the Conference.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We agree with your summing up. However, in point e) we would propose that we should slightly change your wording and ask not to include reference to the World Humanitarian Summit.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The World Humanitarian Summit produced valuable lessons that many countries, especially those affected by lack of food security, are using. So the content was useful. FAO should use any useful document.

Now the question has a legal aspect. I mean, Russian Federation and Egypt, the two countries asked not to mention it. We accept the idea that we do not mention the World Humanitarian Summit and they ask to take it out of the document, but I do not see the inconsistency.

We take ideas from the G20, we take ideas from the G8; these are not international organizations. All FAO members are not Members. We take ideas from OECD publications. OECD is not made up of all Member Nations of FAO.

In this regard, I do not see what is harmful to leave it as it is. Is it because it is illegal? I do not understand.

CHAIRPERSON

After listening to Afghanistan, I hope we can take the phrase as it is. Russian Federation?

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We are grateful to our distinguished colleague from Afghanistan for that explanation. However, for various reasons, we cannot agree with what is being proposed.

Firstly, we are discussing a high-level strategic document which will be the guidelines for the Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization for the next few years and, in this respect, as we see it, FAO should base its vision – FAO is its Member Nations – on what all of the Member Nations of FAO agree on.

We also thank Mr Gustafson for the clarification. However, I need to note that such a basic thing as closing the gap between the Development Agenda and the Humanitarian Aid Agenda, whether the Summit takes place or not, we see no reason in mentioning the Summit as such.

If we look in paragraph 47, we see that there is a direct reference to the FAO commitments adopted at the World Humanitarian Summit. In our understanding, FAO represents the Member States of FAO and the Member States have not agreed to those commitments. So they were given on behalf of FAO without the agreement of the Member Nations, without the agreement of the Governing Bodies of FAO. That is why we propose that we delete the wording, including this paragraph, from the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

I would also note that, despite the Secretariat's admission, the status of the Summit and the status of many other international events mentioned in this document is different. In paragraph 9 they are mentioned in one paragraph and almost in one list. Regarding the governance or leadership, I would also like to note that the 155th Session of the Council already gave a recommendation on this issue which unfortunately was not fully taken into account.

Mr Chairperson, you have actually exactly reproduced the wording which the Council agreed at the last session, but it looks like that wording was not sufficient. So we would kindly request that you, Mr Chairperson, should carry on this work and take into account in your summing up wording which did not include this Summit.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me have information which I hope Members will agree on, including, in particular, the Russian Federation.

We have five minutes remaining and we have only one paragraph for which I request your consensus and I hope the Russian Federation and Afghanistan will agree.

Let me read it: (e) cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit as a basis for action, noting that the outcomes of this meeting did not flow from an intergovernmental process.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We really value your attempts to achieve consensus. Although the wording which you just read out is not fully in tune with what we wanted to see specifically but we are prepared to accept it. Although we would ask Mr Gustafson to repeat to us that it will not be in the Strategic Framework which will be tabled at the Conference; there will not be a single reference there. If Mr Gustafson could confirm that, then we can go along with the consensus.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

I do not think we can change the document that goes to the Conference at this point. I may be wrong on the procedural part, but I do not believe we can agree to that.

Mr Jon Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

To fully understand, could we get a clarification; is there a legal issue or not when it comes to commitments FAO made at the World Humanitarian Summit? Could that help us if we got a

clarification on that? If I understood the Russian Federation, they were hinting that FAO did something that was not legally appropriate to the Basic Texts. So that could help us out.

But, while I have the floor, I do not see any need to delete this from the document.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

If I may, I will have to go back into the history of this issue. The Russian Federation was deeply involved in the whole preparatory process, we took active part in sub-regional, regional and global consultations. Unfortunately, the preparatory process was not properly organized and we said this right from the start.

All of the discussions which took place with Member States were discussions on the broad humanitarian agenda. Then, after the end of that process, the Secretariat of the Summit prepared what they called individual and collective commitments which were presented as outcomes of the Summit. They were not adopted in an intergovernmental format. In parallel, there were also group commitments. This partially answers the question raised by our colleague from Iceland, of what commitments made by FAO we are talking about.

So at the end of the Summit there was an adoption of the so-called “Global Pact”, an agreement which was adopted by a limited number of countries and a limited number of international organizations. The FAO was among that number.

So my question is who took on these commitments? If we say that it was FAO, does that mean that it is the Member States of FAO that took on these commitments? Or does it mean that it is the Secretariat of FAO that took on those commitments?

As far as I know, there were no decisions by the Governing Bodies which are made up of the Member States on what commitments could or should not be adopted. There was no such decision.

In the Annex to the Global Pact on the last page, it lists the countries and international organizations which participated in the drafting of this text. For instance, regarding the World Health Organization (WHO), there is a footnote saying that the decision was to be made after discussion and confirmation with the Member States of the WHO. With regard to FAO, there were no consultations with Member Nations.

I am not saying that there is something incorrect in that document. I am sure that most of the participating countries here would support many of the ideas contained in that document. The point is that nobody ever invited either us or three quarters of the other Members, maybe four fifths of the other Members, to discuss this document.

Now here we are discussing the Strategic Framework document which lays down the guidelines for this Organization for the next two years. So it is as though we were putting on the same level events and agreements that Member States have spent many years on in order to develop consensus language and to make sure that there is no wrong language in those documents. We are not prepared to put such documents that are being worked on in the traditional intergovernmental process. We are not prepared to put those on the same footing as documents which we, as Member States, did not participate in the development of.

Therefore, the results of the World Humanitarian Summit should not be given this place in the FAO Strategic document. That is why we are raising this issue.

CHAIRPERSON

We need to adjourn this morning's meeting. Before we close, I will pass the floor to the Secretary-General for an announcement.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind Members that with regard to item 10, *Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference*, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday morning, there are a number of nominations for Officers of the Conference that have not yet been received. The nominations are subject to endorsement by this session of Council, which is the last one before the Conference in July.

The nominations required are as follows: three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference; the Chairperson of Commission I (representative of a country from the G77 and China Group); the Chairperson of Commission II (representative of a country not within the G77 and China Group); seven elected members of the General Committee, which as you know will meet on the Monday morning, immediately after the opening ceremony of the Conference; and nine members of the Credentials Committee.

I also wish to remind Members that there will be two side events taking place during lunch time today, immediately following the close of this plenary meeting: from now until 13.30 the Side Event on *Supporting transparent, need-based and relevant responses to food crises through coordinated analyses – Presentation of the results of the Global Report on Food Crises 2017*, will take place in the Sheikh Zayed Centre; followed by a side event on *Engaging Countries in Capacity Development for SDG Monitoring*, in the Iran Room from 13.30 to 14.30.

CHAIRPERSON

Council will resume with agenda Item 3 at 14:30 hours sharp.

The meeting rose at 12:44 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 44

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.44

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2016 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| SECOND PLENARY MEETING DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 24 April 2017 |

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.45 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.45
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 3 Reviewed Strategic Framework (continued)
Point 3 Cadre stratégique révisé (suite)
Tema 3 Marco estratégico revisado (continuación)
 (C 2017/7)

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, I declare the Second Meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council open.

Let us now return to Item 3, *Reviewed Strategic Framework*. I have been informed by the Secretariat that the reference to the World Humanitarian Summit will be deleted from document C 2017/7 “Reviewed Strategic Framework”.

That was an issue which delayed us this morning and for the benefit of everybody let me go back again to read my conclusions for Item 3. I hope by reading these conclusions I am not opening for other paragraphs to be intervened.

1. The Council welcomed the Reviewed Strategic Framework, and:
 - a) noted that the document provides a clear understanding of the main challenges expected to be faced by countries in food and agriculture in the coming years;
 - b) reaffirmed its support for FAO’s Vision, Global Goals and Objectives;
 - c) appreciated the alignment of FAO’s Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
 - d) noted with appreciation that the Strategic Framework continued to include a sixth objective, with a new title to better reflect 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;
 - e) agreed to delete from the FAO Reviewed Strategic Framework all references to the World Humanitarian Summit; and
 - f) endorsed the reviewed Strategic Framework, in particular FAO’s Vision, Global Goals and Objectives, for approval by the Conference.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

I would like to intervene on Item 1, the Agenda and the Timetable. The Republic of Korea would like to address the developments and operational plan of the World Fisheries University (WPU) pilot programme which has been jointly pursued by Korea and FAO under Agenda Item 17, *Any other matters*.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Republic of Korea. We will take that up under *Any other matters*.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to return to your summary of our discussion on Item 3 and in particular point e). I think the United Kingdom would support your previous proposal that you made for that paragraph just before the lunch break.

The World Humanitarian Summit did happen and it is influencing the work that FAO and other United Nations Agencies are doing. We heard about that at lunchtime in a very useful session on a recent report on the global food crisis. I do not think we can ignore the fact that it happened. Yes, it is not a United Nations intergovernmental agreed text, and I am quite happy for the summary to reflect that point, but it did happen and it is influencing what FAO will be doing in the next four years.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I can be brief just to add my voice to the last speaker. We do not see this as a way forward as suggested in your last summary and we prefer the earlier text from you, Mr Chairperson.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Señor Presidente, estábamos de acuerdo con la propuesta que recién había realizado.

Nosotros queremos hacer esta intervención también en nombre de los países de Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, República Dominicana, Haití y Venezuela.

En los debates sobre el Marco Estratégico de la FAO, sostenido en el 155.º período de sesiones del Consejo de esta Organización, un amplio número de países se pronunciaron para eliminar la referencia a los compromisos contraídos en la Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial. En consecuencia, reiteramos la solicitud realizada en aquella ocasión. El Marco Estratégico Revisado de la FAO debe basarse en las decisiones intergubernamentales de los Estados Miembros.

La Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial, proceso con implicaciones de trascendencia global y nacional, careció de espacio consultivo intergubernamental, lo cual era indispensable. En tal sentido, reafirmamos que la FAO debe atenerse al alcance que tuvo este tema en el segmento humanitario del ECOSOC en su resolución 9/2016, la cual solo, y cito, “Señala la primera Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial celebrada en Estambul, Turquía los días 23 y 24 de mayo del 2016”.

Asimismo, nos sumamos a los pronunciamientos sobre este tema realizado por los países como Rusia y Egipto. Esperamos la confirmación de la FAO de que en el Marco Estratégico Revisado que se presentará a la conferencia no se incluyan menciones a dicha cumbre.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would also like to join others who have expressed support for your earlier proposal. We really feel that a reference to the World Humanitarian Summit is important in the sense that it happened and is harmless. It is not endorsing necessarily the outcomes, which were in the *Grand Bargain*, which is not mentioned in the document.

I believe that similar discussions happened in other Rome-based Agencies and this is a section that deals with the context and events that happened that are relevant to FAO's work. Looking at the Global Food Report on Food Crises that was released and this dramatic increase of severely food-insecure people as well as the context of the current food crisis, I think that some messages that were highlighted during the deliberations of the World Humanitarian Summit, especially the need to bridge the gap between development and humanitarian work, which is not new but which stills needs to be acted upon, is quite relevant to FAO's work.

I think that your proposal is a good way forward. I do not know if we can explore other options like perhaps putting a footnote besides the words "World Humanitarian Summit" that also has a caveat that is similar to what you said in your summary.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I forgot one point to mention in my intervention and that is in support of that we in our Strategic Framework are referring to this in Resolution 127 of the GA71, paragraph 66.

Indeed, the United Nations takes note of the World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul, Turkey and takes note of the Report of the Secretary-General. So United Nations Members, we recognize this. We take note of it. Yes, in the Council we have heard that some do not want to adhere to it or are not part of it and in this Council I am not sure that we should go the way of starting to delete from the document, if I understand the sort of recommendations you make for us that we would endorse to delete a paragraph from a document here.

I thought the more normal way of doing it is that we might say simply that one paragraph in the document in front of us is not supported by everyone so that is maybe the best and right way to do it instead of deleting.

I can imagine that there are other paragraphs that some other Members here would like to delete. I would have liked to have had something more on soil for instance, and come with a suggestion to add a paragraph on that. I sincerely ask Members to look at your earlier version and to rephrase it so those who are not adhering to or not part of that agreement can agree to the Report.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

As colleagues have noted, we also have had similar discussions in other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and I wonder if we might not be able to make reference as we have in other RBAs, so I would support, first of all, our colleagues who make some reference to it. The second, Canada's idea that perhaps there could be a footnote. I would note that if it does not work, the formulation our Icelandic colleague came up with: "takes note". Again, in the General Assembly parlance, "it takes note" implies neither approval nor disapproval. It is simply "takes note" is a neutral comment. I think that it does not presuppose that we are approving it or not but if we were to use takes note in its literal United Nations General Assembly formulation that might be a way out of this.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We support your revised summary. We have listened to the arguments of a range of countries in relation to keeping the reference to this in the document but we cannot agree with this at all.

We do not ignore the fact that the World Humanitarian Summit happened, but at the current time we recommend not to include this reference in the future documents. We do not believe that the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit should have an impact on the Strategic Framework of FAO because it is not agreed on by an intergovernmental format. We also note that it will be difficult for us to adopt this document if this reference remains in the document.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Como dije anteriormente, este tema ya había sido zanjado en el anterior Consejo. Estamos aquí para tratar de encontrar un consenso, por lo cual mantenemos nuestra posición de que la propuesta que recién hizo usted sea la que más convenga a este Consejo.

M. Imed SELATNIA (Algérie)

L'Algérie souscrit à la position déjà exprimée par les distingués représentants du Groupe Amérique latine et Caraïbes (GRULAC), de la Fédération de Russie et de l'Égypte d'écarter toute référence au Sommet mondial sur l'action humanitaire.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

A esta altura de los acontecimientos, creo que no hay un consenso sobre el tema de la inclusión de la Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial, más allá de las instrucciones que cada delegación tenga sobre el tema en particular. Es decir, cada delegación tiene instrucciones particulares o una posición determinada sobre este tema. Pero al no haber un consenso, podemos estar aquí cinco, seis horas más discutiendo, porque obviamente no nos podemos poner de acuerdo acerca de la inclusión de un párrafo sobre este tema. Va más allá de la posición que cada país tenga sobre este tema.

La Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial obviamente acaeció, existió, sin embargo hay distintas posturas sobre los *outcomes* de la cumbre y, lamentablemente, no hay un consenso para su inclusión aquí.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I just wanted to point out that since the question was asked, my understanding is that in the Strategic Plan of the World Food Programme (WFP) a reference to the World Humanitarian Summit is there with two paragraphs. I just feel that it would be a bit odd to have one Rome-based Agency mentioning it, seeing that the Summit is relevant to some of their work. The Summit stressed the importance of bridging the gap. While the other partner working on food security would not be able to reference it as a relevant event that could inform their work. For the sake of consistency and as mentioned by the colleague from Iceland, the resolution that the UN General Assembly taking note of the Summit was adopted by consensus, I see no harm in having a reference in the FAO's revised Strategic Framework.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

I repeat the position we stated before but I simply would like to add, following on our colleague from Nicaragua that the Council Session in December considered this subject and Russia gave a very clear, unambiguous statement on this point of non-inclusion in the Revised Framework.

I do not think that we should at this point go against the decision that had been taken already in December. Less than six months have gone by and so once again opening a discussion that has already taken place does not make sense. We renew the statement of our position.

CHAIRPERSON

I think for the matter of being flexible and, as I noted, we had almost gotten to a consensus before we took a break. After there was argument and there was flexibility. Could I urge and request that flexibility prevails and go back to my previous formulation?

This is my request which reads as follows: (a) Cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit as a basis for action, noting that the outcomes of this meeting did not flow from an intergovernmental process.

I hope this could be acceptable to everybody. I saw flexibility during that time when I first read the statement.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We are very grateful to you for the attempt to bring a consensus within this Council. In our view, we are going away from the decision which was already taken at the December Session of the Council.

This decision has not been implemented but we would be prepared to agree with your proposal. However, we would like to hear confirmation from the Management of the Organization that references to the World Humanitarian Summit will not be in the document, which will be adopted by the Council. In this circumstance we will be prepared to agree that this conclusion be adopted as read out.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

Yes, we would issue a *corrigendum* to that document.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

I would ask for a minute. We need to consult on this matter.

CHAIRPERSON

You have a minute while we listen to Iceland.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I have just a simple question. If that is the way forward that one member can just be satisfied if a Secretariat takes an action, but if that action is against what other parts of this body would not be happy with, I mean I cannot see how this will solve the problem, honestly. We might need legal advice on this. How can this satisfy the other half that the Secretariat makes a promise towards one Member to delete the text?

Mr Shengyao TANG (China) (Original language Chinese)

In relation to point (e) of your summary, we listened to this with great interest. We have noted that in the Council Session in December last year we said that we should not have reference to the World Humanitarian Summit, and thus we believe that in this Session of the Council we need to have coherence. This is the first point I wanted to raise.

Secondly, we listened to the Chairperson's conclusions. The Chinese Delegation this morning in its statement mentioned many times South-South Cooperation. Our statement was based on the fact that FAO needs to step up South-South Cooperation and we need to make more progress on this issue.

In addition to this, we also have South-South Cooperation in developing countries in Asia and on other continents, and in many countries they have benefited from this. We need to mention this in your conclusions, Chairperson. We need to have a wording here that mentions South-South Cooperation.

CHAIRPERSON

We seem to be opening up this discussion because we had agreed to deal with Item 3. In the morning we were in agreement on all the paragraphs. This is the danger you get into when you postpone something and then you come back to it.

People have changed their positions. When we took a break, I said that we would come and deal with one point which we had not agreed to.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Mi declaración anterior en realidad la hice también en nombre de otros cinco, seis países. Pero si como también mencioné, el resultado del 155.º periodo de sesiones del Consejo, yo me voy a limitar simplemente a leer lo que se decidió en ese entonces, es decir: “Sobre el análisis del Marco estratégico acordó y previno contra la inclusión de esferas que no fueran totalmente coherentes con el mandato”.

Por eso nosotros apoyamos su propuesta, y yo creo que tenemos que hacer un esfuerzo para encontrar consenso en este Consejo.

CHAIRPERSON

I think this consensus is towards what we agreed during our previous Council Meeting where we referred to the caution “against inclusion of areas which are not centrally consistent with the mandate and comparative advantages of FAO, as well as references to the World Humanitarian Summit”.

So this is an extension of what we had already agreed and I hope Members will agree with this formulation which I will read again: “Cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit as a basis for action, noting that the outcomes of this meeting did not flow from an intergovernmental process”.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

As we said, we would have preferred to delete any reference to the World Humanitarian Summit in the document, but since we do not have any consensus here, we have a proposal that I would like Members to consider.

We could keep the reference to the World Humanitarian Summit in paragraph 9 as one of the developments in the areas under the review of FAO, but we delete any other reference, in particular in paragraph 26, which is dedicated mainly to the World Humanitarian Summit, and in paragraph 147, which links the World Humanitarian Summit to Strategic Objective 5.

So we would have a reference in the document in the introduction as one of the developments but we would not have any other reference. This is a proposal from Egypt. I do not know if other Members from both sides would accept it or not.

CHAIRPERSON

Egypt, I always like your proposals. Let us go back to what we already agreed. I request you to agree to my proposal because it relates to what was already agreed in the Council, from you Members. We have had a few changed seats but you are the same Members so we should not be biting our own tails.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

We appreciate your best effort to reach a consensus and I think we are almost there. We are there totally with your proposal because it is agreed language. And if there is any agreed language, we compare to that.

I have in front of me the Report of the 155th Session of Council which contains what you said, Mr Chairperson. It is not common – and we know how many years we have spent here – to see in the Council that we enter into the negotiation of a document of the Secretariat. This is very new to me and I really beg the Members of the Council to consider that it could be a precedent of the proceedings of the Council to have in front of us a document and start negotiating again on the terms of that document.

So we agree with you totally with that final proposal and we plead with our Members of the Council to follow the same so that we can progress.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

First of all I would like to thank the Delegate from Egypt for the attempt that was made to find a solution to this issue. I note that this was a constructive proposal, but nonetheless unfortunately the paragraph that we are speaking of here, World Humanitarian Summit, was mentioned in a different document and in this development of events. These are what the Strategic Framework are based on.

Now I have listened carefully to what the Representative from Cameroon has said and we would not like to take over the role of redacting the Secretariat of the Session of the Council.

But the problem, I believe, lies in the fact that we do have an agreed decision from December 2016, which was not fully implemented. Why not? We are very interested in the answer to this question.

We would have been in agreement with returning the paragraph as it had been proposed to you because your text was based on what we already accepted if we did not have a precedent of a case regarding a decision having been taken and then not being implemented, and I fear that in the next Session of the Council, we will have a document in which we will show a decision taken but once again not implemented over two sessions.

Therefore we want a clear, unambiguous statement that will exclude differences in interpretation. From my humble point of view, this would be very useful also when adopting this document in the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

After listening carefully, there is an agreement to my formulation and there is a question about why there was a decision which has not been implemented. But the way I see it now, it has not been implemented. We still repeat what we said the last time and this is my formulation which I have here for which I think you will agree to.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Reading well the decision of the Council, I think that I would be cautious in interpreting your proposal as infringing the decision of the Council because the Council cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit, but did not request deletion of the references and there is a distinction between the two. So I think your proposal is fully in line with the decision and actually it is reaffirming it.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

We would be very reluctant to reissue the document but we would agree to remove the references to World Humanitarian Summit.

CHAIRPERSON

Listening to what we heard from the Deputy Director-General (Programmes) and the discussion which has gone on and my plea for consensus; now let us agree to this formulation. Otherwise I will postpone the Agenda Item, which is not good, and this has never happened since I have presided over nine Council sessions. We have always worked by consensus and we have done well. I think this spirit will prevail in this tenth Session of Council during my tenure.

I will read this point for the last time and, if there is no agreement, then I will postpone the decision and we will go to another item. This is not how we have been working in the past. We have been working well, striking a consensus and being flexible.

Today you have got your issue. Tomorrow someone will have another issue. So it is a matter of give and take, not take and give. I am not forcing you to a consensus. It has to come from you.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

In our last Council Meeting, we had a difficult matter on the table that we decided not to give up in the Plenary Session in a setting like this and you took a wise decision. You convened a Friends of the Chair meeting to discuss the matter. So you just delayed the final conclusion of the item and I think that is the spirit that we would like to work in, that we will, in the end, find a consensus.

That was the method we used at that time and it worked well. Members came to a conclusion of how to finalize that item and that could also be done now instead of pushing Members in this setting to something that we are not all happy about.

CHAIRPERSON

I am not pushing anybody. It is upon you, the Members, to decide. That is what I said. It is in your hands, if you want to convene a Friends of the Chair only for this small point, it is upon you. Do Members want a Friends of the Chair for this paragraph?

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We have heard the explanations from Mr Gustafson on this issue in relation to the explanations in the minutes of this meeting. We would be in agreement with the wording you proposed and we also believe that our request, taking into account Mr Gustafson's comments, will be implemented.

CHAIRPERSON

We have a consensus now. May I say that we have concluded on Item 3 with point (e) reading: "cautioned against references to the World Humanitarian Summit as a basis for action, noting that the outcomes of this meeting did not flow from an intergovernmental process"?

Item 4 Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19

Point 4 Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 et Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019

Tema 4 Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2018-19 (C 2017/3; Information Notes 1, 2 and 3)

CHAIRPERSON

We proceed now with item 4, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19*. Please ensure that you have document C 2017/3 before you, as well as Information Notes 1, 2 and 3.

I now give the floor to Mr Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to present the report. Mr Haight, you have the floor.

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

This morning the Director-General introduced his proposal for the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. It is a realistic yet ambitious proposal aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on achievements over the past five years to make the Organization more focused, effective and efficient.

I will briefly highlight the main features of the proposal and the additional information the Secretariat has provided in response to the requests of the Programme and Finance Committees last month.

The Medium Term Plan sets out what FAO aims to achieve with Members over the next four years, the measurable impact and results of our work in terms of objectives, outcomes and outputs. 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.

The most important feature of this Medium Term Plan is the alignment of our expected results with the Sustainable Development Goals. As highlighted by the Director-General this morning, our *Strategic Objectives* will be measured exclusively by SDG indicators. Overall FAO's work will contribute to 40 of the 169 SDG targets across 15 of the 17 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.

At the level of Outcomes contributing to the Strategic Objectives, 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.

At the level of the Outputs that FAO delivers, they follow 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.

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 (USD 1 billion 5.6 million) with no change in the overall level of assessed contributions compared with the 2016-17 biennium, by absorbing cost increases and re-investing savings in priority areas of work.

Second, it identifies areas of priority, de-emphasis and savings; reallocates resources in the form of technical capacity to address the identified priorities; and highlights opportunities for voluntary contributions to meet further demand, on which we have provided additional information.

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.

And fourth, the improved programme management arrangements will be used to accelerate delivery of results at country level, particularly in helping countries achieve the SDGs.

Mr Chairperson, distinguished delegates, I will turn briefly to the additional information provided by the Secretariat.

Information Note 1 elaborates on the priorities and resource reallocations for technical capacity, including opportunities for voluntary contributions. It covers the internal consultative process used by Management to gather, rank and decide the ten areas of priority and 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.

Information Note 1 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 encouraged by the Director-General this morning, these needs provide opportunities for Members to provide additional voluntary contributions to increase FAO's capacity and reach.

Information Note 1 also elaborates on the priorities for ring-fenced resource commitments, which are FAO's extensive funding commitments for various international conventions, treaty bodies, intergovernmental arrangements and United Nations cost-sharing mechanisms. These commitments are maintained at their current resource levels in the flat nominal budget.

Information Note 2 elaborates on the areas of programmatic de-emphasis set out in the PWB document, including the extent to which the areas identified result from reduced demand and therefore can be reoriented or discontinued; or areas that can be streamlined in cases of overlap or duplication of work within the Organization; or areas that can be carried out through use of strategic partnerships. Thus for most cases that are identified it is not a matter of stopping work but rather using more efficient and effective arrangements to carry out that work.

In his speech this morning, the Director-General reiterated his commitment to finding savings and promoting efficiency. The PWB 2018-19 reallocates the priority areas of work the USD 23.7 million in savings found in staff costs, administrative and other efficiencies, and areas of de-emphasis. This is 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 streamlining the conferences services provided by the Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division. As requested by the Finance Committee, Information Note no. 3 elaborates on this proposal. First, it clarifies that of the 36 posts removed from this division, 24 are non-language posts relating to printing and distribution of documents, and for services relating to correspondence, meetings and protocol. Then, it goes into detail on the measures for streamlining of language services in the context of the FAO business model for language services. The measures aim to safeguard parity of language and multilingualism, and to ensure high-quality services in translation, interpretation and terminology. The measures build on years of

experience with continuous attention to quality improvement and innovation in a fast changing technological environment.

The proposed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, which are submitted for your consideration and recommendation to the Conference, including on the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million, aim to focus our work on main priorities making the best use of available resources.

CHAIRPERSON

As you will recall, Council had agreed to my suggestion that the inputs from the Programme and Finance Committees and their Joint Meeting on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 be considered under this item.

Therefore, I now pass the floor to Ambassador Tomasi, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to report on the Programme Committee's discussions on this issue.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Les conclusions du Comité du Programme sur le Plan à moyen terme et le Programme de travail et budget sont présentées dans le document CL 156/3, au paragraphe 4 dudit document. Je voudrais ici dans un premier temps vous présenter les principales conclusions et recommandations du Comité au Conseil et dans un second temps apporter quelques éléments d'explication.

Les conclusions du Comité - d'abord, le Comité a exprimé son plein accord avec, bien sûr, les cinq objectifs stratégiques et l'objectif 6 sur les priorités transversales. Il a exprimé une appréciation générale positive sur les produits et résultats identifiés, en notant toutefois que les indicateurs et cibles relatifs aux produits seront finalisés lors de sa prochaine session en novembre prochain, sur la base du document présentant les ajustements au Programme de travail et budget, suite aux observations de ce Conseil et de la prochaine Conférence en juillet 2017. Il a souligné pendant ses débats un certain nombre d'observations pour affiner ces indicateurs et cibles, comme la nécessité de tirer les leçons de l'expérience de la mise en œuvre du Programme de travail et budget 2016-2017.

Le Comité a aussi exprimé son accord avec les propositions présentées au paragraphe 52 du document C 2017/3 concernant les domaines prioritaires et l'affectation de 19,7 millions de dollars de ressources additionnelles du budget ordinaire à ces domaines prioritaires. Il a aussi exprimé son accord sur la liste des économies et des domaines mis en retrait, présentée aux paragraphes 59 à 63, compte tenu des explications apportées par les différents départements concernés, en demandant au Secrétariat de communiquer ces explications au Conseil par une note d'information qui a été publiée en amont de cette session du Conseil. Il a enfin exprimé son accord avec les propositions d'allocation de ressources par chapitre budgétaire, présentées aux paragraphes 70 à 77 du document C 2017/3, y compris l'augmentation de la part des ressources affectées au Programme de coopération technique pour le porter à 14 pour cent du total des crédits ouverts.

Cependant, compte tenu des préoccupations exprimées par plusieurs membres du Comité sur les libellés des paragraphes 52 b) et 52 g), il a proposé de nouvelles formulations, à insérer par un rectificatif (*corrigendum*) dans le document de la Conférence, si vous les approuvez. Celles-ci visaient pour le paragraphe 52 b), à insérer une référence à la biodiversité et aux biotechnologies afin de rester cohérent avec les conclusions de la dernière réunion du Comité de l'agriculture.

S'agissant du paragraphe 52 g), qui avait suscité des incompréhensions, compte tenu de la mention faite des opérations de maintien de la paix, dans la rédaction initiale, il a proposé une nouvelle formulation visant à allouer, je cite: «1,2 millions de dollars pour soutenir les moyens d'existence des populations rurales liés à la sécurité alimentaire dans les zones frappées par des conflits, l'analyse des conflits et les partenariats». Cette nouvelle formulation nous a semblé en effet plus conforme au mandat de la FAO, permettant ainsi de lever les ambiguïtés de la formulation initiale.

Donc, encore une fois, si vous êtes d'accord avec ces propositions de changement des paragraphes 52 b) et 52 g), ils seront insérés dans le document pour la Conférence.

Enfin, le Comité a encouragé le Secrétariat à poursuivre ses efforts pour développer des partenariats permettant de valoriser ses avantages comparatifs, en particulier dans le domaine de la coopération sud-sud et de la coopération triangulaire.

Maintenant voici quelques commentaires et explications sur ces recommandations.

Certes, chaque délégation aura à cœur de voir tel ou tel domaine d'activités mieux reconnu et figurer au rang de priorité. C'est bien normal. Mais notre rôle ici, en tant qu'instance de gouvernance de la FAO, est de définir de claires priorités programmatiques de l'Organisation et de proposer la meilleure allocation de ressources possible, compte tenu des contraintes budgétaires de l'Organisation. Il s'agit donc de faire des choix et d'établir par consensus ces priorités. Tout n'est pas possible, et si nous voulons que notre Organisation soit en mesure d'obtenir des résultats, de faire la différence sur le terrain, nous devons faire ces choix. Pour paraphraser un célèbre chef de gouvernement, je rappellerais que gouverner, c'est choisir, et choisir, c'est renoncer. Il n'y a rien de pire pour le Secrétariat d'une organisation internationale que d'avoir un conseil ou un comité qui additionne les priorités sans capacité à hiérarchiser celles-ci et à établir des choix.

Dans ce contexte, et compte tenu du fait que le Comité du Programme, tout comme le Comité financier, recommande au Conseil d'approuver un budget inchangé en valeur nominale, les domaines présentés au paragraphe 52 nous ont semblé pertinents, reflétant pleinement les priorités mises en lumière par ce Conseil depuis deux ans: je pense en particulier au changement climatique, à l'appui à la production agricole durable, à l'appui aux systèmes alimentaires, notamment la nutrition et la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, à la production de statistiques, à la lutte contre la résistance aux antimicrobiens, au soutien à l'approche «one health» («Un monde, une santé»), à la sécurité alimentaire dans les zones affectées par les conflits où se concentrent, nous le savons bien les crises alimentaires les plus graves, à la lutte contre la pauvreté, y compris l'agriculture familiale qui a été ajoutée à la demande du Comité, ou à la foresterie. Il suffit de relire les rapports du Conseil de ces dernières années pour vérifier que toutes ces priorités ont été mises en avant par le Conseil, par vos déclarations passées.

J'attire enfin votre attention sur le fait que nous parlons d'une réallocation de ressources d'un montant modeste d'une vingtaine de millions de dollars. Il est donc d'autant plus important de ne pas disperser ces ressources additionnelles sur un trop grand nombre de domaines si nous voulons avoir un impact. S'agissant des domaines mis en retrait, je soulignerais que le Comité a posé beaucoup de questions sur les domaines identifiés: nous avons *in fine* considéré que les explications données étaient satisfaisantes, car pour l'essentiel il ne s'agit pas en effet d'abandonner ces domaines, mais d'intervenir autrement, par des actions plus efficaces et plus ciblées, ou en recentrant l'action de la FAO sur des interventions pour lesquelles elle bénéficie d'avantages comparatifs avérés, en laissant au besoin à d'autres partenaires le soin de conduire d'autres actions auparavant prises en charge par la FAO.

Il y a deux ans, ce Conseil avait franchi une étape importante en permettant pour la première fois de trouver un consensus sur le plafond des crédits ouverts établis à 1005 millions de dollars pour le budget ordinaire. Cette fois, il nous semble que nous pouvons franchir une nouvelle étape en approuvant non seulement le plafond de crédits ouverts au titre du budget ordinaire, mais aussi les priorités programmatiques des deux prochaines années et l'allocation de ressources qui permettra la mise en œuvre de ces priorités. Un tel consensus, dès cette session du Conseil, serait une avancée certaine en matière de gouvernance efficace.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Finance Committee and of the Joint Meeting held on 27 March 2017, to report on the discussions on this item during the 166th Session of the Finance Committee and during the Joint Meeting.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to present the outcome of the discussions of the 166th Session of the Finance Committee, and of its Joint Meeting with the 121st Session of the Programme Committee on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 presented in document C 2017/3.

The Joint Meeting considered the budget level, whereas the Finance Committee focused on a technical review of the proposal within its mandate.

Both the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting appreciated the presentation of a flat nominal level budget with no change in the net budgetary appropriation compared with 2016-17.

The Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting also welcomed the increase in the TCP appropriation to bring it to 14 percent of the net appropriation in line with Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session in 2015.

In its technical review of the proposals, the Finance Committee reviewed in detail the anticipated cost increases, noting that the Organization would absorb expected inflation in the cost of goods and services through efficiency measures relating to the costs of consultants, travel and procurement.

The Finance Committee took note of the proposals to improve the financial health of the Organization, including for funding of the After-Service Medical Care past service liability and to increase the level of the Working Capital Fund.

The Finance Committee appreciated the approach to the identification of proposed areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings, and welcomed the principle of reallocation of the USD 23.7 million to increase technical capacity in higher priority areas and to improve programme delivery. The Joint Meeting also appreciated the furnishing of priorities and areas of de-emphasis, in line with the Strategic Objectives.

To facilitate the consideration of the proposals by the Council, the Finance Committee requested the Secretariat to provide further information on the priorities as well as ring-fenced commitments, the areas of de-emphasis, the proposed outsourcing of conference services and expected savings, as well as measures to ensure quality of language services and products. I am pleased to note that the Secretariat has done so by publication of Information Notes 1, 2, and 3.

The Joint Meeting supported continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium Term Plan and underlying Programme of Work, with alignment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Joint Meeting encouraged Members to provide voluntary contributions to facilitate achievement of Strategic Objectives and implementation of the integrated Programme of Work under the results framework.

Finally, the Joint Meeting supported the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million at a budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 = USD 1.22, and recommended endorsement by the Council.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación argentina, en calidad de Vicepresidencia del GRULAC, solicita la palabra para la Delegación de El Salvador la cual tiene la Presidencia del GRULAC.

Sra. María Abelina TORRES DE MEILLIEZ (El Salvador)

Realizamos esta intervención en nombre del GRULAC con las siguientes observaciones.

Reafirmamos nuestro apoyo a las propuestas de Plan a plazo medio y de Programa de trabajo y Presupuesto, ambos para el período 2018-2021, dado que los dos documentos corresponden plenamente con el mandato de la FAO, así como con la Agenda 2030, en particular con los ODS 1 y 2.

Estamos de acuerdo con los cinco Objetivos Estratégicos propuestos, así como con la adición del objetivo seis, sobre la calidad técnica, estadísticas y temas transversales.

Para los países del GRULAC es de particular importancia el apoyo de la FAO para fortalecer las dimensiones económica, social y ambiental del desarrollo sostenible, para alcanzar la resiliencia a los desastres y la respuesta en situaciones de emergencia.

En su calidad de Agencia de las Naciones Unidas, es importante que la FAO continúe guiando sus labores a partir de las Directrices Estratégicas que le fijan sus Estados Miembros, a través de sus Órganos Rectores o en foros jerárquicamente superiores. Por eso solicitamos que las referencias a la

Cumbre Humanitaria Mundial en el documento se correspondan con lo acordado en la resolución 9/2016 del ECOSOC, en su párrafo 41.

En este sentido, solicitamos que no se atribuya status intergubernamental a los compromisos contraídos por el Secretariado de la FAO, u otras agencias de las Naciones Unidas.

Asimismo, tomamos nota de las iniciativas contenidas en el documento y señalamos a la FAO que estas deben ser atendidas a solicitud de cada Estado Miembro.

Por otra parte, en la construcción de indicadores deben tenerse presentes los resultados del 48.º período de sesiones de la Comisión de Estadísticas de las Naciones Unidas, donde se recomendó que para la elaboración de informes globales los organismos internacionales tomen como base los datos estadísticos oficiales que brindan los sistemas nacionales creados a ese fin.

Recordamos que la eventual definición de nuevos indicadores para medir los progresos de los países en el cumplimiento de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible (ODS) debe darse exclusivamente bajo el proceso de las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York creado con este propósito. En tal sentido, la definición de indicadores para medir el progreso de la FAO, como custodio de una variedad de metas, no debe representar una demanda de información adicional para sus miembros. Los países en desarrollo no contamos, en todos los casos, con las capacidades financieras y técnicas necesarias para atender esas demandas de información, en los exigidos niveles de desagregación.

Solicitamos que el documento incluya áreas de acción para fortalecer la cooperación internacional, en particular Norte-Sur, Sur-Sur y triangular.

Señalamos que las acciones de la FAO deben encaminarse a la eliminación de la pobreza y no a su reducción, como refiere este documento. En la Agenda de Desarrollo 2030, se realizaron compromisos para su eliminación.

Agradeceremos que como parte de las labores de la Oficina de Estadísticas para el bienio 2018-19 se contemple la elaboración de las metodologías para los indicadores de categoría III, y se mantenga la permanente participación y consulta con los Estados Miembros.

A la luz del creciente interés de la biodiversidad en el ámbito de la FAO, en los cambios estructurales en la administración, como el nuevo departamento creado en diciembre pasado que incluye el tema de la biodiversidad, así como en la plataforma lanzada por la FAO para que los Ministerios de Agricultura y de Medio Ambiente entablen un diálogo intersectorial más coherente y coordinado, creemos que este tema sigue sin reflejarse adecuadamente en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP) ni en los nuevos puestos técnicos, donde esperábamos al menos un puesto para esta área. Creemos que esta cuestión debe ser clarificada.

Sr. Edison Paul VALLEJO MADRID (Ecuador)

La Delegación del Ecuador cede la palabra al Embajador de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, quien hará una intervención a nombre del Grupo de 77 más China.

Sr. Elias ELSORI (Observador de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

En nombre del Grupo de 77 más China, quisiera expresar nuestro agradecimiento al Director General por el Plan a plazo medio (PPM) para 2018-2021 y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP) para 2018-2019. También damos las gracias al Director General por haber reflejado adecuadamente en el documento algunas líneas guías proporcionadas por los Estados Miembros a través de las Conferencias, Consejos de la FAO y Órganos Rectores.

Al final del Plan a plazo medio en el 2021, los Estados Miembros estarán casi en el 40% del camino para implementar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). La FAO se encarga de la aplicación de 40 objetivos, 169 metas y 53 indicadores.

Esta es una enorme responsabilidad para los Estados Miembros, así como para la FAO, que desempeña un papel fundamental en el apoyo a los esfuerzos nacionales en la aplicación de los ODS.

Los países que no podrán aprovechar esta ventana de oportunidad para el 2021, será muy poco probable que los alcancen para el 2030.

El G-77 más China considera que la Organización ha hecho un buen trabajo al mantener un presupuesto nominal cero para el PTP 2018-2019 y recalcamos que cualquier ahorro en los gastos de personal no debería socavar la capacidad técnica de la sede y de las oficinas descentralizadas, especialmente para aquellas oficinas regionales o de país que no dispongan actualmente de capacidades técnicas adecuadas. También insistimos en que el mantenimiento de un presupuesto nominal cero es un procedimiento excepcional a la luz de la actual situación económica mundial y no debe utilizarse como precedente en el futuro.

Acogemos con gran satisfacción la restauración del Programa de cooperación técnica (PCT) a un 14% del presupuesto de la FAO, de conformidad con las resoluciones 9/89 y 6/2015 y esperamos que en el próximo bienio se incremente aún más el PCT para satisfacer las crecientes necesidades de los países en desarrollo.

Apreciamos que el Plan a Plazo Medio busque lograr una mayor coherencia entre los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO y la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. Esperamos que las áreas de prioridad para los países en desarrollo como la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición, el cambio climático, igualdad de género, y la agricultura sostenible reciban la merecida atención en el programa de trabajo tanto en la sede central como en las oficinas descentralizadas.

Así como reconocemos la atención que se presta a la consolidación de la paz, insistimos en que el énfasis propuesto en la relación entre la consolidación de la paz y la seguridad alimentaria se desarrolle y aplique con la debida atención para no ir más allá del mandato y el alcance de la labor de la FAO.

Destacamos la importancia de las iniciativas regionales a través de los 10 millones de dólares del fondo multidisciplinario. Además, apoyamos la asignación de 1,1 millones de dólares para la reducción de la pobreza, en particular para la creación de capacidad en el desarrollo rural, incluyendo los pequeños agricultores y la agricultura familiar.

Además de las áreas prioritarias arriba mencionadas, que están recibiendo mayor atención de la FAO, el G-77 más China pide una mayor atención a los temas de biodiversidad, tierra, agua y 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. Este Objetivo debería reflejarse adecuadamente en el documento, particularmente en el punto 4, donde el ODS 7 debería estar entre las metas y los indicadores de los otros ODS incluidos en los resultados de los Objetivos Estratégicos 2018-21.

El suelo también está sub-representado en el Plan a Plazo Medio así como en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto, considerando su importancia para la agricultura, la seguridad alimentaria y la provisión de servicios para el ecosistema. Sin embargo, su dependencia total de las contribuciones voluntarias no refleja la centralidad del tema y su creciente importancia para los principales objetivos de la FAO.

En lo que respecta a las áreas a las cuales se propone restar importancia, el G-77 más China desearía obtener más información sobre las mismas y desearía saber si pudiese afectar el trabajo llevado a cabo en actividades de conservación de suelos y agua, silvicultura y educación nutricional que es un área de gran importancia en el contexto del Decenio de Acción sobre la Nutrición.

En cuanto al empoderamiento de las mujeres en el campo, el G-77 más China recuerda que la mayor parte de la mano de obra agrícola de 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. Esto puede y debe ser superado por nuestros países y la FAO puede aportar una contribución.

El G-77 más China solicita a la Secretaría que continúe con sus esfuerzos para fortalecer las actividades de creación de capacidad, incluso mediante la Cooperación Sur-Sur (CSS) y Cooperación Triangular. Sin embargo, la función y la naturaleza del CSS se han debilitado al transferir el CSS al OPC. El G-77 más China espera que la FAO pueda dar prioridad a la CSS y a la Cooperación Triangular a fin de promover la creación de capacidad en los países en desarrollo, resolver problemas y mejorar los medios de subsistencia.

El G-77 más China notó que la FAO racionalizó los servicios lingüísticos de la CPA mediante la externalización de trabajos de traducción. Estos ajustes reducen los costos y sacan provecho de la rápida evolución de la tecnología y la capacidad de los servicios lingüísticos en todo el mundo. El G-77 más China hace hincapié en que esto debería garantizar que la FAO siga prestando sus servicios de manera eficiente y eficaz.

El G-77 más China considera que los Sistemas Importantes del Patrimonio Agrícola Mundial (SIPAM) son activos valiosos de la civilización agrícola y el éxito de la biodiversidad y considera que el trabajo del SIPAM daría un nuevo impulso a los países en desarrollo para alcanzar la Agenda 2030. Tenemos la convicción de que los SIPAM deberían reflejarse plenamente en el PPM y en el PTP de la FAO.

Por último, en consonancia con la recomendación de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité de Finanzas y el Comité del Programa, invitamos a los Miembros a que aporten contribuciones voluntarias para facilitar el logro de los Objetivos Estratégicos y la aplicación del Programa de Trabajo integrado, teniendo en cuenta que en la nueva escala de las Naciones Unidas, las contribuciones prorrateadas harán que los países en desarrollo contribuyan más al presupuesto ordinario a partir de este año.

En conclusión, esperamos que los diputados muestren el mismo espíritu constructivo que tuvimos el año pasado en las discusiones sobre asuntos financieros para poder llegar a un consenso sobre el presupuesto durante el Consejo y antes de la Conferencia en julio.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Like others, Australia welcomes a flat nominal budget. We note that our assessment, unlike many other OECD countries, will be increasing in the next biennium. This increase within a challenging financial environment compels us to continue to urge FAO to identify ways to work more effectively and efficiently to make the most of the resources it has.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work that FAO has already done to identify savings and efficiencies across a range of areas and we strongly encourage this to continue.

Another way to ensure FAO is operating as efficiently and effectively as possible is to ensure that it places great emphasis on those areas where it has a comparative advantage. These areas of comparative advantage are in FAO's normative and standard-setting work, for example planned health through the IPPC, food safety, quality work through CODEX, and work in planned and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

These are just some of the examples. I will not list them all.

We welcome FAO's identification of areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and the information notes that were provided to clarify the rationale for these choices. But we must take this opportunity to express our disappointment that the proposed 2018-19 PWB did not direct any of these additional funds from the identified savings to the normative work such as Codex.

We appreciate that the funding in these areas is ring fenced but it is widely acknowledged that the ring-fenced funding is not enough.

What is at stake because of underfunding the Codex work for the second biennium in a row is for FAO to lose its role and reputation at the forefront of solid science-based standard-setting work in food safety and quality.

Australia understands that FAO is operating in a difficult international environment with many international organizations competing for resources. We understand the pressure to continually improve how FAO works can help countries with the many complex issues that we are all facing.

But no one international organization can do it all. Each organization should focus on its comparative advantages and continue to strengthen work in these areas.

We are, however, very pleased to see FAO's continued work in the Pacific and we strongly support it; in particular, FAO's work in relation to small island developing states, preparedness, and adaptation to climate change effects and natural disasters, blue growth, and food security and nutrition.

We stress the need to address the data gaps that exist in the Pacific region. These gaps make it difficult for many countries to make evidence-based decisions on how to respond to the challenges that they are facing.

We are very pleased with the recent technical consultations on developing catch documentation schemes that have concluded and where consensus was reached. These guidelines are very important to our region and we look forward to the Conference's consideration of them later this year.

On a similar note, we are pleased that work is continuing on implementation of the very important Port State Measures Agreement. Again, this is of keen interest to our region and we are pleased to see progress.

To our mind, these areas of work also represent FAO using its expertise and its comparative advantage to help Members with very challenging issues.

Australia continues to support the work of FAO as the preeminent international organization responsible for agricultural policy, norms, and standard setting and ending hunger.

Mr Yubo XU (China)

China is delivering this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We would like to thank the FAO Secretariat for preparing this document and for the process of identification of prioritized areas for the next biennium.

At the outset, we concur with the support expressed at the recent Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees to the proposed budget level of USD 1,005.6 million and recommend its endorsement by the Council. We appreciate the efforts made to reallocate budget from areas of de-emphasis to areas of programmatic priorities, and I believe this will strengthen FAO's comparative advantage as a specialized UN agency contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

We welcome the increase in the TCP appropriation to 14 percent of the FAO budget and look forward to its full implementation. We note that two new initiatives, namely climate change and One Health, will be formulated in the Asia and Pacific Region while both the extrabudgetary and the net appropriation of the country offices in Asia and the Pacific Region will be reduced.

We would like to hear from the Secretariat the clarification given to the cutting down of net appropriations in the Asia and Pacific Regional Office.

Mr Chairperson, the Asia Regional Group calls for increased attention to the comprehensive solution to hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition through South-South Cooperation, Triangular Cooperation, and other mechanisms.

As one of the main beneficiaries of South-South Cooperation, the Asia Regional Group notes that transferring South-South Cooperation to the Partnership, Advocacy and the Capacity Development Division will actually downgrade its nature and function. It is still a challenge for most of the developing countries in Asia to achieve SDG 2.

According to the recently released 2016 Asia and the Pacific Overview of Food Insecurity, only two countries would achieve the SDG hunger target by 2030 considering their performance over the last five years.

Therefore we would like to urge FAO to facilitate and support countries in the following areas.

We recognize the important roles of smallholders, family farmers, and fisherfolk in contributing to food security and nutrition and call for efforts to enhance the capacity to more effectively link with modern value chains.

We encourage you to mainstream gender equality and uplift the quality of life in rural areas to attract youth in agricultural activities. We stress 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 toward food security and nutrition in the region.

We believe that the Globally Important Agriculture Heritage Systems (GIAHS) are good practices of agroecology in human history with the functioning of ecosystem protection, poverty alleviation, smallholders' livelihoods improvement, cultural inheritance, natural genetic resource storage and environment enhance for women and youth, etc. They should be well preserved and supported in the world.

The Asia Regional Group recognizes the changes made by the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee to the 2018-21 MTP and 2018-19 PWB. We would like to once again stress the importance to reflect our regional concerns in this document.

With the comments above, the Asia Regional Group endorses the findings and recommendations of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

Egypt is delivering this statement on behalf of the Near East Regional Group on Agenda Item 4 on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, and would like first and foremost to concur fully with the statement of His Excellency the Ambassador of Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China.

The Near East appreciates Management's efforts in maintaining a nominal flat budget for the PWB 2018-19. However, we recognize then this will mean less resources for the Organization's Programme of Work.

While we understand that this is exceptional and may come as a result of the difficult financial constraints facing Member States, we highlight that this should not be used as a precedent in the future.

In the meantime, we caution against any negative consequences on the decentralized offices, in particular the Regional Offices that lack the adequate technical capacities. The Group highly appreciates that the Director-General has restored the TCP level to 14 percent. TCP is of increasing importance to developing countries and to implementing the SDGs in line with the Conference Resolutions 9/19, 89, and 6/2015.

We expect that in the next biennium this TCP will be increased further to match the growing needs of developing countries. We further welcome the approach of identifying areas of priority and areas of de-emphasis. We note many of these areas of priority are among the priorities that take into consideration the requirements of developing countries and we see that a lot of such priorities such as climate change, nutrition and others are among our priorities. We would like to have some clarifications concerning the proposed de-emphasis under the Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department as well as in the field of nutrition education, especially as you know the Water Scarcity Initiative is of great importance to the Near East Region and nutrition is getting more attention at both the regional and international levels in the context of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

We also note the importance of the three regional initiatives concerning the Near East region, in particular the Water Scarcity Initiative which is of particular interest to the region, especially since many countries of the region are still in need in the areas of water use efficiency, drought management, strategic planning of water resources, and sustainable land management, in addition to the two other initiatives pertaining to the small-scale family farming and nutrition resilience.

In light of recent changes, we propose to allocate more financial resources to combat the red palm weevil which is becoming a major threat to the agricultural systems in the region as seen in the last meeting held by FAO lately.

In line with the recommendation of the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees, we expect that donor countries will be able to provide voluntary contributions to facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Objectives of FAO, taking into consideration that the new scale of contributions will make developing countries contribute more to the regular budget from this year on.

Mr Chair, we would like to concur with the conclusions. However, we would like to express our reservations as to mentioning the World Humanitarian Summit for the same reasons mentioned before.

Mr Gustaf Daud SIRAIT (Indonesia)

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by China on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We would like to thank FAO for preparing the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. We have studied these documents and whilst we can understand the reasons behind the rationalization and streamlining of the Programme of Work and Budget, we are of the opinion that the streamlining and rationalization should not, in any way, negatively affect implementation of programmes or undermine the quality of work of FAO.

Indonesia also highlights the increased budget allocation for technical cooperation programmes from USD 138.13 million to USD 140.79 million. Technical cooperation programmes are important elements of the Organization's work. As such, strengthening the mechanism of technical cooperation would ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes. In this regard, we see the merit in improving the TCP mechanism whereby the beneficiary countries have greater discretion in the implementation and oversight of the cooperation programmes. It is the view of my delegation that FAO and member countries as equal partners should work hand in hand in the pursuit of shared objectives.

Lastly, my delegation would like to express our appreciation and support for the changes in the composition of human resources in the PWB 2018-19. We firmly believe the new composition would better serve the Organization in providing technical support for member countries to achieve "a world free from hunger and malnutrition".

Whilst touching on the issue of human resources, please allow me, Mr Chairperson, to also share our view on the issue of employee composition in FAO Representative offices. We are of the firm belief that FAO Representative offices would greatly benefit in terms of cost-efficiency and work-effectiveness, as well as local engagements. My delegation, therefore, would like to encourage the Organization to put in place a policy whereby FAO Representative offices prioritize the recruitment of locals.

Mr Noel PADRE (Philippines)

The Philippines aligns itself with the statements by the G77 and China and the Asia Regional Group, and we would like to highlight a few points.

We fully recognize the thrust of the proposed MTP and PWB, which seeks to synchronize the FAO Strategic Objectives and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

While commending efforts to maintain the same level of flat nominal budget, we join other delegations in observing that this is in fact a reduced budget in real terms. It would be, therefore, critical to carefully prioritize and work on the areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, to ensure appropriate attention and delivery of intended outcomes, especially for developing countries. With the proposed scale of contributions, in which the share of a number of developing countries will increase, better balance in geographic representation becomes imperative.

We welcome the increase in the TCP fund to its minimum share of 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation.

We appreciate the allocation of resources for work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and One Health, as well as greater attention to cross-cutting issues under Strategic Objective 6, including climate change, nutrition, statistics and gender equality.

We support the focus on poverty reduction, particularly capacity building in rural development, including smallholders and family farming. We are encouraged that family farming is among the regional initiatives in certain regions. We trust that an inclusive and participatory process will continue to be applied in the development, implementation and review of regional initiatives.

Finally, we wish to stress the importance of FAO's continuing support to countries in addressing the issue of water scarcity and conservation, including through works on watershed management, particularly in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and strengthening of resilience.

With these comments, the Philippines endorses the review and recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees on the proposed MTP 2018-21 and PWB 2018-19.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

First Afghanistan wishes to thank Mr Boyd Haight for introducing the MTP (Medium Term Plan) and the Programme of Work and Budget, as well as the statement made by the Chairpersons of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee. In the last Council Session, Afghanistan expressed its views on the outline MTP 2018-21. It is therefore refraining from repeating those comments except to say that the inclusion of the SDG targets and indicators (paragraphs 34-37, and especially 34) is a useful addition to the document.

Afghanistan limits its intervention to the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. But first, it wishes to thank the Secretariat for producing Information Notes 1, 2 and 3 which clarify many of the points raised by the Joint Meeting and the session of the PC and FC.

A flat net appropriation of USD 1005.6 million for 2018-19 which absorbs a cost increase of USD 10.9 million is in real terms a reduction of 1.1 percent in net appropriation compared with the biennium 2016-17. This is what the Distinguished Representative of the Philippines just mentioned.

The Joint Meeting has endorsed the flat nominal budget of USD 1005.6 million for Council endorsement. Given the changes in the huge scale of contribution, the share of the 35 OECD member countries will be approximately 74.5 percent of this dollar sum which is USD 60 million less than their share in the 2016-17 assessed budget.

By contrast, the share of the 142 developing countries will increase by USD 53.5 million. In view of the changes in the scale of contribution, the adoption of a flat budget in real terms, that is a budget of USD 1016.5 million, will not be a very heavy burden on major contributors, and the Council may wish to consider this option also.

The additional USD 10.9 million could be spent productively in further strengthening the decentralized offices, support for regional initiatives, GIAHS and South-South Cooperation.

Estimated extrabudgetary resources for 2018-19 are shown to be USD 17.4 million less than that of the current biennium (Annex 8, page 125), but with considerable variation among regions.

In real terms, the decline will be more as the rates of inflation in developing countries where extrabudgetary resources are mostly spent is far above the global average.

Chairperson, one may be tempted to label the flat nominal budget as passive or even regressive, but this is not so. The 2018-19 flat nominal budget is in fact a change for the better for the simple reason that the same amount of net appropriation is reshuffled with a view to improving the quality of FAO's technical products and services to Member Nations and other FAO partners.

In his Foreword, the Director-General informs that his budget proposal to the Conference is realistic and ambitious. Afghanistan supports this statement.

Technical products and services are delivered to the outputs of the five Strategic Objectives and Objective 6. From Table 1 on page 22, these six objectives combined receive a net appropriation of USD 573.7 million in 2018-19 which is an increase of 1.3 percent over the previous biennium.

Their combined share in total net appropriation goes up by one percentage point or by USD 7.6 million. Afghanistan considers this as a change for the better.

Another development is the 'beefing up' of Objective 6 which allocated a net appropriation of USD 68.9 million, an increase of 16.3 percent for the current biennium. Afghanistan supports this increase in resources for Objective 6 as it embraces the four cross-cutting issues, climate change, gender empowerment, governance and nutrition.

Another improvement is the recreation of 58 new technical posts in 17 priority areas, 35 at headquarters and 23 in decentralized offices (table 4, page 31).

Afghanistan welcomes the addition of one D and two P posts in the Cairo Regional Office (Annex 9, page 130).

Apart from the internal observation, Afghanistan wishes to associate itself with the statement just delivered by Egypt on behalf of the Near East and the statement delivered by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and China.

However, we wish to highlight the following additional five points:

1. The goal of raising the TCP to 17 percent of net appropriations is still a distant target.
2. From Information Note 2, we are glad to see that out of the 25 areas aimed for de-emphasis involving USD 2.7 million, only five areas are for discontinuation. The rest of the 22 areas involve reorientation, streamlining and strategic partnership. In particular, we are pleased to note that watershed management and soil and water conservation (items C and D of paragraph 63) are for reorientation and not discontinuation.
3. We support the allocation of USD 19.7 million for strengthening technical capacity in ten high-priority areas (paragraph 52, and further elaborated in Annex 1 and Annex of Information Note 1) and notes that these ten areas are in line with the wishes of the Membership as expressed in the meeting of the region's governing bodies and the regional conferences.
4. We are pleased to see the continuation of the existing regional initiatives and with three more added, two for Asia and the Pacific and one for Europe and Central Asia. However, it is difficult to reconcile the two new initiatives in the Asia and the Pacific region when both net appropriation and extrabudgetary resources for Asia and the Pacific receives a cut. This point was just underscored by the Distinguished Representative of China who spoke on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.
5. Afghanistan wishes to see FAO's contribution to the CFS core budget raised by USD 1.3 million to USD 1.5 million. The current evaluation report of the CFS concludes "The Committee's effectiveness and efficiencies are impacted negatively by the unpredictability of its funding and the resources for the Joint CFS Secretariat."

WFP and IFAD could also raise their share to the core budget of the CFS.

Chairperson, with these comments, Afghanistan endorses the MTP 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

As it was in the last biennium, we would be in favour of recommending to the Council a level of the assessed budget for 2018-19 for Conference approval. Afghanistan hopes that this recommendation will be for a flat real budget.

Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairuddin MOHD NOR (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns this statement with the statement of the G77 and China and the Asia Regional Group.

We wish to follow others in thanking the Secretariat for preparing this document and for conducting the informal briefing in March, which has assisted Members to better understand the document.

We also commend FAO's timely effort in aligning the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other important global developments that occurred along the period under review.

Malaysia wishes to highlight the following:

Referring to paragraph 28, we wish to emphasize the need to further collaborate among the three Rome-based agencies to respective comparative advantages. Partnerships must also be built continuously with other development actors and other UN agencies, while averting duplication of work and redundancy.

With regard to paragraph 51, Malaysia appreciates the four principles adopted by FAO in developing the PWB, particularly in identifying areas of programmatic priority and de-emphasis, and reallocating resources according to priority. Looking at the priorities and resource allocation, we noted that climate change adaptation and mitigation receive the highest amount of budget. While this is crucial, we also

believe that other areas such as food systems, statistics and antimicrobial resistance are just as important.

We also note the concern of unmet technical capacity requirements as in paragraph 55. In this regard, we urge the use of partnerships and South-South and Triangular Cooperation to provide an opportunity for the Organization to increase its technical capacity to the developing countries.

We acknowledge the efficiency savings of USD 23.7 million as reflected in paragraph 58. At the same time, the savings or the areas of de-emphasis should not have any adverse effect on the delivery of the programme of work. For example, we may need to consider the importance of nutrition education, particularly for developing countries, as it is still vital due to globalization and urbanization.

Under the sub-topic of regional dimension on page 20, we welcome the priorities to be addressed in the next biennium for Asia and the Pacific in paragraph 66, especially on the two new Regional Initiatives on Climate Change and One Health. Nonetheless, the main challenge of ensuring food security and sustainable farming to improve living standards in rural areas of Asia and the Pacific must still be upheld.

Overall, the exercise of sharpening FAO's focus is very much appreciated. However, Malaysia finds it unclear on how changes would reflect in the overall outcome of each of the FAO Strategic Objectives. We hope this document could assist us in connecting the changes to what is expected of it in a measurable and achievable manner.

On that note, Malaysia endorses the document.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe makes this statement on behalf of the Africa Regional Group and associates itself with the statement that has been delivered by Venezuela on behalf of the G77.

I want to begin by thanking and commending the Director-General for a Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 that everyone who has spoken before me appears to be happy with. If Council approves this by consensus, as we fervently hope will happen, this will be the second time this has happened in the history of FAO; both times on the current Director-General's watch.

There are a number of things in this Programme of Work and Budget that should make Africa smile. First, we are very happy with the PWB's thrust of assisting countries to achieve the SDGs and linking budget appropriations to actual strategic/functional objectives, outcomes and outputs. This will put FAO at the coalface of the fight against hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

Second, we are pleased with the inclusion of the Subregional Office for West Africa on the Organigramme and the Director-General's announcement this morning that he has now begun negotiations with Senegal on a Host Country Agreement. The people of West Africa are finally to realise their long cherished dream of having a FAO office dedicated to their region. We look forward to the finalisation of this issue in the Adjustments to the PWB 2018-19 in December 2017.

Third, we commend the Director-General for increasing the share of the Technical Cooperation Programme to 14 percent of net budgetary appropriation in line with relevant Conference resolutions. We are particularly pleased by the priority given to Africa in the allocation of TCP funds as outlined in Annex 6 of document C 2017/3. Annex 8 of the same document shows that the net appropriation for TCP projects in Africa will increase from the current USD 43.8 million in the Adjusted PWB 2016-17 to USD 44.7 million in the next biennium.

Fourth, we were very concerned about the reduction in the overall net appropriation for the decentralised offices in Africa from USD 103 million in the current PWB to USD 102.8 million in the next biennium as indicated in Annex 8 of document C 2017/3. However, further analysis of the figures showed that there has been a decrease in the overall net appropriation for decentralised offices in all regions except one. This is probably a result of the de-emphasis and reprioritisation the Organization has embarked on due to scarcity of resources.

But we will be happy to hear the Secretariat's explanation on this issue as requested by other delegates.

Finally, Africa is grateful for the strengthening of the Regional Office in Accra with the creation of eight new posts.

With these few remarks, the Africa Regional Group endorses the MTP 2018-21 and PWB 2018-19.

Mme Evelyne TOGBE-OLORY (Bénin)

Le Bénin s'associe bien entendu à la déclaration du Groupe des 77 et la Chine, ainsi qu'à la déclaration faite à l'instant par le Zimbabwe au nom du Groupe Afrique, mais nous souhaitons apporter quelques réflexions complémentaires.

Le Bénin voudrait remercier le Directeur Général de la FAO pour la note d'avant-propos qui présente le document que nous avons devant nous, tout comme c'était le cas pour le Cadre stratégique révisé; le Bénin apprécie ce document très clairement rédigé et félicite la FAO pour avoir relié les objectifs stratégiques aux Objectifs de développement durable (ODD) et particulièrement ici pour avoir même utilisé les indicateurs des ODD comme indicateurs de suivi des objectifs stratégiques de la FAO. Le Bénin a juste quelques observations à présenter ici.

Tout d'abord, à propos du Plan à moyen terme, tout comme pour le Cadre stratégique révisé, en ce qui concerne la parité hommes-femmes, nous voulons rappeler l'importance d'inclure cet élément dans les résultantes de tous les objectifs stratégiques.

Deuxièmement, au paragraphe 41, nous convenons avec la FAO que l'Organisation puisse engager le dialogue dans les pays au-delà des partenaires traditionnels relevant du Ministère de l'agriculture. Cependant, quand la FAO dit, je cite: "l'appui à de vastes politiques et stratégies multisectorielles qui touchent un large éventail de moyens d'existence", nous nous demandons si cet élargissement relève complètement du mandat de la FAO, mais ce n'est qu'une observation.

Je voudrais faire également référence à un commentaire du Comité du Programme relatif au paragraphe 52 b), dont le Président du Comité nous parlait et qui concerne donc le Plan à moyen terme. Ce paragraphe était rédigé comme suit, je lis : "3,1 millions d'USD pour l'appui à la production agricole durable, y compris l'agroécologie, les ressources génétiques et la gouvernance, en particulier au niveau des pays." Tandis que le Comité du Programme recommande de réviser la phrase comme suit, et je lis de nouveau : "3,1 millions d'USD pour l'appui à la production durable, y compris l'agroécologie, la biodiversité et les biotechnologies, en particulier au niveau des pays." Nous comprenons, bien entendu, la référence insérée à la biodiversité et aux biotechnologies, mais nous nous demandons pourquoi le Comité du Programme a dans le même temps retiré la référence à la gouvernance. Nous sommes d'autant plus étonnés de ce retrait, ou de cette proposition de retrait, que dans le Cadre stratégique révisé que nous avons examiné ce matin, la gouvernance est présentée comme une dimension importante en relation avec le renforcement des capacités institutionnelles des pays. Donc, le Bénin suggère que le mot "gouvernance" soit maintenu dans la phrase et nous acceptons les autres révisions.

Je passe maintenant au Programme de travail. Le Bénin soutient tout à fait les quatre grands principes du Programme de travail décrits au paragraphe 51, ainsi que les dix priorités et réaffectations des ressources décrites aux paragraphes 52 à 56. Le Bénin a été particulièrement convaincu par les arguments mis en avant au chapitre des économies et domaines mis en retrait. Cependant, le Bénin regrette que les technologies dans le domaine de l'aquaculture doivent être mises en retrait pour la raison indiquée dans le document au paragraphe 62 c), à savoir du fait qu'elles sont devenues l'apanage du secteur privé. Les pays en développement souhaitant développer l'aquaculture n'auraient pas nécessairement accès aux financements privés dans ce secteur.

Pour ce qui est de la dimension régionale, au paragraphe 65, nous sommes heureux de lire la décision de maintenir les trois initiatives régionales principales en Afrique et nous applaudissons la priorité qui sera donnée, à la demande de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique, à la promotion d'emplois décents pour les jeunes dans les secteurs de l'agriculture et des agro-industries, et nous espérons que notre pays pourra renforcer le partenariat avec la FAO dans ce domaine. Nous voyons ici des opportunités de partenariat sur le terrain entre les trois organismes romains et, bien entendu, également avec le Bureau international du travail.

De nouveau, je voudrais faire référence à la recommandation du Comité du Programme, que nous remercions pour avoir recommandé au Secrétariat d'élaborer les notes d'information donnant des précisions supplémentaires sur les domaines d'activité à mettre en retrait. Ces notes nous seront bien utiles pour comprendre notamment le processus de détermination des domaines d'activité mis en retrait pour l'heure, et nous espérons vivement que ces activités puissent bénéficier de contributions volontaires.

Permettez que j'en vienne maintenant au budget. Nous notons au paragraphe 76 une estimation des ressources extrabudgétaires qui couvriraient 61 pour cent du total des ressources nécessaires. Ne serait-il pas prudent, plutôt que d'avoir un chiffre précis, de prévoir une fourchette, avec un scénario plancher et un scénario plus élevé?

Enfin, au paragraphe 100, traitant de la Division de la Conférence, du Conseil et du protocole, le Bénin, en tant que pays membre de la Francophonie, est particulièrement inquiet de la réduction nette de 23 postes qui porteraient la FAO à sous-traiter la traduction des documents avec les risques liés au recours à des traducteurs externes qui ne seraient pas nécessairement au fait de la terminologie usuelle dans notre environnement bien spécifique de la sécurité alimentaire.

Avec ces commentaires, le Bénin est toutefois heureux de donner son aval pour la présentation de ce document pour adoption par la Conférence de la FAO en juillet 2017.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Mi Delegación se suma a las declaraciones realizadas por el G-77 más China y por la Presidencia pro tempore del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

Queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento al Director General y la Secretaría por la preparación y presentación del Plan a plazo medio 2018-2021 y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto 2018-2019, muy centrados en los objetivos y metas que pretendemos alcanzar a nivel nacional, regional y mundial de cara a la Agenda 2030.

Acogemos con particular satisfacción la inclusión de las prioridades derivadas de las Conferencias Regionales y los comités técnicos, que oportunamente toman en cuenta los principales retos y expectativas de cada uno de nuestros países, contribuyendo a instrumentar de forma más eficaz su trabajo en el terreno.

Valoramos el incremento de la consignación presupuestaria para el Programa de Cooperación Técnica, en línea con la política de descentralización de la FAO, aunque consideramos este ajuste, un primer paso dirigido a atender las múltiples necesidades que los países de la región demandan en temas claves como como cambio climático, nutrición, género, resistencia a los antimicrobianos, entre otros.

Prioridades que requieren además promover una cooperación solidaria, complementaria y horizontal entre los países, en asuntos como intercambio de conocimientos, tecnologías, desarrollo de capacidades, fortalecimiento de los recursos humanos e institucionales y por ende una mayor movilización de recursos a través del mecanismo de Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular.

Asimismo acogemos con beneplácito que hayan sido incorporados todos los temas transversales (cada vez más vigentes) como género, gobernanza, nutrición y cambio climático, ámbitos que hemos asumido con responsabilidad y compromiso.

En particular, hacemos mención a los desafíos ambientales que compartimos los países de la región, entre los que se destaca la pérdida de la biodiversidad terrestre y marina. La gestión de los recursos hídricos y marinos, requiere de una atención prioritaria frente a la vulnerabilidad ante la cual estamos cada día más expuestos y de un profundo ejercicio de coordinación y coherencia.

Por ello consideramos oportuno y valoramos la reasignación de recursos en áreas prioritarias, que permitan a la FAO conectar directamente con los esfuerzos de nuestros países en el contexto de los nuevos Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, centrados en particular en la consecución de los objetivos 1 y 2.

Con estas consideraciones reiteramos el respaldo de la Delegación de Nicaragua al Plan a plazo medio y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto propuesto por el Director General, con la plena confianza de que la administración seguirá manejando los recursos con la eficiencia demostrada en el presente bienio.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I would like to announce a five-minute break and then we continue with other interventions.

The meeting was suspended from 17.00 to 17.15 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 00 à 17 h 15

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.00 a las 17.15

Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group's statement delivered by China and would like to make further comments on the proposed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

Firstly, I will make comments on the budget level and then my colleague will take over to comment on the substance. On the budget level, Japan always takes the position for zero nominal growth of the total net appropriation. Therefore, we appreciate and approve FAO's proposal to maintain a flat nominal budget compared with 2016-17 through prioritisation of work by identifying areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, and through further cost reduction and efficiency savings.

On the other hand, in terms of the proposed additional funding for the After-Service Medical Care past service liability, we are aware of its increasing deficit, but consider that the amount of funding should be reduced in light of the progress being made in the ongoing discussions to solve this problem.

Furthermore, regarding the proposed replenishment of the Working Capital Fund by USD 16.2 million to the level of one-month cash flow, we are not convinced if this replenishment is absolutely necessary, considering the fact that FAO has managed its work without any problems at the current level of the Working Capital Fund for recent years. We have requested the FAO Secretariat to provide further explanation for such need, but never received any more detailed information than what is already written in the PWB. Therefore, Japan cannot immediately approve this proposal.

Now, on the substance of the MTP and PWB, Japan reiterates that FAO should continue to focus on its comparative advantages and collaborate effectively with other agencies, avoiding duplication of work. In terms of specific areas, I would like to now hand over to my colleague to make further comments.

Mr Daiji KAWAGUCHI (Japan)

I would like to make some comments on the substance. First of all, regarding Codex Scientific Advisory Programme, Japan appreciates the effort of the Secretariat for funding the programme.

However, considering the importance and the serious financial difficulty of the programme, Japan echoes the concern raised by Australia earlier that no additional funding has been allocated to this area of work and encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts to secure sufficient funding in the future.

Regarding nutrition education programmes, Japan appreciates the Secretariat for providing additional details of the future direction of the works, and understands the direction that FAO continues its works in, but is shifting the source of funding by voluntary contributions. At the same time, in view of the importance of nutrition education, we have to keep in mind FAO's presence in this area.

Next, regarding the development of a global governance instrument, which is one of de-emphasized works of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, it is cited in the Information Note as "This reorientation does not affect FI's engagement in global fora and processes such as UNGA, CBD and CITES which will continue unaffected".

Japan appreciates the explanation and also emphasizes the importance of contributions by FAO as an impartial and specialized UN agency, including participation of high-ranked officials in discussions in international fora.

Japan expects that these contributions will raise the presence of FAO in international fora and keep the credibility of FAO.

Lastly with regard to outcome 4.1 of the results framework, Japan needs to raise a question about the appropriateness of the use of current outcome indicator 4.1.B, which is "Number of countries whose

access to international markets has been improved by trade related agreements measured by also using agricultural export subsidies and proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff”.

Japan is concerned about this proposed indicator for the following two reasons:

First, export subsidies and proportion of zero-tariff lines, and the linkage between each of them with FAO’s activities is not clear. Second, Japan understands that FAO has explained that it would avoid duplication with other international organisations such as WTO, and also does not intend to make trade rules but focuses on analysing the impact of trade on food security, capacity building and facilitating dialogue among stakeholders.

Indicator 4.1.B would be more appropriate if amended as “Number of countries whose access to international markets has been improved by trade related agreements”. In so doing, however, indicator 4.1.B would become almost identical to proposed indicator 4.1.C.

Therefore, Japan proposes to merge 4.1.B and 4.1.C into a revised 4.1.B, which is “Number of countries whose access to international markets has been improved due to adoption of international voluntary guidelines and participation in trade related agreements”.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

The United States would like to thank the Director-General and the Secretariat for this Programme of Work and Budget. It reflects their efforts to continue to promote good governance and fiscal responsibility. We also appreciate the efforts made by the Chairmen of the Programme and Finance Committees. We applaud the Director-General for maintaining zero-nominal growth and for identifying an additional USD 2.7 million in savings during the current biennium.

Chair, we recommend that the Secretariat remove the two special assessments for the Working Capital Fund and After-Service Medical Care from the budget. We understand these are important issues but, like other Member States, we have concerns about their inclusion. With these additional assessments amounting to USD 30 million, it would be difficult for the United States to consider this proposal a zero-nominal growth budget and therefore again recommend removal of the Working Capital Fund and After-Service Medical Care items.

We appreciate the new Cost Recovery Policy which more closely aligns FAO's practices to other organizations within the United Nations system. We urge the Secretariat to continue working towards full implementation of this policy in 2017 and look forward to a report on its progress.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina hace suya la declaración del GRULAC leída por la Delegación de El Salvador y la declaración del G-77 más China y acoge con satisfacción el documento C2017/3.

Destacamos el hecho de que el presupuesto nominal se mantenga invariable en un contexto internacional de dificultades financieras. Subrayamos la importancia del incremento hasta el 14% de la proporción del presupuesto neto destinado al Programa de Cooperación Técnica. También alentamos la atención que se le brinda en el documento a la Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular.

Tal como lo manifestamos en el Comité del Programa, celebramos que en el párrafo 52b relativo a prioridades y reasignación de recursos se haya incluido a la biotecnología y la biodiversidad, recogiendo lo establecido en el último Comité de Agricultura.

En cuanto a la reasignación de recursos se coincide con la asignación del porcentaje más alto de recursos, a la adaptación al cambio climático, y a la mitigación de sus efectos. Como se señala en el último Estado Mundial de la Agricultura y la Alimentación del 2016, los efectos del cambio climático en la agricultura y en la seguridad alimentaria, son preocupantes.

El Acuerdo de París reconoce en sus considerandos la vulnerabilidad de los sistemas de producción de alimentos a los efectos adversos del cambio climático. En ese sentido la decisión de la FAO de reasignar la mayor cantidad de recursos a esta temática, así como el respaldo a los países para acceder a la financiación relacionada con el clima, y el apoyo a los países en desarrollo, en especial a los pequeños

estados insulares en desarrollo, resulta esencial para aumentar la sostenibilidad, la productividad y la resiliencia de la agricultura a los efectos del cambio climático y así evitar sus consecuencias negativas sobre la seguridad alimentaria.

Las metas de la FAO no podrán conseguirse si no se enfrentan los desafíos que presenta el cambio climático en los sistemas alimentarios y agrícolas en todo el mundo.

Por otra parte, la Delegación argentina desea resaltar respecto a las esferas prioritarias de las iniciativas regionales de la FAO, desde el párrafo 64 al 69 del documento, nuestra coincidencia con el enfoque que se plantea en relación a las iniciativas en América Latina y el Caribe. En particular, en relación a la iniciativa sobre la agricultura familiar y los sistemas alimentarios inclusive, se resalta el hecho que se centre la atención en el acceso de la agricultura familiar, en las cadenas de valor.

Asimismo, respecto a la iniciativa sobre utilización sostenible de los recursos naturales, la adaptación al cambio climático y la gestión del riesgo de desastres, se valora positivamente que se focalice la contribución de la FAO en las estrategias de gestión de riesgos y el cambio climático.

Por último, resaltamos como muy positivo que el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto 2018-2019 otorgue consideración especial a la situación de los indígenas y de las mujeres en el programa estratégico para reducir la pobreza rural. Así como el reconocimiento de la necesidad de establecer asociaciones, con instituciones financieras y otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas para alcanzar resultados a gran escala en este campo.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to request the floor for Malta to make a statement on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. I would like then also to retain the floor to make a national statement afterwards.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The EU candidate country, Montenegro, as well as San Marino have aligned themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States welcome the Medium Term Plan 2018-21, Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 and support the four main principles.

We agree to the proposal that a flat nominal budget should be maintained, but we would like the Secretariat to elaborate on the effects of the exchange rate between EUR and USD in the PWB and on how variations in the exchange rate can be better managed in the execution of the budget.

As a general principle for FAO planning, the MTP and PWB should focus on those areas that are at the core of FAO's mandate. Moreover, looking ahead, we would like the Council to agree a principle whereby the Secretariat indicates what results will be achieved, or not achieved, in areas that are prioritised or de-emphasised.

We welcome the areas of increased priority, particularly climate change, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), sustainable agricultural production, including agroecology, and statistics. We would like to know what extra results will be achieved with the additional resources allocated to these areas, and would therefore appreciate further information and explanations on a number of points. We also have a number of suggestions and proposals to make.

Regarding AMR, we would appreciate explanations on the proposed level of funding, which is lower than the estimated needs. We would also like to see an output target in FAO's results framework for work on AMR.

We would like further explanations on the link between Strategic Objective 6 and other Strategic Objectives that deal with the same topics, e.g. nutrition and climate change.

As regards item 52(g) of the PWB, we appreciate the new wording as contained in the report of the 156th Session of the Programme Committee. We would nonetheless stress the need for FAO to work within its mandate and in areas where it has comparative advantages. In this light, we would appreciate

further information on the USD 1.2 million budget allocation for this item, in particular as regards the specific initiatives envisaged.

As regards the Codex Alimentarius, we would favour an increase in the proposed allocation so as to ensure adequate support for scientific expertise, in line with the conclusions of the Committee on Agriculture in 2016. We would also propose giving increased priority to the Blue Growth Initiative under item 52(i). In fact, fisheries and aquaculture make a significant contribution to the food security of millions of people.

We would also like to stress the continued high importance of the CFS (Committee on World Food Security), which needs a budget allocation that allows it to function in a stable and smooth manner. In the same vein, we stress the need to acknowledge the continued high priority of the standard-setting work in the framework of the IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention).

We would welcome an increase in the allocation to FAO's work on gender equality across all Strategic Objectives, in line with the conclusion in 'The State of Food and Agriculture 2010' that between 100 and 150 million people would be pulled out of hunger if there were equal access to productive resources.

Moving on to the areas of de-emphasis, let me start by expressing our appreciation for the transparency in this regard. We have nonetheless a number of concerns and would appreciate more information to understand the rationale for de-emphasising work in the following areas:

First, nutrition education and dietary diversity measurements. We would like to stress, in particular, that much has to be done with regard to the Minimum Dietary Diversity Indicator, when it comes to awareness raising, capacity building, roll-out and policy dialogue with partner governments to promote nutrition-enhancing agriculture. We would like to be reassured that this important work will continue to be carried out.

Second, fisheries and aquaculture technologies. We recall the conclusions of the 32nd COFI session, which stress the importance of maintaining FAO's leadership role, capacity and skills in the area of fisheries and aquaculture and of further enhancing FAO's participation in and contribution to UN fora and processes devoted to both fisheries and aquaculture.

Third, we would like to express our concerns about the lack of visibility of soils in the PWB. This does not reflect the growing importance of FAO's work on soils and FAO's cooperation with other UN agencies through the Global Soil Partnership. Moreover, the proposed de-emphasis of work on water infrastructure and on soil and water conservation is likely to affect the work on soils.

Fourth, as regards the de-emphasis of work on forestry, including tenure, we consider that this is premature. It is very important that FAO's forest governance and forest policy development adequately reflects the adoption of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests (UNSPF) as a milestone cross-sectoral agreement.

In addition, we would like clarification regarding the implications of the proposed reduction of support for 'databases targeting individual commodities'. We believe that such databases continue to be really useful, especially with a view to providing input for more holistic analyses.

Finally, we are concerned about the overall budget decrease under Strategic Objective 2. In fact, Strategic Objective 2 is at the heart of FAO's mandate and we would like to have more information on how this decrease will be compensated for in other areas.

Our next point is about the language services. We are concerned about the effects of the streamlining of the language services and we would like to be reassured that this will not result in a drop in quality, or even a reduction in linguistic services.

Moving on to the Human Resources policy, we would appreciate more detailed information on the 2 945 'budgeted posts', especially the breakdown of those posts into the regular and the voluntary budget, as well as into temporary staff and consultants involved in the PWB activities. Furthermore, we would appreciate clarifications on the trend towards recruiting younger professionals as opposed to more senior-level staff, because this raises concerns with regard to FAO's technical capacity as a knowledge-based organization.

As regards the enhancement of the Decentralised Offices Network, we stress the importance of continuing to pay due attention to the principle of cost-neutrality with respect to the funds devoted to the network.

On a more general note, we encourage FAO to continue working on improving transparency in its relations with recipient countries, including by setting targets for meeting the IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative) standards. We also call for further information on improving collaboration with the other Rome-based agencies, including possible efficiency savings. We look forward to further work on developing FAO's Results Framework. We welcome the use of SDG indicators, but have a question regarding how results reporting will show FAO's contribution. We would also like to know how baselines and targets are to be established with a view to reporting progress.

Let me conclude by reiterating 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 continuously improve its overall performance and efficiency and maintain its global leadership as a knowledge-based organization in the field of food and agriculture, including forestry and fishery.

We are ready to engage constructively with other Members and to reach a consensus on the level of the budget in this Council session.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

First of all I would like to align the United Kingdom with the statement that Malta has just made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. I would like to elaborate on two of the areas that Malta just mentioned. Both of these focus on prioritization, which as the Chair of the Programme Committee has said is one of the key jobs for FAO's governing bodies. My suggestions will help with this.

So, firstly, when the output targets are elaborated on in the adjusted Programme of Work and Budget, please can they specify what results will be achieved with the additional resources that have been allocated to new areas of priority?

An example is one that Malta also mentioned; what extra will we see FAO achieving with the resources allocated to antimicrobial resistance? But there are other examples as well. I think more generally, if Members can see what is being achieved with their contributions, it will encourage Member States to make those additional voluntary contributions that have been called for today.

Secondly, looking ahead to future PWBs, we would like to repeat and reiterate the request that the European Union has made that the Council endorses a principle that in future PWBs where the Secretariat proposes a new area of priority and additional resources for that area, it sets out what results will be achieved with those new resources, and conversely where the Secretariat proposes an area of de-emphasis what results will not be achieved with the lesser resources.

We think that both of these measures will really help the decision making and maybe answer many of the questions that have been posed so far this morning and this afternoon.

Mr Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden align themselves with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

The Nordic countries welcome the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work of Budget 2018-19, with the following comments:

We support the strategic direction of the Organization with its Strategic Objectives and Outcomes and welcome the proposed flat nominal budget with its reallocations to meet priorities.

We recognize and commend FAO for aligning its work with the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The MTP and PWB demonstrates FAO's continued focus on supporting Member States to implement the new Agenda and meeting its goals.

We urge FAO to link results with resources to allow Members to understand the costs of delivering results.

We welcome and support the inclusion of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the core budget, but we question the amount allocated, as it has previously been reported that USD 2 million per year was needed. Further, to follow FAO's work on AMR, an output target in FAO's results framework would be necessary.

Other areas given increased priority that deserve to be mentioned and supported by this Council are climate change, sustainable agricultural production and statistics.

However, once again we have to call for more funding for FAO's work on gender equality and women's empowerment across the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6. It is striking to see that work on gender equality and women's empowerment is not among the ten higher-priority areas in the Programme of Work. The net appropriation increase for Chapter 6 is almost 10 million, but gender work does not get as much as one dollar of that.

With this in mind, could the Secretariat clarify better the internal process of prioritizing and de-emphasizing? For example, were there in the internal processes no suggestions to prioritize the gender work?

Another activity where funding commitments are only maintained at its current level, but further funding is easily justifiable, is the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

We would appreciate maintaining an adequate budget allocation to the CFS, but at the same time recognize that the future work of the Committee is going under thorough discussion among the Members, following the evaluation that recently finished. In the same manner, we would like to acknowledge the continued high priority of the standard-setting work in the framework of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

We would like to call for more allocations to the work on aquaculture. Even though some fields of aquaculture are now more driven by the private sector and could then be de-emphasized, the importance of aquaculture for food security and economic development is only going to increase in coming years. The work of FAO in sustainable aquaculture development must be prioritized and get resource reallocation.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, could I kindly ask you to allow Sweden to take the floor after me with some important message they would like to give to the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Iceland, speaking on behalf of the Nordic Countries. I think it will be appropriate that I will give the floor to Sweden to speak as an observer after I have exhausted the list of Council Members.

Nevertheless, on an exceptional basis, I give the floor to Sweden.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Observer for Sweden)

Sweden aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and the statement made by Iceland on behalf of the Nordic Countries. Sweden has, along with many others, been an advocate of strengthening the role of FAO in the fight against AMR.

We are pleased to see that AMR is a priority in the proposed PWB. We are also pleased to announce that Sweden will sponsor a senior secondment to FAO within the field of AMR. We hope that this will be a good addition to FAO's technical capacity and a useful contribution to our joint effort in combatting AMR.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Sweden, for that generous contribution to our work.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We thank the Secretariat for preparing the draft Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget for the upcoming period. We are prepared to support most of the key parts of this document. We welcome the fact that the Organization is on track to make a large commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda in line with FAO's mandate.

We welcome the inclusion in the results framework of 40 targets and 53 SDG indicators. We also endorse the four principles set out in the document which will be used to draft a new Programme of Work, the flat budget, adjustments to priorities, efficiency, and demonstrable results and also an increase in the share of the TCP to 14 percent of net budgetary appropriation.

We agree with the scaling up of FAO's activities on cross-cutting themes. We believe it would be wise to focus on the issues of climate change and nutrition. We are satisfied that in the new Programme of Work, FAO affords additional attention to social protection in rural areas, food systems and the One Health approach, including the fight against antimicrobial resistance.

To assist FAO's efforts in this important area, Russia has taken the decision to make a voluntary contribution to FAO of USD 3.25 million for work on AMR in five countries in the Eurasian region.

We welcome the establishment of the new FAO Regional Initiative for European and Central Asian countries for the sustainable management of natural resources in the context of climate change. We look forward to receiving additional details on its practical implementation at upcoming FAO events.

We also appreciate the consolidation within the Secretariat of the institute or regional programme leaders. We believe that these measures will strengthen internal coordination at FAO. At the same time, we would like to caution the Secretariat against further expansion of the coordination function to avoid HR risks for technical work streams.

On the whole, we look favourably on the Secretariat's initiative to create new Professional posts to strengthen FAO's technical capacity. However, we had serious concerns in relation to the proposal to make reductions in translation and interpretation services. Hasty decisions in this area could have negative consequences for the realization at the appropriate level of the principle of multilingualism which is a fundamental principle for all UN system agencies.

We call on FAO Management to take a cautious approach to the reorientation of posts which support the concerted efforts of the whole Organization. We recall that the 155th Session of Council already made an unambiguous recommendation on this matter. We once again express our own principal support for FAO's activities in the area of emergency assistance to the agro sector in crisis and building its resilience going forward.

Having said that, we are unfortunately forced to note that the Secretariat ignored the comments of several countries and the decision from the 155th Session of Council on references to the World Humanitarian Summit in the FAO's programme documents.

We underscore once again that the Secretariat's taking on of so-called commitments from the Summit was not agreed on by Member States or sanctioned by FAO's governing bodies. In this connection, we strongly request the deletion of all references to the World Humanitarian Summit from the document, including the complete deletion of the second sentence in paragraph 254 and the second sentence in paragraph 260, as well as the relevant references in paragraphs 6 and 263.

We also note that the reference to the term 'peace building' is still in the draft document despite the decisions of the 155th Session of the Council and the 121st Session of the Programme Committee, and also assurances from the Secretariat during the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in March of this year.

In this connection, we would like to request that this term be deleted from the whole draft document, in particular from paragraphs 52(g), 113, Table 4, 257, 259, 268 and 270. We would also be grateful if the Secretariat, in the context of FAO's mandate and comparative advantages, could clarify the basis for the inclusion in its results framework of SDG indicator 16.1.2: conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population by sex, age and cause.

We asked this question at the previous session of the Council but unfortunately we did not receive a response.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

La Delegación de Chile agradece el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP) y Plan a plazo medio presentado y quisiera manifestar su satisfacción con las conclusiones de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa y Comité de Finanzas.

Consideremos pertinente la propuesta del Director General de mantener un presupuesto de crecimiento nominal cero, reconociendo las limitaciones presupuestarias de los Estados Miembros, identificando áreas de énfasis y des-énfasis. Sin embargo, entendemos que esta es una situación excepcional, y que con el fin de abordar cada vez mayores desafíos, la Organización requerirá eventualmente mayores recursos.

Tal como han dicho otras delegaciones, destacamos el 14% asignado al Programa de cooperación técnica, esperando que este porcentaje aumente en los próximos años.

Destacamos el alineamiento de las prioridades de FAO con la Agenda 2030 y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), y siguiendo las orientaciones que nosotros, los Estados Miembros, establecimos en los diferentes Comités Técnicos, así como durante nuestras Conferencias Regionales. Las áreas de trabajo donde el PTP busca aumentar la capacidad técnica nos parecen relevantes. Los países en desarrollo necesitamos apoyo para adaptarnos a los estragos que produce el cambio climático, efectos del que muchas veces somos víctima y no directamente responsables.

Para el Gobierno de Chile, temas como la inocuidad de los alimentos, una producción agrícola y pesquera sustentable, la agricultura familiar campesina, la igualdad de género, el cambio climático, la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional y la biodiversidad, son de crucial importancia, y así se refleja en nuestras políticas públicas. Esperamos que estos temas tengan la debida atención en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para el próximo bienio.

La Delegación de Chile se suma a lo mencionado por el G-77 más China, así como a la Delegación de China a nombre de Asia, sobre la importancia de los Sistemas Importantes de Patrimonio Agrícola Mundial, SIPAM, y el valioso aporte que estos sitios realizan al rescate cultural de sistemas agrícolas hereditarios, a la biodiversidad, a la producción sustentable, así como al mejoramiento de los medios de vida de los agricultores de pequeña escala. En este sentido, apreciaríamos ver la iniciativa SIPAM debidamente reflejada en el PTP de la FAO.

Finalmente, hacemos un llamado a los países que están en condiciones de hacerlo, de realizar aportaciones voluntarias adicionales a sus contribuciones, que complementen las áreas de trabajo prioritarias que han sido identificadas por la Organización, en línea con el Marco Estratégico Revisado.

Con esta intervención, la Delegación de Chile acoge satisfactoriamente el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para el próximo bienio y el Plan a plazo medio 2018-2021.

M. Georges GANONGO (Congo)

La République du Congo prend la parole pour appuyer l'intervention du Zimbabwe faite au nom du Groupe Afrique. Le Congo note que le Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 définit également de manière claire les objectifs stratégiques et les résultantes qui doivent être mis en œuvre par les Membres et la communauté internationale avec l'appui de la FAO, conformément au Cadre stratégique révisé. Le Congo se félicite que les défis et les nouveaux défis en matière d'alimentation et d'agriculture soient pris en compte dans le document et soient en conformité avec la vision de la FAO, celle d'un monde libéré de la faim et de la malnutrition, dans lequel l'alimentation et l'agriculture contribuent à améliorer le niveau de vie de tous, en particulier des plus pauvres, d'une façon durable sur les plans économique, social et environnemental.

Le Congo approuve le maintien des cinq objectifs stratégiques et leurs résultantes, le Cadre des résultats reformulé, ainsi que le sixième objectif, tout en attendant que les indicateurs et les cibles soient présentés dans les documents sur les ajustements à apporter au Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019.

Le Congo approuve également les priorités et les domaines d'activité à mettre en retrait ainsi que les allocations de ressources relatives aux objectifs stratégiques et à l'objectif six concernant les questions transversales.

Le Congo appuie l'accroissement de la part des ressources affectées au Programme de coopération technique à 14% du montant des crédits ouverts. Cette augmentation est conforme à la résolution 9/89 de la Conférence et à la recommandation formulée par la Conférence à sa 39^{ème} session.

Pour terminer, concernant le Programme de travail et budget, le budget proposé est inchangé en valeur nominale, tenant compte de la pression exercée sur les États Membres en matière budgétaire dans cette période d'incertitude. Le Congo, en accord avec le Groupe Afrique, approuve cette proposition de budget, que nous considérons comme réaliste compte tenu des conditions macro-économiques mondiales actuelles.

Avec ces commentaires, le Congo appuie l'adoption et recommande le Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 et le Programme de travail et budget 2018-2019 à la Conférence pour approbation.

Mr Badreldin ELSHIEKH MOHAMED ELHASSAN (Sudan)

We align ourselves with the statement made by Japan and Egypt on behalf of the G77 and China and the Near East Regional Group respectively. We appreciate particularly the Director-General's proposal on the nominal budget that recognizes the current financial, global constraints as an exceptional status. We also note the decreasing posts, the absorption of the cost and reinvesting savings in priority areas.

The identification of priorities and areas of de-emphasis is a key. We appreciate FAO's initiatives to identify areas of emphasis and de-emphasis. We also welcome the increase in TCP appropriations to 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation as per Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session.

In order for better utilization of this policy, we requested the Secretariat to provide further information on the priorities as well as reinforced commitments in the areas of de-emphasis.

We support all of the recommendations from the Finance Committee and also support the request from Iceland and Malta on behalf of the EU to raise the budget of the CFS.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, please allow me to give the floor to the Republic of Iran.

Mr Shanin GHORASHIZADEH (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran)

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 and would like to express appreciation to the Director-General and the Secretariat for preparing these documents.

Iran welcomes any plan and implementation of the same track of SDGs and believes also in achieving more coherence between FOs, SOs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development more needed for all agricultural sectors.

While Iran acknowledges the attention given to capacity building at the regional and national levels, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that because of the fast growth of communication knowledge and technologies, everyone should consider the management, development and capacity building in its mandate and plans according to new sciences of our present work.

The Islamic Republic of Iran also requests that FAO consider SDG 7 targets and indicators in the MTP and PWB and make links with the private sector in the field of clean energy technologies for their small scale use in agricultural activities.

Iran, in line with the statement made by G77 and China, would like not only to reiterate the importance of the GIAHS role in achieving the 2030 Agenda and requests to fully reflect in FAO documents the MTP and PWB but also invites all esteemed delegates and FAO in this Council to support the proposal to found a GIAHS symbolic museum in FAO headquarters in Rome to introduce a global agricultural heritage for a new generation and present how the previous generation worked hard to keep agriculture alive. Maybe they follow feeding minds for fighting hunger.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We appreciate the documents provided by the Secretariat and the way it supports the recommendations of the G77 plus China.

China is willing to deepen cooperation with FAO and other related parties and make positive contributions to achieve world food security, eradicate hunger and malnutrition, and eradicate poverty, and play a greater role in South-South Cooperation in the above-mentioned areas.

We propose three specific proposals of revision. The first is on priorities and resource allocation. We recommend to emphasize South-South Cooperation and agricultural heritage and revise 52(b) to appropriation of USD 3.1 million to support sustainable agricultural production, particularly at the country level, including GIAHS resource management, and 52(c) revised as USD 2.8 million for food systems and for nutrition and food security particularly at country level, including South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation.

The two revisions we have noted G77 and China, the Near East Group, Chile, Sudan, and Iran, that their interventions and other countries, such as Afghanistan.

Our second recommendation is we hope to emphasize China's high concern of moving South-South Cooperation work from TCS to OPC. China takes the position that partnerships mainly refer to private sector partnerships. Considering South-South Cooperation plays a very important role for 2030 SDGs and FAO's Strategic Plan and also the needs of developing countries to South-South Cooperation has been increasing to ensure FAO's playing a continuous leading role in agricultural provision. We recommend FAO be cautious about such change and only make certain decisions after a careful assessment of what to avoid and the negative impacts on South-South Cooperation.

China believes South-South Cooperation can play a bigger role in technology cooperation divisions. Therefore we recommend FAO consider to set up a dedicated South-South Cooperation and a Triangular Cooperation Division responsible for promoting international collaboration at national, regional and global levels in support of 2030 Sustainable Development, Country and Strategic Objectives.

Therefore we recommend that within the second paragraph and to change it from one Deputy Director to only making decisions of whether to make such a change after an assessment from role allocation concerning South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation so that coordinating capacities of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation can be achieved to promote a greater role.

Regarding this recommendation, G77 and China have expressed sufficient concerns.

The third recommendation is on language services. We agree with the recommendations of Russia. We reiterate the issue of balanced language usage. We stress that FAO should maintain the capacity and quality of translations in six official languages.

We recommend to make an additional change in this paragraph to stress that outsourcing of translation should follow the prerequisite of ensuring a stable team of translators.

Mr Winston Rudder (Trinidad and Tobago)

On behalf of the 15 Member Nations of the CARICOM sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago wishes to join the rest of the Council in commending the Secretariat for the excellent documentation presented for the discussion of this item and to the Chairpersons of the Finance and Programme Committee for their helpful insights and comments.

Trinidad and Tobago commends the common thread linking the renewed Strategic Framework, the MTP and the PWB. This confirms that the challenges confronting food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries derived from an in-depth analysis of global perspectives and friends and are aligned to the SDGs. The Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget therefore constitute, in my humble view, a realistic view of the agenda before FAO. We appreciate the candid observation that this task cannot be sustainably and successfully addressed by FAO alone. Happily, the very useful assessment of the Organization's attributes and functions reinforces assurance that strategic alliances will be forged to complement FAO's role. The seven functions outlined in paragraph 11 clearly and concisely describe

and define the adequacy of the in-house instruments for organizing and operationalizing the actions that would take place in the years ahead.

The Results Framework in Figure 1, the Results Chain model in Figure 2 and the Monitoring Frame in Figure 3 in the MTP form a cluster of ideas and mechanisms which not only illuminates understanding but also enhances confidence about FAO's capacity to get the work done. Of significance, too, is the logical linkage between the Strategic Objectives and the relevant SDGs and SDG indicators in Figure 4. This, in addition to facilitating better understanding of how the Programme of Work and Budget activities are intended to meet the objectives, also allows for meaningful conversations at national level between and across sector agencies for planning, implementing and monitoring food, agriculture and agriculture development within a coherent framework for promoting national development. This is a matter of specific and critical assistance to the SIDS (small island developing states), which by virtue of their special limitations live the reality that all things connect.

We draw attention to paragraphs 159 and 160 which deal with governance mechanisms. They highlight use of coordination and partnership in translating policy to action, and they also highlight weak implementations which reflect chronic disabilities that you find in SIDS. The proposals in paragraph 167 on improving capacities to design, formulate, and implement policy and legal frameworks to realize the right to adequate food are of equal importance.

On behalf of the 15 Member Nations of the CARICOM sub-region, Trinidad and Tobago first recommends the priorities outlined in paragraph 52, observing that while FAO must ensure it does not dilute its normative work, suggests that equity demands that it must continue to strike a balance between that aspect of its mandate and the critical need of a significant proportion of humanity to straddle the divide between humanitarian assistance and development and for whom the technical support of FAO not only contributes to loosening constraints on food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries development, but is a pathway to survival.

Trinidad and Tobago also supports the modified staffing proposals, particularly in respect of climate change, food systems, nutrition and sustainable production. We laud the application of the five principles of sustainable agriculture as a means to assess sustainable practices and production systems. We also appreciate the restoration of funding levels to the TCP. We commend the additional resources provided by the SIDS Global Action Programme, although we urge caution and understanding that many SIDS lack the absorptive capacity to utilize effectively large amounts of funding in short spaces of time without the support and technical guidance of FAO. This, in our view, will require, in addition to funding, the investment of time, patience and respectful understanding.

Finally, Trinidad and Tobago joins the other Members of Council in endorsing the MTP 2018–21 and approving the PWB 2018–19 for the consideration of Conference.

Sra. Martha BÁRCENA COQUI (México)

México se suma a la intervención de El Salvador en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC), así como las de Argentina y Chile expresando su apoyo al Plan a plazo medio (PPM) para 2018-2021 y al Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP) para 2018-2019.

Subrayamos nuestra coincidencia en las prioridades y reasignación de recursos mencionados en el PPM y el PTP y los cambios al párrafo 52b. En este contexto, con relación al nuevo Departamento sobre Cambio Climático, Biodiversidad, Tierra y agua, México quisiera preguntar: ¿cómo funcionará el área de biodiversidad? y ¿qué atribuciones de coordinación se le encomendarán con el resto de las áreas de trabajo de la FAO?

También, quisiera saber si habrá una asignación presupuestaria para los trabajos del área sobre biodiversidad en el nuevo departamento sobre cambio climático, biodiversidad, tierra y agua, y ve con preocupación la ausencia de un puesto técnico para esta área. México desea destacar que el área de biodiversidad debe contar con los recursos necesarios incluidos presupuesto y personal para su eficaz funcionamiento.

Por último, México se suma a la Delegación de China en subrayar la importancia de la cooperación Sur-Sur y la Cooperación Triangular para lograr los objetivos contenidos en el PPM y en el PTP.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada welcomes FAO's efficiency savings and we support the flat nominal budget that was presented in the Programme of Work and Budget 2018–19. We also appreciate FAO's efforts to align the PWB with the SDGs, noting that they use exclusively targets and indicators at the SO level. In this regard, we have a comment to make.

While we appreciate the efforts of the Organization to mainstream gender across the SOs, we were wondering why the SDG5 was not better reflected at the SO level. I know we had this discussion in the Programme Committee, but we still feel that two indicators and targets under SDG5 were actually proposed by FAO when that was all negotiated and it is strongly linked to poverty reduction which is all about the issue of access to productive and economic resources and land. This is also related to the point made by Iceland on behalf of the Nordic countries concerning how the results chain can be made clearer when much mention is made of the intention to devote more attention to gender equality in each of the SOs yet the resources are the same. Maybe I do not understand clearly how you intend to achieve greater results, but more information about that would be welcome.

In general, I think that, as we have also heard in the discussion on the Revised Strategic Framework, many delegations stressed the importance of gender equality and wonder why they could not see results in one SO or in the other SO. It concerns visibility. Gender is a cross-cutting issue, but it is more than that. It is the face of agriculture that is changing as well. In certain countries, it is up to 80 percent of the workers or farmers. I guess my comment is how can you elevate the visibility of your work on gender and link it more clearly to a direct contribution to SDG 5.

We also appreciate FAO's efforts to focus on its comparative advantage. This morning the FAO Director-General mentioned the process for areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and he did acknowledge that, and also his efforts to reach out to the other RBAs, which bodes well for RBA collaboration, and also to make FAO more a partner of strategic choice if it is going to focus on and leverage its strengths. But one of these comparative advantages, as others mentioned, is normative work and standard setting.

We echo Australia's and Japan's concerns in terms of the current funding levels that are dedicated to the Joint Scientific Advice Programme of Codex and the fact that they do not provide sufficient predictability and sustainability to meet the demands for food safety and plant health standards. Many have said unsafe food is no food. And we were wondering how FAO intends to address this gap and how it can consider allocating additional savings to this area and other options like broadening the donor base to allow for voluntary contributions from non-state actors with appropriate safeguards of course.

We also support the reallocation of resources to increase technical capacity in some areas, namely climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as sustainable agricultural production. We are quite satisfied with the revised wording from the Programme Committee to include biodiversity and biotechnology. We are satisfied with FAO's recognition about the contributions that biotechnology can bring to sustainable intensification as well as increasing the resilience of smallholders to climate change. We are looking forward to the upcoming regional consultations. We also note with appreciation the new position that was identified in the information note for voluntary contributions on biotechnology.

Finally, we also support the revised wording regarding FAO's work on conflict-affected rural livelihoods linked with food security, conflict analysis and partnerships. We welcome the fact that you will have a side event on Friday during Council. This is actually a comparative advantage of FAO, but is not very well known and is linked to its work on resilience. But I think in the context of the current crisis, the FAO Director-General talked about FAO's recent activities, and we have learned as well that some United Nations agencies had devoted funds to FAO to take early action and it was quite an effective response to ensure that in a crisis you bring in not only food assistance but also support to livelihoods, so I think this needs to be better acknowledged. We support that.

Ms Jeanine VOLKEN (Observer for Switzerland)

My Delegation would like to make two short remarks regarding the resource allocation as outlined in the present document.

First, biodiversity is the basis of agriculture. Therefore, appropriate personnel and balanced resources should be allocated to the new department called Department of Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water in order to reflect the importance that FAO gives to biodiversity.

Second, the promotion of sustainable livestock production systems is, in our view, a very important issue of FAO's work. Appropriate personnel and resources should be allocated to this subject, especially in the context of sustainable food systems and sustainable and balanced diets.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Je retiens de cette discussion plusieurs points, certains positifs, d'autres un peu moins.

Pour les points positifs, je crois que toutes les délégations ont soutenu l'idée d'un budget inchangé en valeur nominale, et donc sans augmentation de crédits ouverts. Pour le deuxième, de nombreuses délégations ont exprimé un satisfecit au Secrétariat pour avoir proposé des choix et fait des propositions de domaines prioritaires et d'autres où l'on pouvait dégager des économies. Quant au troisième élément de satisfaction, personne n'a remis en cause les dix domaines prioritaires proposés et tout le monde a souligné qu'ils étaient assez pertinents. Jusqu'ici, je dirais, tout va bien.

Ensuite, cela se complique parce que vous avez évoqué vraiment beaucoup de sujets où vous souhaiteriez augmenter la dépense. Le problème se pose de comment augmenter la dépense si l'on n'augmente pas la ressource?

Je peux apporter une réponse à certaines questions, comme celle de la biodiversité, citée par le Groupe Amérique latine et Caraïbes (GRULAC), le G77, le Mexique. Ainsi que je l'ai dit dans mon introduction, nous avons bien réintroduit dans le paragraphe 52 b) la biodiversité aux côtés des biotechnologies et de l'agroécologie, puisque c'est une nouvelle priorité.

Je vais aussi répondre à présent sur ce paragraphe à l'Ambassadrice du Bénin. En fait, le terme «gouvernance» a été retiré du paragraphe 52 b), car effectivement celui-ci se réfère à la production agricole durable, au sens de la durabilité environnementale, et il ne nous a pas semblé très cohérent d'avoir une référence à la gouvernance dans ce paragraphe. Nous nous sommes posé la question s'il fallait parler de «gouvernance de la durabilité», mais c'était là quand même une percée conceptuelle un peu étrange, donc nous avons décidé de retirer le terme «gouvernance».

Et puis, cela devient beaucoup plus difficile, car, comme je le disais, chacun a ses domaines à mettre en valeur et suite à vos interventions, je crois en avoir décompté 19. Il a été question des sols, de l'eau, de l'aquaculture, des Systèmes ingénieux du patrimoine agricole mondial (SIPAM), de la croissance bleue, du Codex, du CSA, de l'éducation nationale, des antimicrobiens, des forêts, des bases de données pour les produits de base et de l'Objectif stratégique 2. Il s'agit d'une vingtaine de «domaines prioritaires» à ajouter aux dix domaines prioritaires, avec le même volume de ressources, ce qui signifie qu'il n'y a plus de priorités. On réduit d'autant les ressources additionnelles qu'on voulait allouer aux dix domaines prioritaires.

Il faut donc faire des choix et établir des priorités. Sinon, à budget constant, le Secrétariat va être confronté à un vrai problème d'exécution du Plan à moyen terme et les vrais choix d'allocation de ressources seront faits par le Secrétariat, au fil de l'eau, en fonction des besoins, mais il est clair qu'avec une augmentation de 20 millions de dollars, on ne peut pas augmenter les ressources allouées à autant de domaines.

Donc encore une fois, la question est de savoir comment allons-nous identifier les priorités? Au Comité du Programme, nous avons suivi une logique simple: quels sont, depuis deux ans, les thèmes qui ont émergé de ce Conseil et sur lesquels des initiatives ont été prises, des symposiums tenus, concernant les biotechnologies ou l'agroécologie? Nous avons toutefois bien conscience qu'il n'est pas possible de répondre à tous les besoins.

Je voudrais faire un dernier commentaire sur la remarque du Royaume-Uni à propos de la nécessité de faire un effort supplémentaire pour bien articuler les résultats avec les ressources allouées, notamment dans ces domaines prioritaires. C'est un sujet difficile, mais certainement possible à appliquer dans certains domaines. Demain, nous parlerons de la peste des petits ruminants; il est là assez facile

d'articuler les résultats avec l'augmentation des budgets parce qu'il s'agit de campagnes de vaccination et les résultats d'une augmentation de ressources peuvent assez facilement se mesurer. Mais dans d'autres domaines c'est objectivement difficile.

Par exemple, parmi les dix domaines prioritaires, il est proposé d'allouer un million de dollars supplémentaires pour la lutte contre la pauvreté rurale. Il y a 600 millions de pauvres en milieu rural et on va allouer un million de dollars pour réduire la pauvreté de 600 millions de personnes. Il est très difficile d'imaginer la capacité de mesurer les résultats avec une augmentation de ressources aussi modeste. Je crois que l'on pourrait demander au Secrétariat comment ces ressources additionnelles seront utilisées, allouées—les «outputs», mais il va quand même être très difficile d'essayer d'articuler cette augmentation modeste d'un million de dollars avec une mesure des résultats.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I should like to thank Members of the Council for their interventions and the various questions they raised.

I do not think there were any specific questions concerning the report of the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting, but the questions were mainly focused on issues relevant to the Programme Committee and for the provision of additional information by the Secretariat.

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

I would like very much to thank all of the delegates for the very careful reading of the Director-General's proposal and expressing your views, particularly on priorities. I must say it is refreshing to have a discussion about substance once we have generally agreed on the budget level.

I think the Programme Committee Chair has quite elegantly stated the problem that we face where we have a limited amount of resources that we can reallocate. In fact, some of you have taken issue with some of the ways we have found those resources in such areas as language services in some of the areas of de-emphasis. It reminds me a bit of the discussions we had internally about where we should allocate resources for priorities, analyzing: where do we need the capacity?

We had questions, for example, about whether there was a request internally for more resources on gender capacity. In fact, there was not because we have a significant amount of resources already for gender capacity, close to USD 22 million. The issue is how to make the best use of it. I take the point made by several members, in particular Canada, on the need to make our work on gender more visible. We have some indicators and sub indicators of our outputs that are gender-related – Mr Stamoulis could elaborate on that – also in relation to SDG 5. It might help better explain how we utilize the capacity that we have on gender.

This gets us to another point that has been raised by several Members. We recognize the need to demonstrate in terms of results how we use these additional resources, this reallocation of resources. That we will certainly try to do when we present the output targets and the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget. We will aim to demonstrate, at least in cases where there are significant resources, for example, around climate change, AMR, or One Health, where we can see a difference in the results.

On the areas of de-emphasis, as set out in the second information note, you will see that – in fact, Afghanistan pointed this out in their careful reading of the note – that many of the areas of de-emphasis are not about stopping work so much as they are about taking advantage of where we find areas of duplication, or where we may be able to work in a more streamlined manner or work in partnerships so that the work may not stop. Some work may be reoriented, but it will still go on in a different way and also find some savings for us. Savings in the areas of de-emphasis are relatively modest at USD 2.7 million. If we started putting in large areas where we stop work, I think we would have some very interesting discussions here. I can tell you in all my years in FAO when we have tried to do that, we have never succeeded. Our proposal is very incremental in the areas of de-emphasis and they are a bit like efficiency savings in many cases.

There were some very specific questions about some of the outcome indicators. Japan asked about the SP4 indicators on trade. We have had a dialogue over several Governing Body meetings and informal meetings about our indicators related to the outcome 4.1 and how it is measured. I think we are getting close. I think your idea of merging these indicators 4.1.B and 4.1.C could be interesting. We will have to see how we can treat that in the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget.

On the question from Russia on the indicator in Strategic Objective 5, that is the SDG indicator 16.1.2 on conflict-related deaths, I think you have to see this in the context of several SDG indicators in SDG5. We have SDG indicators 1.5.3 and 13.1.2 that are related to disaster-related deaths and 16.1.2 is related to conflict-related deaths. The work that we do in SP5 is about building resilience; it is not about stopping deaths as such. It is about building resilience in whatever form. We also have indicator 11.5.2 which is related to economic losses due to disasters and conflicts. Our work under Objective 5 is about building resilience to whatever form disaster or conflict may come up.

The EU asked a very specific question on the exchange rate. As you know, the assessments are paid in US dollars and in Euro based on our estimate of the mix of expenditure in these two currencies. So from an operational point of view, we are relatively protected from exchange rate changes because we receive your contributions in the currencies or linked currencies that we expect to spend. On the margins, we have to be careful with some non-USD and non-Euro-based currencies, but the vast majority of our expenditure is in those two currencies or linked currencies. The representation of the exchange rate in the budget is purely notional. In this particular proposal, it helps us to ensure that we really can present a transparent budget with no effect of the exchange rate on the negotiations at the budget level.

Mr Chairperson, my colleagues here are better placed to answer many of the questions that have come up on some of the technical areas and also some of the operational areas.

Mr Kostas STAMOULIS (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

There are a couple of issues that first of all have to do with gender and SDG 5. I think the overall philosophy of picking SDG indicators was that they should be relevant to FAO's mandate, areas of work and comparative advantage. Now if one goes through the indicators for SDG 5, only two have to do with the FAO comparative advantage. This is 5.a.1, which has to do with a means of communication, because they have a letter in them, and 5.a.2, which has been picked up for SB3 and SB5. If you go to the rest of the indicators for SDG 5, then you see they have to do with reproductive health, empowering women and girls and other areas on which FAO does not have a team working.

I think we picked those that were most relevant to FAO's work: 5.a.1 has to do with a proportion of total agriculture population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land by sex, and then 5.a.2, proportion of countries where the legal framework, including customary law, guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control. So I think it is pretty consistent with the way that we picked the SDG indicators.

Another issue concerns nutrition. I think Mr Haight mentioned the fact that in terms of nutrition education, there has been a refocusing and redesigning of focus. Over the years FAO has produced several guidelines, curricula and guidelines for curricula, so it is time that we work with partners to make sure that they get picked up at the country level and contribute directly to what we call nutrition education. So this is the shift that has happened and we have a few paragraphs in the areas of de-emphasis where we tried to explain the issue of nutrition education.

As far as the question: what is the difference between the work on nutrition under Strategic Objective 6 and under the other Strategic Objectives, I think there is quite a bit in the Medium Term Plan write-up in several paragraphs. But just to give a quick response to this, the Global Nutrition Report which will contribute to this is under Objective 6. The work on putting together a Programme of Work for the Decade on Nutrition is under Objective 6. The work we do on producing guidelines for the incorporation of nutrition into food systems goes into Objective 6. Implementing that kind of work at country level goes through the Strategic Objectives 1 to 5. So these are the differences between the nutrition work under Objective 6 and under the Strategic Objectives 1 to 5. Now the results on the Strategic Objective 1 to 5 will be picked up by the indicators for those particular Strategic Objectives. This also fits the notion of mainstreaming nutrition.

As far as the gender resources, I think the allocation of gender resources covers the gender unit that we have to coordinate the mainstreaming work and the gender network which consists of five regional offices at P4 and P5 level full time and more than about 120 gender focal points. That is the whole structure that makes sure that gender is incorporated into the FAO Strategic Framework and through this to country policy, etc., is funded with this USD 21.8 million. So I think this is the essence of the mainstreaming function of the gender work.

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

I will try to cluster the questions without referring to the countries because some have been raised by several members. I will start with AMR.

Indeed, as you know, FAO has been considering AMR as part of the priority in the Programme of Work and Budget. If you see in the technical posts, we have two new technical posts on AMR and these all had FAO contributions. We are working with several countries. I would like to thank the United Kingdom, Russia and Sweden, just to mention some of our contributors, and the United States, and we are mobilizing extrabudgetary resources to fill the gap on our AMR work.

To give you an example, you remember last year during the UNGA our discussion was on AMR, and we have a declaration, a resolution coming from the General Assembly. The Secretary-General has just established an interagency working group where I will be representing FAO next week. We are very active working under the leadership of the Tripartite with WHO as our leader in AMR. I believe it may be our Action Plan. We have not enough resources in this budget to cover the work plan, but we are sure and confident that with extrabudgetary resources we will be able to fund and to achieve all of the outputs and outcomes we envisage.

One of the main parts of our Action Plan is on awareness raising and capacity building and we believe that we will be able to work with you, member countries, in enforcing your capacity in this regard. Also allow me to thank the Swedish government for their generous offer, increasing our internal capacity on human resources to deliver the Action Plan already approved by yourself.

Regarding Codex, we believe that as you have said, we have not increased the amount allocated to the Codex but we have enough resources to achieve our working plan and the plan we have already agreed and approved. We do not need additional resources to achieve what we envisage to deliver during the next biennium.

Regarding the areas to emphasize and de-emphasize soils: we have the Global Soil Partnership where we are also able to mobilize extrabudgetary resources and we believe soil is one of the priorities of FAO as I mentioned this morning. We were able to organize the Global Symposium on Soil Organic Carbon in March 2017. We have additional resources and also we have an additional post funded through the PWB.

The idea to de-emphasize on infrastructure is indeed not that FAO is completely leaving infrastructure. We believe that for the large and the big infrastructure, like dams, FAO does not have a comparative advantage. What is FAO doing on contributing to following the construction of the building of dams? However we work at the downstream level with small irrigation infrastructure.

In this area, it will be further strengthened, while de-emphasizing the upstream work. And this is what we said. We should focus where we really trust and are confident that we can be more effective than the others and we can establish and reinforce partnerships to deliver this area of work. This is what happens in the areas to de-emphasize. FAO is not completely leaving infrastructure but we are de-emphasizing the big infrastructure and working more at downstream level.

Regarding biodiversity, indeed we have one position on biodiversity. If you see on pages 30-31, genetic resources are discussed but they are linked to biodiversity. And this staff is envisaged to reinforce the capacity of the department when dealing with the coordination work of biodiversity, which is a new area to be emphasized in the CB Department.

Regarding climate change, being crosscutting I think it is the same as Mr Stamoulis' reply on nutrition. We work with the Strategic Objectives but, being a crosscutting area, the CB Department has the

responsibility to implement the climate change strategy which will help and that we expect to be endorsed by this Council. This is how we see the work we do with SPs and the crosscutting work done through all six by the Climate Change Department.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

I would limit my comments for now to the question on South-South Cooperation and the move from TCS to OPC; it is an interesting question. Both of the units come under the Deputy Director-General (Programmes) and there are advantages and disadvantages in both cases.

We see South-South Cooperation as having been particularly important for us. You can see it in terms of resources, not just financial contributions but also in terms of non-monetary resources. You can also see it of course in terms of partnership between governments and other actors.

Management believes that at this juncture in the maturity of the work of that unit that there are greater synergies to be found in the partnership and capacity development division given the somewhat parallel work with the parliamentary forums, farmer to farmer South-South Cooperation, academic departments, etc.

The work of the South-South Cooperation unit will largely remain as it is, and it is the same unit, but there are a lot of very innovative ideas coming from both sides out of the South-South unit and out of the partnerships and Capacity Development Division that we believe can be better harnessed in terms of those synergies in that configuration rather than the other. But it does remain under the same DDG Programmes area so we will keep a close eye on that but it does appear to us to offer greater synergy in the proposal as it stands.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We are particularly grateful for the Deputy Director-General (Programmes) for his response on South-South Cooperation. However, China still takes the position that the proposal to move South-South Cooperation to OPC, whether such a change will strengthen or weaken South-South Cooperation, leaves us rather unsure.

We still hope that a separate unit of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation will be created under OPC. If South-South Cooperation is moved to OPC with the team dissolved, the work of South-South Cooperation will be harmed.

Finally, we hope FAO could consider China's recommendation and carry out an assessment before any decision is made to change such an organizational structure.

CHAIRPERSON

What I heard being repeated by many of you is that this Council for the second time recommends a consensual budget level to the Conference. It is not said just like that but with an understanding of the contents of the Programme of Work and Budget on areas which have been prioritized and areas which have been de-emphasized, and areas which have been de-emphasized but not dropped. We all agree to the resources which have been allocated, because being allocated to the areas which we have agreed is priority.

After some time we need more resources for those areas, or areas which have been de-emphasized, while appreciating the fact of the zero-growth budget.

I have heard good new ideas which have been brought up. I think these new ideas could be further developed through consultations, formal seminars, etc. I think they needed to be taken up and we have got mechanisms where we can do this so that next time such good ideas can be reflected, for example, in the Programme of Work and Budget on the Medium Term Review.

So with those words I would like to make conclusions on Item 4, *the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19*.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my conclusions for item 4 are as follows:

1. The Council considered the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (MTP/PWB), as well as additional information provided by the Secretariat in Information Notes 1, 2 and 3, and endorsed the recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees and of their Joint Meeting.
2. Regarding the proposals to improve FAO's financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Council:
 - a) noted the ongoing discussion of the After-Service Medical Care past service liability by FAO and the UN Common system and agreed with the recommendation to continue the approach previously approved by Conference of partial funding of USD 14.1 million as a separate additional assessment for the biennium; and
 - b) agreed to review the proposal for a one-time assessment on Members of USD 16.2 million to bring the Working Capital Fund to USD 42 million, equivalent to one-month's Regular Programme cash flow, in future Programmes of Work and Budget.
3. Regarding the substance of the proposals in the Medium Term Plan/Programme of Work and Budget, the Council:
 - 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's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - b) supported the priorities, areas of programmatic de-emphasis and resources allocations for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6,
 - c) approved the reformulation of definitions for priorities in paragraphs 52.b) and 52.g) of document C 2017/3 as requested by the Programme Committee;
 - d) cautioned against inclusion of areas which are not centrally consistent with the mandate and comparative advantages of FAO, as a basis for action, as well as references to the World Humanitarian Summit;
 - e) reiterating the importance of multilingualism at FAO, underlined the importance of maintaining the integrity of language services' capacity within the PWB 2018-19;
 - f) looked forward to reviewing the Strategic Objective Output indicators and targets to be presented in the Adjustments to the PWB 2018-19; and
 - g) encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
4. Regarding the budget level for 2018-19, the Council:
 - a) welcomed the proposed flat nominal budget level to carry out the full delivery of the Programme of Work as realistic and innovative, especially in view of prevailing global macro-economic conditions;
 - b) appreciated the identification of proposed areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings with a view to reallocating the 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 PWB 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; and
 - e) endorsed the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million at a budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 = USD 1.22, and recommended approval by the Conference of the draft Conference Resolution, as contained in C 2017/3 paragraph 146, and set out in the *Appendix* to this Report.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

With a reference to paragraphs (b) and (g), I would like to reiterate, if I may, China's position. We had proposed to modify 52(b) and (c). In 52(b), we were suggesting an addition and that is a reference to the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and to include as well South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation in the efforts to promote food security.

Then in point 3(g), you refer to partnerships and how they can be used through the comparative advantages of FAO, including through South-South Cooperation, and China would like to include the creation of a department or division that would deal with South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation to emphasize the lead role that FAO plays in South-South Cooperation.

CHAIRPERSON

Could you please clarify your request?

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to ask you to add a mention under point 3(c) of your conclusion, where you say paragraph 52, to add agro-ecology as well because we believe it is very important. Together with French and Italian Ministers for Agriculture, we all worked on this. So we think agro-ecology is very important and should be added under (c).

Also at the end of the little (c), should include 'including South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation' because, through that kind of cooperation, we can play a greater role in sustainable food systems

And also we hope to see at the end of point 3(g), where it says 'through South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation' to change it to 'set up a separate South-South and Triangular Cooperation Division' so that we can reflect more clearly FAO's leading position in the global South-South Cooperation.

CHAIRPERSON

If I understand correctly your request for point 3(g), you want a Division to be created in FAO. There have been discussions on the structure of FAO which have taken place through a long procedure to come to agree to what is appended now and added to the structure of FAO.

But I leave it to get further explanation but it is something which is already negotiated, not in such a setting here. It might not be easy.

Could you go back to your other points, please?

Mr Yubo XU (China)

You said that it is not easy for the establishment of a new division of South-South Cooperation. It is a long procedure. But I must say we have gone through a long consideration to propose this idea.

CHAIRPERSON

I want to know if you have any issues on item 2.

Mr Yubo XU (China)

No, not on Item 2. Actually on Item 3(c) and (g) of your conclusion.

Under point 3(c) I would like to add agro-ecology because we have had a seminar with France and Italy in FAO on the theme of agro-ecology and GIAHS. I think a lot of representatives from RBA attended that seminar and I think there is a basis of consensus to add this, just like biodiversity and biotechnology.

So we would like to add GIAHS after agro-ecology because they share a lot of similarities. So I hope for your kind consideration, Mr Chair.

Another point is 52(c). I do not know whether you already endorsed it. We wish to add ‘through the South-South Cooperation and the Triangular Cooperation’, at the end of the sentence. If you agree, we would be very happy to hear that.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

I wonder if you could repeat your proposed language in section number 2 regarding proposals to increase the financial health of FAO. I want to make sure I understood what your language is and ensure that we properly reviewed it during the discussion.

CHAIRPERSON

2. Regarding the proposals to improve FAO’s financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Council:

- a) noted the ongoing discussion of the After-Service Medical Care past service liability by FAO and the UN Common system and agreed with the recommendation to continue the approach previously approved by Conference of partial funding of USD 14.1 million as a separate additional assessment for the biennium; and
- b) agreed to review the proposal for a one-time assessment on Members of USD 16.2 million to bring the Working Capital Fund to USD 42 million, equivalent to one month’s Regular Programme cash flow, in future Programmes of Work and Budget.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

I would like to pass the floor to Malta to speak on behalf of the European Union and the 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa Frazier (Observer for Malta)

We would like to see reflected in the conclusions the principal which we stated, whereby the Secretariat indicates what results will be achieved or not achieved in areas that are prioritized or de-emphasized. We would like to see that in the conclusions please.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We tried to be clear in our intervention about our concerns on both the After-Service Medical Care and the Working Capital Fund. It is not that we do not disagree with the importance of the topic and the need for the UN-wide system to come to a solution and, indeed, we commend FAO for the efforts it has made in this case.

It is our understanding that FAO is actually significantly farther ahead than most UN programmes, funds, and agencies when it comes to this particular question.

I do not think we agreed to points (a) or (b) in the course of the discussion today. We did note the ongoing discussion of ASMC but I do not remember us agreeing to continue to fund at last year’s level. Nor do I remember point (b), that we agreed to review proposals or to further consider bringing USD 16.2 million to the Working Capital Fund.

Again, that is not to diminish the importance of this or the need to work to this, but I need to stress the United States of America, for us to have a zero nominal growth budget on which everything else here depends, we clearly signalled those two additional points would in essence break the ZNG. We would therefore ask for language that implies that we are going to be able to agree to this not be included in your report.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

I would like to support the statement by the colleague of United States, in particular with the view to the deliberations on the Working Capital Fund.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

En ce qui concerne le paragraphe 52 b), en effet une manifestation parallèle, qui s’est tenue ici il y a trois semaines, a mis en lumière la cohérence entre l’agroécologie et les Systèmes ingénieux du patrimoine agricole mondial (SIPAM), et le fait que les SIPAM faisaient partie intégrante de

l'agroécologie. Cependant, jamais personne n'a proposé d'ajouter dans les priorités les SIPAM en tant que tels. Si nous avons mis la résistance aux antimicrobiens, l'agroécologie, la biotechnologie, c'est bien parce qu'un programme de travail de la FAO a été élaboré. Sur l'agroécologie, il y a eu un symposium international, cinq conférences régionales, il est proposé un nouvel événement lors de la COP23 et l'année prochaine de nouveau, un symposium international. Sur les biotechnologies, je crois qu'un symposium international et des symposiums régionaux sont en préparation. Pour les SIPAM, il s'agit d'une nouvelle proposition.

Deuxièmement, sur le paragraphe 52 c), si je comprends bien la proposition, on considérerait maintenant 2,8 millions de dollars pour les systèmes alimentaires, y compris la nutrition et la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, en particulier au niveau des pays, à travers la coopération Sud-Sud. Cette proposition me pose problème parce que cela signifie que la FAO ne pourra plus intervenir sur les systèmes alimentaires en dehors de la coopération Sud-Sud. Cela me paraît quand même aller un peu loin, car la coopération Sud-Sud deviendrait une modalité d'intervention exclusive de la FAO sur les systèmes alimentaires. La FAO peut aussi avoir, il me semble, un processus de soutien directement aux systèmes alimentaires sans passer par la coopération Nord-Sud ou la coopération Sud-Sud.

Quant à la création d'une division spécifique Sud-Sud, je me tourne vers le Secrétariat: c'est la première fois depuis que je siège dans ce Conseil que je vois une proposition de création d'une nouvelle division dans l'organigramme du Secrétariat. Normalement, toutes les réformes de structure sont étudiées par les comités avant d'être présentées au Conseil et en général, d'ailleurs, elles sont même présentées dans une session informelle, comme en novembre dernier, parce qu'elles ont bien sûr une incidence importante sur le fonctionnement de notre Organisation. Par conséquent, sur ces trois sujets, je pense qu'on aurait besoin de consultations supplémentaires avant de prendre une décision; ce sont là trois propositions assez capitales, surtout les deux dernières sur la coopération Sud-Sud et sur le paragraphe 52 c).

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I just wanted to take the floor to provide some clarification on the two items which are mentioned here. One is the After-Service Medical Care and one is the comment regarding the Working Capital Fund.

Regarding the After-Service Medical Care, this is not a new issue. It was approved by the Conference some years ago because the liability was constantly increasing and this was a method for being over a period of time if I recall correctly. At that time the period mentioned was 30 years to contribute towards the reduction of that liability because now that we have international accounting standards. If these liabilities are not funded, you are likely to have an external auditor's qualifications on the financial statements. So that was the reason for this USD 14.1 million, over a period of I think it was 30 years, to try and reduce that liability.

As for the Working Capital Fund, it is a safety net. If for example the contributions are late or delayed for whatever reason and the Organization's activities need to go on, this is a safety net. If that safety net was not there, then you may find that the Organization has to borrow externally because it has the authority to borrow. Therefore, it is obviously for Members to decide but it is connected with good financial management to provide a safety net in case there are not sufficient contributions for the Organization's activities to carry on. I believe the Organization has the authority but has not been using it for some years although in the past years, they used it quite often.

CHAIRPERSON

We are trying to incorporate some of the interventions which were mentioned. I would like to ask the United States and Germany if they have followed up and they agree to the explanation which was given by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee first in regard to 2(a) on the After-Service Medical Coverage. This has been coming up all the time. We discussed this issue of the financial health of the Organization and it has been there because it was a Conference decision.

But as regards 2(b), his suggested proposal: agreed to review the proposal for a one-time assessment of Members of USD 16.2 million to bring the Working Capital Fund to USD 42 million, equivalent to one month's regular cash flow, not for this Programme of Work and Budget but in the future. This is to undergo a review in the next session. It was proposed but, during the discussion, the Finance Committee

never came to a consensus that it should happen now. I think this happened even during the last biennium so it is for future discussion.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We thank the Finance Committee Chairman for his lucid comprehensive discussion of the rationale behind both After-Service Medical Care and the Working Capital Fund. Indeed, in following your direction to Council of not rehashing arguments that we had already held in the Committee, we do not necessarily need to go into further detail on that, other than to say my delegation at every step of the way has indicated concerns with this both in the Finance Committee, in our intervention here, in our formal intervention and in my follow-up interventions. I also believe other countries, especially in the Finance Committee, were speaking to this as well.

Again not diminishing the seriousness of the topic that we are taking a look at and noting your point that this is something to look at in the future, I wonder if you could not make the same points by replacing the word 'agreed' in both of your points with 'takes note'. In other words, "noted the ongoing discussion of the After-Service Medical Care by FAO and the encumbrances, and takes note of the recommendation to continue the approach to finance and then further takes note of the proposals for a one-time USD 16.2 million addition".

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

Again I want to agree with what my colleague from the United States has suggested and we support his proposal.

M. Mongui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Cette question sur les obligations concernant l'assurance maladie devient pour nous comme un serpent de mer, nous n'arrivons toujours pas à la résoudre. Pourtant, la Conférence avait déjà adopté une résolution pour un financement partiel, qui tiendrait sur 14,1 millions de dollars, mais nous ne l'avons jamais effectivement mis en place. Je ne sais pas s'il faut un courage particulier pour pouvoir mettre en œuvre ces résolutions. Chaque année, à chaque négociation du budget, cette question revient.

Je comprends très bien les positions des uns et des autres sur ce problème, qui est réel, parce que comme l'a expliqué le Président du Comité financier, nous avons maintenant des instruments, comme l'IPSAS et autres, intégrés dans le processus informatisé et sans lesquels nous n'aurions pas obtenu d'un auditeur externe ou d'un commissaire aux comptes la qualification des comptes. Il y donc un problème.

Je pense que nous devons collectivement réfléchir sur comment, effectivement, mettre en œuvre cette décision de la Conférence, qui remonte à longtemps, mais qui n'a jamais été mise en application et qui revient à chaque proposition de budget.

C'est une question toujours difficile à trancher que nous sommes toujours obligés de mettre en suspens. Je ne dispose pas de formule magique pour résoudre le problème, mais je voudrais dire ici qu'il faut y réfléchir vraiment et que les positions tranchées sur la question ne feront pas du tout avancer l'Organisation.

Vous savez que le système des Nations Unies est en train de l'examiner et, c'est vrai, depuis dix ans. Il pourrait falloir encore 10 ou 20 autres années pour conclure la question et entretemps, le déficit du Fond général ne fait que s'accroître. Nous avons donc certaines obligations auxquelles il faudrait revenir et je souhaiterais que nous ayons une discussion sérieuse lors de ce Conseil, peut-être avant vendredi, pour qu'on puisse se mettre d'accord sur comment aller de l'avant.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We still think the Chair should give some feedback on the comments made by the Chairman of the Programme Committee or to add something. Several days ago we had a Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee. In the Finance Committee, we reflected our views quite strongly on the GIAHS; we are not a member of the Programme Committee. So the French Ambassador does not know how we expressed our views including to amend certain text. We could not discuss the matters under the Programme Committee and that is why we use this very important forum today to express our views which we already expressed in the Finance Committee.

About paragraph 52, we agree. The Chairman of the Programme Committee said we could add especially through South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation. In that way, we are not exclusively talking about South-South Cooperation or Triangular Cooperation on the format of cooperation as well.

Also I want to add about the structural adjustment of FAO. Mr Chairman, it seems you think this is the first time you heard our views. In fact, we have discussed with the relevant people and also talked bilaterally with FAO as well, so this is a formal forum again. We are using this formal forum to express our views. So TCS is already there and in fact the FAO wants to change the name of TCS. We do not like this idea. We wanted to keep the TCS so, for the structural adjustment, our views should be there from a long time ago and we think that it is an important juncture needed to take into account our suggestions. We hope the Deputy Director-General and all the important heads of divisions, because you are all sitting here, that is why we wanted to repeat again, please take into account our suggestions.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, I was not hearing for the first time about the creation of the division or the department raising the profile of South-South Cooperation. It is not the first time but I do not get it in the various documents where this was negotiated, when it has been presented, it does not come out, you see. That is why I said whatever we have on the organizational structure of this institution, it has been through negotiations through the various governing bodies and where you are represented, and we come to the end, you see. So it is not there. It is not that I have not heard it. I have heard it several times.

Anyway it is upon the Members to see if you can agree to change the structure in this setting here. It is not easy. I ask the question and I conclude myself. I know it is not easy. Anyway I leave it to the Members to decide. But you have heard what the Chairman of the Programme Committee has said and this is not the end of the discussion. It is still open. We still have other years to come. There is another biennium which we are discussing here so it is an area which can be looked into if there are any annual adjustments which can be recommended by the Conference. It can come from the Conference. That is why I am saying this is not the end here. That must be there. If not being there, then it has died a natural death. No, it has not. The Conference may decide in the adjustment to look into the establishment of a division of South-South Cooperation in FAO. That is my advice anyway.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for your explanation. We also believe communication is ever so important. We think the Division of South-South Cooperation which exists in FAO is not a new establishment. At the moment it is named TCS, the Division of South-South Cooperation or mobilization of resources. We wanted to retain the division of South-South Cooperation rather than to put the South-South cooperation into OPC.

CHAIRPERSON

Could I know from the Secretariat: do you have a division of South-South Cooperation?

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

Yes, currently the Division is 'Resource Mobilization and South-South Cooperation'.

CHAIRPERSON

So the request of China is it should stay there?

Mr Yubo XU (China)

Yes, I think that the correct name is the Division of South-South Cooperation and Resource Mobilization.

M. Mongui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Nous sommes dans une situation un peu difficile. Lorsqu'une telle proposition est faite dans un Conseil, peut-être que la meilleure façon de l'aborder, Monsieur le Président, sous votre contrôle bien entendu, serait de proposer au Conseil de prendre note et que si une révision était envisagée dans le Programme

de travail et budget, elle soit présentée ultérieurement, mais que nous devrions d'abord nous mettre d'accord sur l'essentiel.

Des propositions nouvelles comme celle-ci peuvent peut-être faire l'objet d'une proposition de révision qui pourrait être examinée en automne 2017 ou au printemps 2018. Cela dépendra de comment la révision budgétaire peut se faire. À l'heure actuelle nous n'avons pas les ressources pour examiner une telle question. Elle est trop compliquée parce qu'elle implique des mouvements, des déplacements et autres.

Je ne sais pas dans ce contexte-ci comment il faudrait s'y prendre, mais la suggestion est peut-être que le Conseil prenne note et demande au Secrétariat d'envisager une révision lors des prochaines sessions, en automne 2017 ou au printemps 2018.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us finish the formulation and then I will read the conclusions again. Thank you very much for your patience. That is what we are here for. I will again go through everything. I know I am tiring you but I want to be consistent as we had a big break. In view of the debate which has gone on with some items, let me go through my conclusions for Item 4.

1. The Council considered the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, as well as additional information provided by the Secretariat in Information Notes 1, 2 and 3, and endorsed the recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees and of their Joint Meeting.
2. Regarding the proposals to improve FAO's financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Council:
 - a) noted the ongoing discussion of the After-Service Medical Care past service liability by FAO and the UN Common system and took note of the recommendation to continue the approach previously approved by Conference of partial funding of USD 14.1 million as a separate additional assessment for the biennium; and
 - b) took note of the proposal for a one-time assessment on Members of USD 16.2 million to bring the Working Capital Fund to USD 42 million, equivalent to one-month's Regular Programme cash flow, in future Programmes of Work and Budget;
3. Regarding the substance of the proposals in the MTP/PWB, the Council:
 - 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's Strategic Objectives within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - b) supported the priorities, areas of programmatic de-emphasis and resources allocations for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6, and looked forward to including the impact on results in future PWBs;
 - c) approved the reformulation of definitions for priorities in paragraphs 52.b) and 52.g) of document C 2017/3 as requested by the Programme Committee, to read as follows:
 - i. USD 3.1 million for support to sustainable agricultural production, particularly at country level, including agroecology, genetic resources and governance;
 - ii. USD 1.2 million for work to support peace-building in relation to food security, conflict analysis and partnerships;
 - d) cautioned against inclusion of areas which are not centrally consistent with the mandate and comparative advantages of FAO, as a basis for action, as well as references to the World Humanitarian Summit;
 - e) reiterating the importance of multilingualism at FAO, underlined the importance of maintaining the integrity of language services' capacity within the PWB 2018-19;

- f) looked forward to reviewing the Strategic Objective Output indicators and targets to be presented in the Adjustments to the PWB 2018-19; and
 - g) encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to be reflected in the proposed new title of the Office of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development and South-South Cooperation
4. Regarding the budget level for 2018-19, the Council:
- a) welcomed the proposed flat nominal budget level to carry out the full delivery of the Programme of Work as realistic and innovative, especially in view of prevailing global macro-economic conditions;
 - b) appreciated the identification of proposed areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings with a view to reallocating the 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 PWB net appropriation resources in a flat nominal budget;
 - d) welcomed the increase of the share of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) to 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation, in line with Conference Resolution 9/89 and recommendation in Conference Resolution 6/2015; and
 - e) endorsed the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million at a budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 = USD 1.22, and recommended approval by the Conference of the draft Conference Resolution, as contained in C 2017/3, paragraph 146, and set out in *Appendix* to this Report.

I hope this meets your desire at this point.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation)

We wanted to ask you whether you could perhaps kindly repeat point 3 b)? Thank you

CHAIRPERSON

Point 3b) reads as follows: supported the priorities, areas of programmatic de-emphasis and resources allocations for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6, and looked forward to including the impact on results in future PWBs.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation)

It is my mistake. I just checked with my notes and I actually should have said 3(c), the next paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Point 3(c) reads: approved the formulation of definitions for priorities in paragraphs 52.b and 52.g of document C 2017/3 as requested by the Programme Committee to read as follows.

- i. USD 3.1 million for support to sustainable agriculture production, particularly at country level, including agroecology, genetic resources, and governance.
- ii. USD 1.2 million for work to support peacebuilding in relation to food security, conflict analysis, and partnerships.

Mr Yubo XU (China)

I re-read your conclusions and we have two questions. One is on those fields which are no longer priorities. We consider the language services should remain a priority and therefore we do have questions in this subject.

In 3(g) you noted now, what did you mean by this? You have encouraged, as it says here, the continued use of partnerships, etc. What exactly does this mean?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Thank you again to the Secretary for the reformulation of point two which we can agree to as reformulated, which we have taken out, agreed and replaced with “takes note”.

We also note that the Draft Resolution now in Paragraph 146 would need to be altered and in order to reflect that change, we would need to remove sub-paragraph C of the proposed resolution as well as the clause to fund the amortization of ASMC in sub-paragraph F. But again, we appreciate your flexibility and the change on that.

As a new topic, just a question on paragraph 52(b). We understood the Programme Committee Chairman at the beginning of the Session to talk about a corrigendum on a language that was specifically to address what 52(b) was going to look like, and we were wondering what the status of that corrigendum would be.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Our intervention was in the same line as the last point of the United States. I think your 3(c) said that the Council would support the proposed revised reformulations that were endorsed by the Programme Committee.

However, when you read the wording, you read the original formulation instead of the revised, so I guess your intention was to actually have the wording of the revised formulations by the Programme Committee, correct?

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

Speaking for Germany, I would like to indicate that we are happy with the reformulation of conclusion 2(b) as you gave it just a second ago. I would like to pass the floor to Malta to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

We would like you to, if possible, re-read paragraph 3(b) and (f) because that is where we think that you have placed our request for the principle of results basically. So we would like to have the text again, 3(b) and 3(f).

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation)

I think that, in the wording of 3(c) and for 52(g), a small mistake has crept in. The recommendation from the Committee did not contain the word “peacebuilding” so I think it was a technical mistake in your summing up which can be very easily put right.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your understanding and agreeing to some of the paragraphs which have been reformulated. Now I will go to paragraphs which have been requested to be read again.

Point 3(b): supported the priorities, areas of programmatic de-emphasis and resources allocation for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6 and looked forward to including the impact of results on future Programme of Work and Budgets.

3(c): approved the reformulation of definitions for priorities in paragraph 52(b) and 52(g) of document C 2017/3 as requested by the Programme Committee to read as follows:

(i): USD 3.1 million for support to sustainable agriculture production, including agroecology, biodiversity, and biotechnologies in particular at the country level.

(ii): USD 1.2 million to support conflict-affected rural livelihoods in link with food security, conflict analysis, and partnerships.

f): looked forward to reviewing the Strategic Objective output indicators and targets to be presented in the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019; and

(g): encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to be reflected in the proposed new title of the Office for Partnership, Advocacy, Capacity Development, and South-South Cooperation.

I think we have a consensus.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

Mr Chairperson, as regards your text for paragraph 52(b), China still would like to see GIAHS after agroecology. That is our first point.

Our second point is you are talking about paragraph 3(g) in your conclusions at the end, mentioning the OPC with a new title which would make it a new Division. We do have concerns. We would like an assessment, an evaluation, before any changes are made. So we would like it after the word evaluation, before changing the title.

CHAIRPERSON

With some consultations with the Secretariat as well as the Chairpersons of the Council Committees. On point 3(c)(i), you will see that sustainable agriculture production, agroecology, biodiversity, biotechnologies encompass a very wide range of subjects. That is why in fact in one way when you are talking of sustainable agricultural production including ecology, biodiversity, it encompasses in one way or another GIAHS. And the intention here was to mention and elaborate on the wider subjects.

As for point 3(g), what is holding us now is 3(c)(i), a request for increasing GIAHS. I have given an explanation why GIAHS is not included in there.

Point (g) remains as I read it: “that encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to be reflected in the proposed new title, the Office of Partnership, Advocacy, and Capacity”.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

For us with GIAHS, we have a reason for wanting to include it in this paragraph. We are not the experts but in the seminars the experts explained to us the role of GIAHS and I think there is consensus on this for the FAO.

We talked about biotechnology, biodiversity, but for us it is very appropriate to include GIAHS in this paragraph. So could we add “including GIAHS”? Could we just add that? After biotechnology and biotechnology, we would have “including GIAHS”.

In point 3(g), could you repeat the end of the sentence please?

CHAIRPERSON

Let me read the full text of point 3(g), “encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to be reflected in the proposed new title of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy, Capacity Development and South-South Cooperation”.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Again, on 52(b), we are just trying to get a sense of what the current status is. We think we can, without reservation, support the language that came out of the Programme Committee, but we are wondering if there are further changes that are on the table.

Again, in terms of how the Programme Committee came up with it, it is corrected language. We can support that as it is written.

CHAIRPERSON

The paragraph from the Programme Committee is what I have read. That is USD 3.1 million to support sustainable agriculture production, including agroecology, biodiversity, and biotechnologies, in particular at the country level.

GIAHS was not included. Maybe the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, I do not know if you discussed this issue of GIAHS at this point?

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Cela n'a pas été abordé au Comité du Programme.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

Regarding GIAHS, you said that we cannot perhaps discuss this subject here, but actually throughout the whole world there are countries which have started work in the GIAHS area.

It is not a subject which has never been raised or tackled at the national level. We have this, for instance, in the G20. It is an initiative there. It is not something completely new.

Of course we agree with the Chair who said that it was not discussed in the Programme Committee, but we were observers there. We did not have the right to speak. We spoke in the Finance Committee and that committee said we could not discuss it in that forum. It has to be talked about in the Programme Committee. That is why we are talking about it now.

I hope that you will take my remarks into consideration.

Following on from that on South-South Cooperation, how should we best use the comparative advantage of the FAO? We think that that is a very important subject. So I would ask the Secretariat. How should we reflect South-South Cooperation correctly? The name of this new division does not have any mention of South-South Cooperation. That is why we are saying we need to assess this. Then we need to be prudent after that assessment. Then we can take the decision.

I am just saying all of this in the interest of South-South Cooperation.

Today the G77 and China accord great importance to South-South Cooperation and also to the impact on changing the Organization's organigramme to bring in South-South Cooperation. We need to assess this.

Since we support South-South Cooperation, why do we not have a much more active attitude to it? Thank you for your attention and thank you to all of those countries as well as regional groups which supported South-South Cooperation.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

As a Member of the Programme Committee, I would support a proposal for 52(b). As pointed out as well by Argentina we remember, that the reason for the proposed reformulation by the Programme Committee for 52(b) was based on the conclusions of the COAG report that highlighted agroecology, biodiversity and biotechnologies. It was an agreement after careful balance and consideration and we can support this recommendation.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for that reference to the technical governing body which brought up this issue to the Programme Committee. I hope, China, you are represented in COAG. Please, you have the floor.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We are looking at the report of COAG. We saw that there it said that FAO must support the GIAHS, and that is especially important at national level. So thank you for reminding and recording this point.

There is a paragraph in the report that does state the importance of the GIAHS and we support countries in initiating work in the area of the GIAHS. This is in the COAG report, I repeat, and China is a member of the COAG Bureau, so our view was reflected in that report. As we are not members of the

Programme Committee, Chairman, we addressed this issue here in the Council and submitted it to you for your consideration.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, China. Make a clarification on South-South Cooperation, please.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Programmes)

I hope that in my earlier remarks I did not give the wrong impression that we were in any way diminishing the importance that we assigned to South-South Cooperation. It is for us very important and we do not see in any way that decreasing with the proposed change. We were hoping, in fact, that it may increase given the synergies with the other parts of OPC.

But what we have are two divisions. At the moment currently, one division, TCS, is the division of South-South Cooperation and Resource Mobilization that combines the work on resource mobilization and the work on South-South Cooperation which is a coherent team. The other division is the Office of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development. What is proposed is that the South-South Cooperation team now in TCS moves to OPC, and given the importance, in fact, that that work on South-South and Triangular Cooperation has in the current proposal also include that in the name of the division of OPC. But the current work remains and we believe that the existing work in OPC that is somewhat analogous, there would be mutual benefits from doing that. We think that we have sufficient understanding of the units in the two divisions and where the greater synergy may come out of the mutual learning and so on to be satisfied from our perspective at least that this would be worth doing.

CHAIRPERSON

I think China has understood this item. Let me go back to the issue.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

Thank you to the Deputy Director-General for his explanation. China and FAO have the same objective in relation to South-South Cooperation, that is why through cooperation we have started work and also to strengthen work in South-South Cooperation. We have the same objective here. There was just a difficulty or a difference between the two of us which is about the institutional re-organization with South-South Cooperation in the Division.

We have a concern here. We would like FAO to be more careful and have an evaluation here and to be sure that this will strengthen South-South Cooperation. Because if this does not happen, if South-South Cooperation is weakened, then this would be a shame because we know that the teams that are working on South-South Cooperation have been in place for a long time and now they will go into the OPC Division which looks primarily or deals primarily with private partnerships. This could weaken South-South Cooperation. This is the argument we are putting forward.

We do not have any other objectives here. Our only objective here is not to just have a single division but to strengthen our work on South-South Cooperation. I believe that this could be a compromise and I would like to ask you to consider our proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Members, if you can give me Cameroon and United Kingdom before you make your intervention. Could you listen to my new formulation, I do not know if you agree. This is my request. Thank you, United Kingdom. Thank you, Cameroon. Now let me read my formulation. This is as far as I can go on this issue.

For point 3(c)(i), I put it for the Members' agreement or consensus, 3(i) 52(b), USD 3.1 million to support sustainable agriculture production, including agroecology, biodiversity, GIAHS and biotechnologies, in particular at the country level. Are the Members in agreement to this formulation?

China is in agreement. Thank you, China. I can see you saluting me. I think you will also salute me on this other point.

And (g) “encourage the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to be reflected in the proposed new title the Office of Partnerships, Advocacy, Capacity Development, and South-South Cooperation, ensuring thereby the integrity of South-South Cooperation in FAO”.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

Thank you for this new wording.

Regarding the Division, if you wish to include South-South Cooperation, we want the name to be the *Division on South-South Cooperation and Partnerships*. That would make it possible for us to emphasize the importance of South-South Cooperation with FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

I may ask the Members again.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

It would appear that China is reopening negotiations on your proposal, so as a package we could support it. But if China feels that they need to reopen it, we would ask because GIAHS is not the only type of topic of work, that your revision to 52 b) be revised not just to have a GIAHS reference but to further qualify systems such as GIAHS if we are going to reopen negotiations.

CHAIRPERSON

We are reminded that we are moving in the spirit of consensus. Members have agreed on 3(b) (i) as amended on a consensus basis. So I expect flexibility. Otherwise given what we have already agreed may be questioned.

Cameroon, you have the floor for point (g).

M. Mongui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Monsieur le Président, je crois que nous partageons entièrement ce que vous avez dit parce que nous sommes en train d'essayer de construire quelque chose sur la base du consensus.

Nous ne sommes pas très confortables avec l'ajout des SIPAM parce que nous faisons entièrement confiance au travail des Comités techniques qui ont examiné cette question et nous ont rendu compte.

La question des SIPAM a été traitée au Comité de l'agriculture, dont le rapport a été présenté et adopté par la 155^{ème} session du Conseil. Ce rapport sera présenté à la Conférence et sera examiné en Commission I. Nous ne savons donc pas s'il faut ramener des questions déjà traitées par ailleurs, ou qui n'ont pas été traitées, pour cette session, par les Comités techniques.

Nous acceptons parce que vous essayez de nous amener vers un consensus, soit, mais il faut également que de l'autre côté, il y ait une certaine flexibilité, car on n'obtient pas tout ce que l'on veut. Je prierais donc notre collègue, ayant déjà obtenu ce qu'il demandait à propos des SIPAM, de ne pas trop insister pour les autres questions, qui ont des implications que nous ne maîtrisons pas encore. Telle est notre suggestion.

Mr Ryna WILSON (Australia)

Just to chime in and support the comments of the United States about GIAHS and probably just to add a comment that we have gone through an extensive prioritization exercise, so this sort of sits a bit uncomfortably to be sort of modifying those priorities in some implicit or explicit way.

Ms Liz NASSKAU (United Kingdom)

Also to reiterate comments of the US, Australia and others who have reminded us also that we are talking here about the summary of the Chair on discussions that have been held on this Agenda Item today.

It is not entirely appropriate then to be introducing new issues or to be discussing possible introductions of new departments and so on. So we are very flexible. We are ready to accept the wording that you have proposed, Chair, but I do think that we need to conclude your summary and move forward on this.

Of course there are ongoing discussions that can be held. We all value the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation and so on but let us focus on the summary that you are providing us with here.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for this encouragement to Members.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

Thank you again for allowing me to speak. I agree with delegates that we should put emphasis on the conclusions of the Chair and not re-open the already agreed contents. We do not have this intact. From the very beginning we said that we need to discuss only this part of your conclusion, that you have already reached consensus on many elements. Only this point now, we still have flexibility.

If you can ensure that in the new title we can keep South-South Cooperation, it is not reopening negotiations because in the original TCS, South-South Cooperation was in the title. We do not want that altered. Moving on to the OPC, we lose the title, South-South Cooperation in the title.

It existed originally. We should keep it in the title of the new unit. So we did not have any intent to reopen any negotiations and I think until now, Mr President, you have always been trying towards consensus. I think I have already reached the purpose to a certain extent. Now we just need to ensure we have South-South Cooperation in the title.

Actually we have been showing flexibility all the time instead of asking to renegotiate. We all go toward the same goal and I think we have already reached the limit. Actually everybody present here is spending time to discuss it. I thank everybody for your attention.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

I am just taking the floor to say we agree with the way you have summarized these issues. Of course like the others have said, if they are willing to reopen discussions on items that we had agreed to and if this, then we might have to ask you to re-read the whole summary so that we can start commenting if the indication is that issues can be reopened for discussion.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

Our comment is only limited to paragraph 3(g). In fact, we understand the logic behind what China was trying to mention. I think there is a concern that when you put South-South Cooperation in another department and without clearly mentioning the South-South Cooperation, it could be diluted. I think your summary reflected this by inserting South-South Cooperation in the title.

So as I understood, China was only trying to summarize the title of the existing division to have the words South-South Cooperation included. So it is not a new department or a new division; it is the same department. But highlighting the word South-South Cooperation which was before under resource mobilization. So I do not think this should be a problem for anyone.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. There is no problem. I think you all agreed to my summary. I take it that we agree to conclude on this Agenda Item. Thank you.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, my conclusions for Item 4 have been accepted. Thank you very much.

I will now pass the floor to Angola who will provide us with the name of the Representative from the Africa Group on the Drafting Committee.

Ms Maria Esperanca PIRES DOS SANTOS (Angola)

The country is Kenya. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the Members have no objection to having Kenya on the Drafting Committee. Thank you. I congratulate Kenya.

Thank you, Angola. This brings us to the end of this afternoon's Plenary Meeting. The Council will resume its work tomorrow morning at 9.30 sharp. I wish you all a good evening. Thank you very much.

The meeting rose at 21:03 hours

La séance est levée à 21 h 03

Se levanta la sesión a las 21.03

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2016 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| THIRD PLENARY MEETING TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 25 April 2017 |

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9:43 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 43
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.43
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 7. Reports of the 165th (7-8 February 2017) and 166th (27-31 March 2017) Sessions of the Finance Committee

Point 7. Rapports des cent soixante-cinquième et cent soixante-sixième sessions du Comité financier (respectivement 7-8 février et 27-31 mars 2017)

Tema 7. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 165.º (7 y 8 de febrero de 2017) y 166.º (27-31 de marzo de 2017) del Comité de Finanzas

(CL 156/4; CL 156/6)

Item 7.1 Scale of Contributions 2018-19

Point 7.1 Barème des contributions 2018-2019

Tema 7.1 Escala de cuotas para 2018-19

Item 7.2 Status of Current Assessments and Arrears

Point 7.2 État des contributions courantes et des arriérés

Tema 7.2 Estado de las cuotas corrientes y los atrasos

(CL 156/LIM/2 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Third Meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council to order.

We start with item 7, *Reports of the 165th (7-8 February 2017) and 166th (27-31 March 2017) Sessions of the Finance Committee*. Please ensure you have documents CL 156/4, CL 156/6 and CL 156/LIM/2 Rev.1 regarding the Status of Current Assessments and Arrears before you.

Document CL 156/LIM/2 Rev.1 sets out the status of assessments and arrears as at 17 April 2017.

Member Nations currently owe to FAO over USD 425 million for 2016 and prior years, which complicates FAO's liquidity management.

As of 17 March 2017, 71 percent of 2017 assessed contributions still needed to be settled. This is higher as compared to the same period last year (70 percent).

Sixty-five Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 2016 and previous years and 29 owed arrears in such amounts as would prejudice their right to vote at the forthcoming Session of the Conference in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution.

I would like to invite Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, to introduce this item.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to present the reports of the 165th and 166th Sessions of the Finance Committee. These reports are submitted to the Council in documents CL 156/4 and CL 156/6. In addition, document CL 156/LIM/2 Rev. 1 has been prepared to provide the Council with an update on the status of contributions and arrears as of 17 April 2017.

While the 166th Session dealt with FAO issues, the 165th Session was a special session convened to deal with WFP matters. In accordance with the current practice of the Council, the Committee's report on WFP matters has been submitted to the WFP Executive Board for its consideration. Hence, I shall now present the salient highlights of the report of the 166th Session of the Finance Committee, except for those issues, which have already been dealt with under Agenda Item 4 of the Council.

The Committee reviewed the financial position of the Organization and noted that the Organization's liquidity was expected to be sufficient to cover operational needs through the end of 2017. Recognizing that the Organization's ongoing cash flow health was dependent on the timely payment of assessed contributions, the Committee urged members to make payments of assessed contributions on time and in full.

The Committee noted the overall level of the general fund deficit had marginally decreased to USD 912.4 million as of 31 December 2016 and that the deficit was primarily due to unfunded charges for staff-related liabilities. The Committee emphasized the importance of adopting the common

approach amongst the Members of the United Nations Common System on this matter and encouraged the Secretariat to continue to review options to address the funding gap.

The Committee reviewed the Report on Investments 2016 and appreciated the annual return of the Short Term Investment Portfolio had exceeded the benchmark, welcoming the overall performance of the Long Term Investment Portfolio and commended the solid governance arrangements in place.

The Committee analysed and endorsed the proposed scale of contributions for the biennium 2018-19 and submitted to the Council the Draft Resolution set out in paragraph 12 of CL 156/4 for adoption by the Conference.

The Committee evaluated the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report for 2016, focusing on the functional objectives and special chapters, the Technical Cooperation Programme and the management of delivery and resources.

The Committee expressed satisfaction with the overall performance in 2016, noting that 23 out of the 25 key performance indicators of business processes under functional objectives and special chapters were on track and all KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) were expected to be achieved by the end of 2017, while expressing its concern with the performance of the KPI relating to governing body documents delivered according to deadlines in line with requirements.

The Committee welcomed the significant improvements in the rate of TCP (Technical Cooperation Programme) approval and delivery compared with the previous biennium and noted that the delivery of net appropriation resources and voluntary contributions in 2016 was on track.

The Committee studied the Annual Report on Budgetary Performance and Programme and Budgetary Transfers for the 2016-17 biennium and approved the forecasted budgetary transfers arising from implementation of the 2016-17 Programme of Work.

The Committee noted the update on human resources management in the following areas:

1. Recruitment and development of the highest calibre of employees.
2. Alignment of Human Resources Management to the strategic and programmatic needs of the Organization.
3. Reflection of FAO's nature as a United Nations specialized agency, including through implementation of the Mobility Policy.
4. Increased efficiency in human resources processes and procedures.
5. The intention of the Secretariat to revise the process for the selection and evaluation of international consultants with a view to improvements in this area.

The Committee appreciated and encouraged the efforts to achieve a projected reduction in the professional staff vacancy rate in keeping with the agreed target of not greater than 15 percent at both headquarters and decentralized offices.

It also welcomed the reported improvements in the distribution of geographic representation.

The Committee requested that future reports should be as follows: i) focus on the achievements and challenges during the reporting period; ii) provide statistical data on staff and non-staff human resources in the standardized format; and iii) present information on progress made on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations on human resources matters.

The Committee also reiterated the request to streamline the process for responding to requests by Members for a timely provision of non-sensitive information on their nationals working in FAO.

The Committee reviewed the FAO Audit Committee 2016 Annual Report to the Director-General and expressed satisfaction with the FAO Audit Committee's advice in the areas under its mandate.

The Committee also appreciated the Director-General's concurrence with the recommendations presented in the report and welcomed in particular the actions being taken to enhance FAO's Internal Control Framework.

The Committee revised the proposed update to the Terms of Reference of the FAO Audit Committee and agreed to examine the suggested update to add further revisions to the Terms of Reference at a future session, including the reporting line to the governing bodies.

The Committee checked thoroughly the 2016 Annual Report of the Inspector General and expressed its satisfaction with the quality of the report and the analysis of issues presented. The Committee welcomed the good cooperation on internal control issues between the Office of Inspector General and Management. It noted Management's efforts to close outstanding recommendations, particularly those of prior years relating to high risks.

The Committee reiterated the importance of continued attention by Management to strengthening the Internal Control Framework at headquarters and decentralized offices, including through the forthcoming issuance of a statement of internal control to be attached to the FAO Audited Accounts for 2017.

The Committee supported the recommendation of the Director-General that the terms on the FAO Audit Committee of Ms Enery Quinones and Mr Verasak be extended for a further three years to be endorsed by the Council.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Members of the Committee, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat for its assistance in our deliberations and our gratitude to the Member Nations of FAO for providing us this opportunity to promote the important work of the Organization.

Ms Sagung Mirah Ratna DEWI (Indonesia)

This statement is delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Asia Group.

First, we thank Mr Khalid Mehboob, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for his presentation of the Committee's deliberations.

We welcome the conclusion and advice from this report to the Council. We have a few brief comments regarding some items.

We have noted that in the proposed scale of contributions 2018-19, the proportion of Asian countries is generally raised. We are accounting for 25 percent among 71 countries with increased scale and, among the five largest contributors, Asian countries take up two with approximately 18 percent of overall assessed contributions. However, we also noted the budget cut 1.15 million in our Regional Office. We request FAO Management to take concrete action to make sure our Asia regional prioritized areas and concerns will be addressed without budget adjustment influence, particularly through South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation, and other mechanisms as well.

The Asia region has, overall, a high under- and non-representation status. We share the Finance Committee's concern on the lack of adequate HR statistic data to assess the performance of HR management. With the proposed new scale of contribution, more efforts still need to be devoted to better balance the geographical representation.

With recognition that the Organization's liquidity sufficiency is based on the timely and full payment of assessed contributions, we welcome the intensive efforts by the Secretariat to encourage timely payments of assessed contributions which in fact have resulted in the improved rate of collection of contributions.

We welcome TCP to be 14 percent of the FAO budget and look forward to its full implementation.

Acknowledging the efforts made by the FAO Audit Committee and the Office of Inspector General, we welcome their 2016 reports. We appreciate the Director General's concurrence with further improvement of the Internal Control Framework and risk management. We would like to highlight the importance to the implementation of the recommendations from both reports as well as continued collaboration and communication with external auditors. We look forward to receiving the Statement on Internal Control.

With these comments, the Asia Group endorses this report.

Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Group comments delivered by Indonesia, and would like to particularly highlight the following three points.

Firstly, we urge all the member countries to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions. Japan has been doing so, despite its constrained financial situation, to show its strong support for FAO's work, and we encourage other member countries to follow suit.

Secondly, on the issue of financing the staff-related liabilities, especially the After-Service Medical Care liability, we encourage the FAO Secretariat to continue to be actively engaged in the discussions under the United Nations common system and to consider the options to contain the costs of those liabilities.

Thirdly, on human resources management, we expect the FAO Secretariat to provide sufficient statistical data in future progress reports, and hope that FAO, being a specialised agency, continues to place high value on ensuring technical competency of the staff in its recruitment process, while also taking account of equitable geographical representation. Also, in this regard, we have noticed that the monthly report on FAO staff geographical representation published on the Members Gateway has not been updated to the latest figures and currently no information is available. We request the FAO Secretariat to update this information as promptly as possible.

Maria de los Ángeles GOMÉS AGUILAR (México)

México desea solicitar la palabra para El Salvador para que haga una declaración en nombre del GRULAC.

Sra. Sandra Elizabeth ALAS GUIDOS (El Salvador)

Agradecemos al Sr. Mehboob la presentación de los principales resultados de los 165° y 166° períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas. Apreciamos el trabajo del comité.

Permítame, a nombre del GRULAC, unos comentarios relativos a este último período de sesiones. En primer lugar, y como ya fue expresado por el Grupo G77 más China, reiteramos el apoyo a la propuesta para que en el bienio 2018-19 el presupuesto tenga un crecimiento nominal cero. Esto es, sin duda, reflejo de una administración prudente que toma en cuenta tanto las restricciones presupuestales de nuestros países como la búsqueda de economías en la Organización. Si bien el nivel del presupuesto planteado es aceptable, entendemos que podría haber ajustes programáticos acorde a las prioridades de los países.

Tomamos nota del estado financiero de la Organización que se prevé contar con suficiente capital para que la FAO opere hasta finales de 2017, el cual depende, por supuesto, del pago oportuno de las cuotas.

En cuanto al servicio de cobertura médica después del servicio, el cual es un reto importante a nivel de todo el sistema de las Naciones Unidas, hacemos un llamado a la Administración a redoblar sus esfuerzos para proponer soluciones creativas, ya que tiene el potencial de afectar la sostenibilidad de la institución.

Con relación a los recursos para el Programa de Cooperación Técnica, nos complace que en el bienio futuro se plantee que el nivel de apropiaciones se incremente de un 14%. Hacemos un llamado a la Administración a realizar un ritmo de uso de estos recursos con referencia a ese incremento, ya que el ritmo actual de uso de esa partida tiene ciertos retrasos.

En materia de recursos humanos, agradecemos a la Secretaría sus esfuerzos para llenar las vacantes en puestos profesionales y técnicos. Esperamos que este ritmo se mantenga en el futuro, apegados a la práctica de contratar personal de distintas regiones, lo que fortalece la visión universal de la institución.

Compartimos también la conclusión del Comité de Finanzas en que se puede mejorar la cuestión de cómo la Secretaría responde a solicitudes de información de carácter general sobre sus connacionales en la FAO.

En materia de recursos humanos, creemos que el Consejo no debe realizar micro-gestión de la Administración, sino velar por el buen uso de los recursos financieros y humanos desde un punto de vista general, con el ánimo de mejorar y reforzar la Organización.

Agradecemos a la Administración las tres Notas Informativas preparadas como adición al Plan a plazo medio y Programa de trabajo y Presupuesto para 2018-19, los cuales presentan información más detallada sobre cuestiones planteadas en las sesiones de los Comités de Finanzas y del Programa.

La Nota informativa 3, solicitada por el Comité de Finanzas, y relacionada con "los servicios lingüísticos en la FAO," es de gran utilidad y presenta la justificación para las propuestas de simplificación en los servicios lingüísticos de la FAO. Apoyamos las medidas planteadas en el documento pero en el entendido de que en ninguna manera disminuirán la calidad y disponibilidad de dichos servicios en la Organización, que son de suma utilidad para los países del GRULAC.

Con estos comentarios, el GRULAC apoya las recomendaciones del Comité de Finanzas.

Mr Mitiku Tesso JEBESSA (Ethiopia)

Ethiopia is making this statement on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

In document CL 156/LIM/2, it is clearly pointed out that as at 17 April 2017, 65 Member Nations paid their contributions in full and 129 Member Nations still owed current assessments (in full or in part), totalling USD 205.59 million and EUR 129.34 million. The collection rate for current assessments was 28.97 percent.

Sixty-five Member Nations still owed arrears totalling USD 43.24 million and EUR 15.77 million as at 17 April 2017 and which was equivalent to 12.86 percent of current assessments.

Twenty-nine Member Nations had arrears in such amounts as to jeopardise their right to vote in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution. Instalments due in future years also amounted to USD 870 951.76 and Euro 17 555.76. A total of outstanding USD 249 702 463.74 and Euro 145 129 322. 22 is expected to be paid by Member Nations.

The Africa Regional Group encourages member countries to pay their 2017 assessment and arrears of contributions. We would also like to encourage FAO to communicate and consult member countries to pay their current assessments and arrears.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

I would like to ask you to pass the floor to Malta to speak on behalf of the EU and its 28 Members.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The EU candidate country, Montenegro, as well as San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

We would like to concentrate on the 166th Session of the Finance Committee, which dealt with FAO-related matters. We generally welcome the conclusions and advice to the Council as contained in the report on this session, especially regarding the proposed flat nominal budget and the new scale of contributions for the biennium 2018-19. However, we would also like to make some more specific remarks on two items:

The first one is on human resources management. In this regard we share the view expressed by the Finance Committee and would like to express our disappointment with the insufficient quality and content of the document which was presented to the Finance Committee. As requested by the Finance Committee and the Council, the information provided needs to be substantiated by relevant and adequate data on human resources, presented in a standardised format covering comprehensively both staff and non-staff human resources. Likewise, the Secretariat has not yet implemented measures to streamline the process for responding to Members' requests for non-sensitive information on staffing.

We request further information on the Secretariat's decision not to implement UNGA Resolution 70/244 to increase the mandatory age of separation for staff from 62 to 65 years. Failure to implement this resolution leads to higher financial burdens for Members, and is all the more concerning considering the chronic underfunding of the After Service Medical Care.

We are also concerned about the substantial number of outstanding follow-up measures in response to recommendations of the External Auditor in the field of human resources. Some of these

recommendations are classified as "fundamental" or "significant". We request the Secretariat to provide information on when these recommendations will be implemented.

We see considerable room for improvement in FAO's human resources management. This conclusion is consistent with those of recent independent external assessments, including the Multilateral Development Review 2016 of the United Kingdom's Department of International Development, the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) report and the BMAP review of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. We strongly encourage the Secretariat to pursue and accelerate its efforts towards enhancing transparency and building more trust with FAO staff and the FAO Membership in the area of human resources management.

The second item we are concerned about relates to the 2016 Annual Reports of the Inspector General and the Audit Committee. Both reports highlight serious concerns regarding FAO's fraud risk management, which is described as fragmented and lacking a "strong second line of defence". Moreover, the Audit Committee was concerned about *"weaknesses in the tone at top, in particular, the lack of Organization-wide messaging of FAO's zero tolerance of fraud and corruption"*. In addition, both reports highlight the fact that long-standing high-risk recommendations, reconfirmed as still relevant, have not been fully implemented.

In order to remedy these shortcomings, we strongly encourage the Secretariat to finalize and fully implement a comprehensive enterprise risk management programme in the next year. Furthermore, we expect major progress in the implementation of both the Inspector General's and the External Auditor's recommendations.

We also endorse the Finance Committee's appeal to Members to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions, and encourage the Secretariat to continue exploring measures to encourage such payments.

We would like to conclude on a more positive note, commending the Secretariat for the solid investment results in the Report on Investment 2016, in particular considering the unfavourable general conditions in this area.

Mr Badreldin ELSHIEKH MOHAMED ELHASSAN (Sudan)

Sudan delivers this statement on behalf of the Near East Group presenting the highlights of some of the issues covered by the Finance Committee.

As for monitoring the financial position, the starting fact of having positive cash flow is important for the activities of our Organization. The Near East Group appreciate and note that, based on the information available, the Organization's liquidity is expected to be sufficient to cover its needs to the end of 2017.

However, we as Members need to timely and fully make required payment of assessed contributions.

We remarked as well that the overall level of the general fund deficit had marginally decreased to USD 912 million as of December 2016 and that this deficit was due to mainly to unfunded targets for staff-related liabilities.

The latter aspect is being dealt with at the United Nations common system level. Therefore, the Near East Group welcome the proposed scale of contributions for the biennium 2018-19 worked out by the Contributions Committee of the United Nations and approved by the General Assembly.

However, with regard to FAO, it is suggested that this issue should take into account the total number of member countries of FAO. The Near East Group also appreciates the Reviewed Report on Investment as well as the fact that the total annual retain had exceeded the short-term benchmark.

We also accept the overall performance of the long-term investment and we do commend the effective governance arrangements that are in place, insisting to follow the same low-risk approach.

Regarding budgetary matters, the Near East Group expressed satisfaction with the overall performance in 2016 in reviewing the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report, noting that 23 out of the 25 key

performance indicators (KPIs) of business processes and their functional objectives, and special chapters measured in 2016 were on track.

Moreover, all KPIs are expected to be achieved in 2017. However, it expressed satisfaction with the performance of the KPI relating to governing body documents. The Near East welcomes the significant improvement in the rate of TCP approval and delivery compared with the previous biennium.

Concerning human resources management, the Near East Group supports the improvements in the recruitment process of posts, Professional and General Service staff, leading to a significant reduction in the overall recruitment type. Plus, we back a reduction in the Professional vacancy rate in keeping with the agreed target of no more than 15 percent at posts at headquarters and in the decentralized offices.

The Group also approves the improvement in the distribution of geographical representation. The Group requests that future reports should focus on achievement and challenges during the reporting period and these should provide the following information: first, statistical data on staff and non-staff human resources; second, progress reports on the implementation of external audit recommendations on human resources matters; and third, a timely response to requests for the provision of non-sensitive information on the nationals working in FAO.

On behalf of the Near East Group, we extend our gratitude to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Mr Khalid Mehboob, for his great efforts, for the flexibility and the work carried out with the view of reaching consensus with this proposal.

Therefore we support all recommendations from the Finance Committee and we are ready to give our support on this matter.

Mr Thomas NDULU (Kenya)

We associate ourselves with the statement made by Ethiopia on behalf of the Africa Group.

This is an important subject as it is beneficial and really essential to the provision of resources for this Organization to function as required. It is indeed on the basis of these contributions that FAO can fully implement the programmes that member countries approve.

We note that the proposed scale of contributions has been assessed, having been derived directly from the United Nations scale-up enforced during 2017, which is the practice that we expect. Then, as stated by the Director-General in his address to this Council, in the current view of assessed contributions, some Members are suddenly going to pay more and this includes my country, Kenya, which allowed us to pay a little less compared to what they are paying in this biennium.

We appreciate and do respect the decision of the United Nations in coming up with these scales for each member country. We note that many countries may be going through tough and difficult economic times. And this includes my own country, Kenya, which has suffered a severe drought whose negative impacts may linger for a while.

We however urge member countries to strive to pay our contributions fully and on time to enable the Organization to meet the requirements of implementing these planned programmes. With these comments, we endorse the assessed contributions and the draft resolution.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I want to comment only on one issue, the scale of contribution. Paragraphs 11 and 12 of CL 156/4 does not say much. It refers us to the Annex that was approved by the General Assembly and adjusted for FAO Membership.

I think that several colleagues here have raised the following points: what has happened? Who is gaining? Who is paying more? Who is paying less and who is unchanged?

This information is not given. It is in the Annex, but it requires analysis. We would have preferred to see a note attached to this Annex showing where the burden falls. I will just give you a few examples.

The distribution of the scale by regions, in the sense that region means each region according to real Council seats. My region, the Near East, includes 21 countries. Our contribution has been increased by 20.8 percent comparing the two. It is the highest among all regions.

On the other hand, Europe has declined by 11 percent. So this relevant information is very useful.

We also want to know how the scale of contribution affects low-income countries, lower middle-income countries, upper middle-income countries and high-income countries. Please note that this information is not available, but it could be extracted. I will give you another example.

There are 32 low-income countries as Members of FAO. Out of this 32, the scale of contribution for ten has increased. This is one-third. It is the highest among the other agencies. So please, next time when you are submitting this Annex, present a proper analytical note and analyze which country did not change, which Member had an increase and/or a decrease of contribution.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We join our colleagues in thanking the FAO Finance Chairperson for sharing his substantial knowledge and experience and for his very capable management of the Committee deliberations over the last several years.

We welcome the increased focus by FAO Management on vacancy announcements and the strides made by FAO in gender and by FAO Management in geographical representation. However, we do question the FAO decision not to implement the new mandatory retirement age as recommended by the UN General Assembly.

We support the Finance Committee's recommendation for the Secretariat to undertake another review of the Terms of Reference of the FAO Audit Committee in order to align them with best practices of other UN organizations and then to present the revised draft version for future Finance Committee review.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to start by aligning United Kingdom with the statement made by Malta on behalf of the EU and its 28 Member States. Besides, I would like to underline two particular areas of concern for the United Kingdom and make a suggestion. First of all, I would like to thank the Finance Committee for their work and for the report.

Then, I would like to highlight how concerned we are about the Inspector General's finding that fraud risk management is fragmented. This has real potential to undermine the voluntary contributions that FAO relies on and will rely on increasingly.

We believe, as Malta said, that the completion of the Enterprise Risk Management Policy will go a long way to helping this and I would ask the Secretariat to confirm when this will be completed.

Secondly, we would like to highlight our concern about the outstanding audit recommendations both in the areas of human resources, but also in other areas. So, we would like to request that completion of agreed actions following audits are also tracked in the Results Framework under Functional Objective 10, FAO governance, oversight and direction.

As you will see, there is an oversight KPI (Key Performance Indicator) in there, which tracks the percentage of recommendations of strategic evaluations where an agreed Management response is being completed within the due date. We would like to request that a similar indicator is included that covers audit recommendations.

Finally, I would like to state how encouraged we are by the confirmation that the Finance Committee received that a Statement of Internal Control will be completed at the end of this year. We very much look forward to that.

Mr Shengyao TANG (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, we would like to thank the work of the Finance Committee. We would also like to thank the presentation of the Chair of this Committee. China agrees to adopt the reports of the two Finance Committee meetings.

With regard to the assessment of contributions, I would like to add that Indonesia, on behalf of Asia, made a speech where China supports the speech of the Asia Group.

As for the assessed contributions, China commends and supports FAO's actions to collect the assessed contributions until the end of 2016. The contributions paid amount to more than 90 percent. Well that is a slight increase compared to the last year and the year before.

However, there are still 70 member countries who did not pay their assessed contributions in full or did not pay on time. Therefore, the Chinese Delegation would like to call on all member countries to fulfil their obligations and pay their contributions on time and fully.

In fact, China's contributions have been increasing every year. In recent years, the scale of the increase has been huge. Such a scale of increase is against the context of China's economic slowdown and China's financial income slowdown and the depreciation of the Chinese currency.

Yet, China strives to tackle all difficulties to fulfil its obligations and to fully pay the contributions on time. Furthermore, we also hope that the Secretariat will pay more attention to the representation issues and take concrete and actual measures to increase the recruitment of under-represented countries to serve FAO so as to share their knowledge, technologies and experiences.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I just have one question that relates to an issue mentioned in the EU statement. The question is the following: when will FAO implement UNGA Resolution 70244 to increase the retirement age to 65 years of existing staff?

The part of the Resolution I am referring to, and others have referred to, reads as follows: I quote from UNGA Resolution 244 from UNGA 70, "decides that the mandatory age of separation for staff recruited before 1 January 2014 should be raised by the organizations of the United Nations common system to 65 years at the latest by 1 January 2018, taking into account the acquired rights of staff."

If that could be clarified, that would be helpful.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for his strong leadership of the Committee.

In relation to the timely provision of non-sensitive staff information on Members, nationals working at the FAO, I would like to share the fact that Australia requested that information recently and we were delighted to get a response within less than five working days. So thank you very much to FAO for that.

With regard to enterprise risk, Australia shares the concerns about fraud risk management in the Organization and we urge FAO to implement measures as quickly as possible to address these concerns. With this in mind, we support the European Union's request reiterated by the United Kingdom: FAO should develop an Enterprise Risk Management Policy as a matter of urgency and we would greatly appreciate your advice on the timing for that.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

We express our appreciation for the excellent management of Mr Khaled Mehboob. We also align ourselves with the statement delivered by Sudan on behalf of the Near East Region. We have just three points to highlight.

Firstly, we praise the fact that the average monthly TCP expenditures continue to steadily progress to USD 5.3 million compared to USD 4.8 million. We commend FAO for this significant improvement and call on maintaining the rate of expenditure at a pace that will ensure the full implementation of the TCP appropriation. We also expect that the increase in the TCP to 14 percent will basically require higher expenditure rates.

Secondly, we also welcome the improvement to the human resource management, in particular in connection with the equitable geographical representation based on merit. We expect that by increasing

the Near East Group contributions as explained now by Afghanistan, this would be reflected in the geographical distribution in the Organization.

Thirdly, we have a question in connection with the vacancy rate. We would appreciate if you can now provide more information about the current vacancy rate in the Cairo Regional Office (Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa) and advise on the measures being taken to further decrease it.

Mr Khalid MEHOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

In fact, most of the questions which have been raised are for the Secretariat to respond to. I would like to thank Members of the Council for their interventions, which have highlighted and emphasized some of the important issues referred to in the report of the Finance Committee.

Here are the questions I have noted on behalf of the Finance Committee. Afghanistan's point about more information with regard to the aspects he referred to on the scale of contributions. I would just clarify the scale of contributions, because some Members have highlighted the fact that contributions have gone up for some Members and gone down for others.

However, a few Members have made reference to the process that is followed. The process is that the issue of the scale of contributions is not in FAO's control because contributions are worked out by a Contributions Committee in New York and submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

FAO adopts that scale by adjusting the figure based on the FAO Membership. The Membership of FAO and the UN may not be the same, so FAO adjusts the scale approved by the General Assembly for its Membership and that is how the scale is worked out. So it is really not in FAO's control to adjust the scale.

I think a few Members did refer to this, so the process is quite long but I just wanted to sum it up.

As for the rest of the questions raised by Members, I think it is for the Chairman and Management to answer and I think they are here to provide those answers.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

Mr Independent Chairperson of the Council, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, this is my first intervention in front of you as the new Deputy Director-General (Operations) and I hope that my reply will meet your expectations.

The first comment I would like to make is that we have been listening actively to the guidance of the Finance Committee and the guidance today of the Members of the Council in order to ensure that together we improve operations and we address challenges and issues raised.

The second comment I would like to make is to be fair again to what has been highlighted clearly in the Report of the Finance Committee that with regard to the questions that were raised on internal control, enterprise risk management, challenges raised by the Inspector General, this convergence of views on these matters between the Office of the Inspector General and Management. I think it is very important we converge with the views of the Inspector General.

We also welcome the findings that were highlighted in the Report of the 166th Session of the Finance Committee. We are taking action to address the challenges identified. More specifically, the question of corruption and fraudulent practices and the sign-off at the top that was mentioned; here I am on the spot because it has been decided by the Inspector General that the Deputy Director-General (Operations) is the highest official in the Organization responsible for these issues.

I will be the one to ensure that we give the right sign-off at the top, that we communicate with staff and that we make sure that our policy of Zero Tolerance to fraud, corruption and fraudulent practices is clear everywhere in all locations and that we not only fix a target with this regard, but the means to achieve these targets.

With regard to enterprise risk management, since the Report of the Inspector General was issued, we have had progress. We have a policy in place. We have a policy that covers both Regular Programme and project activities. We have developed a global corporate risk clause identifying the most significant risks to FAO with planned mitigation measures. This will be updated regularly.

We will continue to implement risk management as part of our regular planning. Reporting and analysis of risk will also be integrated in internal control reporting, keeping clear on the implementation in all the offices throughout the world. This will be fully implemented in early 2018.

Requirements for further measures to strengthen enterprise risk management implementation will be evaluated based on the result of the process ongoing. As a number of Members highlighted, we committed to deliver a statement of internal control at the same time of the audited account 2017, so it will take place around April 2018.

This statement will be delivered by the Director-General. In fact, right now we are in the process of putting in place the internal measures. We have a cascading set-up where starting from the bottom we have all managers reporting on the capacity to put in place the right internal control measures to the Director-General ultimately to make this positive statement to the Membership.

It is progressing well and the experience that we are developing now through this first-time exercise on internal control will help us to identify where the weaknesses are and where we can improve in terms of our capacity to manage the resources allocated to FAO. What I can say is good progress has been made and we are confident that we will be able to report to you on this matter positively at the 167th Session of the Finance Committee.

Finally, speaking of the importance of transparency and good management of the allocated resources, I wish to confirm to you that we continue to progress in our commitment to be compliant to the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which represents good practices in the world today and this demonstrates that the Organization is transparent about the use and the allocation of its resources.

Regarding a number of questions on human resources, what I can say is that we have taken good notes. Regarding the question about the implementation on the UNGA Resolution on retirement age, I will ask our Legal Counsel to provide you with information. All the issues on human resources, particularly what was highlighted on the need to improve reporting and communication of feedback with Members, we are going to make progress. We are happy to hear the comments from Australia that there has been some small progress but we will continue in this regard.

Regarding the mandatory age for retirement at 65, Mr Tavares, do you think you can give some relevance?

LEGAL COUNSEL

Let me provide a few words of explanation about this resolution, which I do not have here before my eyes. But I am in fact very familiar with this topic.

It is a Resolution that has been recommended by the ICSC, the International Civil Service Commission. The ICSC system, which includes the General Assembly, is based on two concepts. One of them is that payments, allowances, matters having to do with salaries, post adjustments, etc. are entirely within the authority of the ICSC or the General Assembly. Such decisions, once taken, are binding upon the organizations, which are under a legal obligation to implement them.

This is why, for instance, when we had the salary surveys of General Service staff, they have for many years led to systematic increases in salaries. The Finance Committee and the Council have expressed great concerns about this situation. We are under a legal obligation to implement these decisions, we have no discretion. The Director-General, should he decide not to implement this decision, would have a challenge before the tribunal. This is why we always recognized an obligation to accept those decisions.

Other matters, such as mandatory age of separation, are not within the core mandate of the ICSC. The ICSC may make recommendations and for many years this topic of the age of separation was not even considered to be a common system issue.

The structure of the Resolution itself shows that it included matters which were binding upon the Organization, as well as other issues that were mere recommendations. The decision of the General Assembly as regards the mandatory age of separation applies directly to the United Nations secretariat and to the United Nations programmes and funds that are managed under the United Nations staff rules

and regulations. But it does not apply, is not binding upon the other organizations. We are not under a legal obligation to implement this recommendation.

In fact, we have already information that a few organizations – IPU, WIPO and ICAO – are not implementing this Resolution under the conditions that have been foreseen, or at least will be implementing it at a much later stage.

FAO does not have the intention of implementing this recommendation now. Normally these types of matters are the result of a proposal of the Director-General to the Council, which would involve an amendment to the Staff Regulations.

Finally, I should like to add that in the context of cooperation and coordination among the Rome-based agencies, a few years ago there was a decision that the various agencies would not be implementing this recommendation immediately. That is what I can say now. This position could evolve in respect of the other agencies. We would see if WFP decided to implement this recommendation. We would see how to accommodate its concerns.

We do not view ourselves under an obligation to implement this recommendation. We shall not be doing it.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

There was concern expressed on the rate of implementation of internal and external audit recommendations. It was explicitly mentioned at the time of the 166th Session of the Finance Committee as a concern. It was highlighted in the Report of the Audit Committee. It was highlighted in the Report of the Inspector General. It is something that we take very seriously. In fact, the Director-General himself expressed his concern with Senior Management of the Organization at the beginning of 2017 in one of our Programme and Policy Boards, asking all Managers to take corrective action.

We are working on this. I am pleased to report that as of next week we will have in place a new facility called the Business, Inter-regions and Management system which is our dashboard to facilitate access to the information on the outstanding audit recommendations to manage us, particularly the Assistant Directors-General and all Senior Managers who are ultimately accountable to ensure that these recommendations are implemented and closed.

This facility on our dashboard will be launched next week. We will embark on a campaign to get everybody to accelerate the closure of this recommendation because we clearly see this as an area to be addressed and we cannot be satisfied about the situation today. Again, we believe that we will be in a position at the occasion of the 167th Session of the Finance Committee to demonstrate major progress in this regard.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

Thank you, Legal Counsel, for the explanation.

I just want to say that the Nordic Countries find it important that FAO and the other Rome-based agencies implement the human resources policies in accordance with the United Nations staff rules and regulations.

Can I then direct a question that may be away from the legal part and ask why it is still a matter that is up in the air, at least for me? I understand that the answer is “not now”, but then it would be interesting to know why it will not be implemented now.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. That is the reason for now. Okay, let it be now.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

I am not sure if we got a response to our question about the vacancy rate in the Cairo Regional Office (Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa).

Mr Abdulaziz Bin Ahmed Al Malki AL JEHANI (Qatar) (Original language Arabic)

The Legal Counsel reminded us that the decision for 65 years of age was a recommendation by the International Civil Service Commission and he added that these are binding upon all agencies.

He also said that a few international organizations did not implement this now but they will implement that later on. I think what is new is that he said at the end of his speech that FAO would not like to implement this right now and that it would like to add some amendments to the staff regulations. Can you give us more information about this?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

Thank you to the Deputy Director-General (Operations) for his response. It is greatly reassuring.

I wanted to come back on my particular suggestion on including an indicator or a key performance indicator under functional Objective 10 on progress addressing audit recommendations. It seems like it would be an easy win given the campaign that is about to start.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

We are going into the heart of the matters. The first question to address is why the matter of the mandatory age of retirement is still up in the air. I think the correct answer is to say that having given you information on the legality of the matter, the obligation of the Organization is that this decision is under the consideration of the Director-General and he has not taken a decision yet. I think that is said very clearly.

He knows the different aspects of the challenge, how it could benefit, the pros, and the cons of the measure applied to the specificity of our Organization, and he has not yet taken a decision. I think it is a Management decision. It is not only part of his prerogative but his role to decide on this, having all the elements at hand in the interest of the Organization.

I think we are very clear on this. The Director-General has not decided yet one way or another and he is well aware of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution in this regard.

On the point of the question about the vacancy rate in the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (Cairo), what I propose is that we provide the Distinguished Delegate of Egypt with information at a later stage. I do not have the information here. I want to be sure that we give you the most updated information. What I can say at this stage is that the Cairo office is well on track to meet the target set of the 15 percent of vacancy in all locations.

The third point is about the key performance indicator on the rate of closure or implementation of the audit recommendation: it is a good recommendation. Let us review with our colleagues here how it could eventually be considered as part of the key performance indicator. I am not in a position to tell you yes at this time but we have heard your recommendation and we will include this as part of the discussion with a view to improve the Programme of Work and Budget.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for the interventions which you have made on this very important subject. I want to also thank the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, as well as the Secretariat.

I would like to make conclusions on Item 7 as follows:

1. The Council approved the Reports of the 165th and 166th Sessions of the Finance Committee and in particular:

(a) Urged all Member Nations to make payment of assessed contributions on time and in full.

(b) Recommended the draft resolution for adoption by the Conference of the FAO Scale of Contributions for 2018-19 presented in paragraph 12 of document CL 156/4 as set out in the Appendix of this Report.

- (c) Welcomed the Finance Committee's satisfaction with the overall performance in 2016 as presented in the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report 2016, noting the concerns expressed with regard to governing body documents delivered according to deadlines and language requirements.
- (d) Noted that the Finance Committee had authorized forecasted budgetary chapter transfers arising from implementation of the 2016-17 Programme of Work in favour of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 from Chapters 1, 10 and 11.
- (e) Welcomed the progress and achievements in human resources management in the Organization and endorsed the Finance Committee's guidance in this regard.
- (f) Noted with appreciation that the Secretariat was working on the continued implementation of the risk management policy to mitigate fraud risks observations made by the Inspector General.
- (g) Noted the Finance Committee's observation with regard to the 2016 Annual Report of the Inspector General and the FAO Audit Committee - 2016 Annual Report to the Director-General.
- (h) Encouraged Management to expedite the closure of outstanding recommendations of the Inspector General, particularly those prior years' recommendations relating to high risk, and suggested that progress in that respect be monitored by way of performance indicators.
- (i) Noted with appreciation that a system of internal control would be attached to the FAO Audited Accounts for 2017.
- (j) Endorsed the extension of the terms of Ms Enery Quinones and Mr Verasak Liengsriwat on the FAO Audit Committee for a further three years.

M. Mongui MÉDI (Cameroun)

C'est une question vraiment mineure, sur votre résumé qui est exhaustif; il s'agit de la résolution elle-même. Je suggère que l'on soit beaucoup plus spécifique au dernier point de la résolution, «adopte pour 2018-2019 le barème figurant à l'annexe au présent rapport.» Or, nous sommes à la Conférence et à priori le rapport du Comité financier n'y est pas présenté. Si on met ce barème dans le rapport du Conseil, la formulation «en annexe du rapport du Conseil» est préférable. C'est un ajustement vraiment mineur mais qui nous permet d'être précis.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Cameroon. But as you have said, this is a minor adjustment really. It does not entail that it has to be changed but maybe for assurance to what you have said, let me read it again.

Point 1(b): recommended the Draft Resolution for adoption by the Conference of the FAO Scale of Contributions for 2018-19 presented in paragraph 12 of document CL 156/4 as set out in the Appendix of this Report.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

Would you please pass on the floor to Malta to speak on behalf of the EU and its 28 Member States?

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

We would like to see in the conclusions the concern raised by the European Union and its Member States regarding the requests that we have made to the Finance Committee and the Council that information provided be substantiated by relevant and adequate data on human resources, presented in a standardized format, covering comprehensively both staff and non-staff human resources.

We would like to see this reflected please.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us make a formulation and if it is accepted by Members, then it will be taken up.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroun)

Je parlais du texte de la résolution elle-même et non pas de la conclusion. Le texte de la résolution qui est soumise pour adoption par la Conférence énonce «(...) adopte pour 2018-2019, le barème figurant à

l'annexe au présent rapport.» Si l'on se réfère au rapport du Conseil il vaut mieux le spécifier dans la résolution en disant, «adopte pour 2018 le barème figurant en annexe du *rapport du Conseil*.» afin d'éviter toute confusion.

CHAIRPERSON

Can you give me a formulation please?

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Oui, Monsieur le Président. Si le rapport du Comité financier va à la Conférence, on cite le rapport du Comité financier avec son annexe, mais si le rapport du Comité financier ne va pas à la Conférence et que c'est le rapport du Conseil qui est présenté à la Conférence, alors on est obligé de mettre au rapport du Conseil l'annexe qui figure dans le rapport du Comité financier. Dans ce cas là, on cite «l'annexe du rapport du Conseil». Je suis dans le texte de la résolution elle-même et non pas dans votre conclusion.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, this is what I have said. But could you improve and reformulate that paragraph?

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroun)

J'imagine que c'est peut-être le rapport de la Conférence, puisque ce n'est pas le rapport du Conseil. Cette résolution sera sans doute annexée au rapport de la Conférence. Si c'est le cas, il n'y a pas de confusion. Ce sera donc au rapport de la Conférence. Merci.

CHAIRPERSON

I will read point 1(j) which says: "recalled the importance of provision of timely and quality human resource data in respect of staff and non-staff".

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I would like to suggest that, with regard to the language that you have just proposed in response to the United Kingdom's intervention, if you would allow an addition: "according to its mandate". I would not like to give the impression that we are broadening the scope of the Finance Committee if we leave it open like that.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

Could you please read again the text you proposed now on the provision of the statistical data? I would suggest to lift the text from paragraph 23(b) of the Report of the Finance Committee in this regard, so this would then accurately reflect the request that was made by the Committee at its 164th Session and endorsed by the Council at its 155th Session, and then reiterated by the Finance Committee in its last Session.

That was very specific and there was no follow up on this, we think it is the most appropriate guidance we can give.

CHAIRPERSON

Now this will read as follows: point 1(j): recalled the importance of provision to the Finance Committee, according to its mandate, of statistical data in staff and non-staff human resources in its standardized format.

Thank you. Item 7 is now concluded.

Item 6. Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee (27-31 March 2017)**Point 6. Rapport de la cent vingt et unième session du Comité du Programme (27-31 mars 2017)****Tema 6. Informe del 121.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (27-31 de marzo de 2017)**
(CL 156/3)**CHAIRPERSON**

We will now continue with Item 6, *Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee*. The document before Council is CL 156/3.

We will discuss the Report, with the exception of the Reviewed Strategic Framework, as well as the MTP and PWB, as these topics have already been dealt with under Agenda Items 3 and 4.

I now invite Ambassador Tomasi, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to introduce the Report.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Je vais donc vous présenter le Rapport de la 121^{ème} session du Comité du Programme, dont il est rendu compte dans le document CL 156/3.

Le Comité du Programme a tenu sa 121^{ème} session du 27 au 31 mars 2017 à Rome au Siège de l'Organisation. Tous les membres ont participé à cette session.

En dehors du Cadre stratégique révisé et du Plan à moyen terme, qui ont été évoqués hier aux points 3 et 4 de l'ordre du jour du Conseil, le Comité s'est penché sur les questions suivantes: d'abord l'Examen à mi-parcours du Programme de travail et budget 2016-2017; deuxièmement, la finalisation de la Stratégie de l'Organisation en matière de changement climatique; troisièmement, l'examen du Rapport intérimaire sur la mise en œuvre du Programme d'éradication de la peste des petits ruminants; quatrièmement, les questions d'évaluation.

Quelques mots sur chacun de ces sujets:

Sur le premier point relatif à l'Examen à mi-parcours du Programme de travail et budget (PTB) 2016-2017, le Comité s'est d'abord félicité de la qualité du rapport présenté, des données quantitatives et des informations analytiques contenues dans celui-ci. Il a souligné que le cadre de résultats était désormais bien structuré et a noté l'implication croissante des bureaux décentralisés dans le suivi des résultats, montrant une meilleure appropriation de ce pilotage par les résultats, par les équipes du Secrétariat. Il s'est aussi félicité des résultats globaux enregistrés, notant le fait que 86 pour cent des 50 cibles associées aux produits pour 2016 avaient été pleinement atteintes. Il s'est félicité du rythme de mobilisation et de décaissement des ressources qui permettait une exécution satisfaisante du Programme. Il a aussi constaté avec satisfaction les réalisations en matière de services et de qualité technique de l'Objectif stratégique 6, notamment s'agissant des questions de parité entre les sexes; je pense en particulier à l'application des 12 normes du Plan d'action à l'échelle du système des Nations Unies pour l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes.

S'agissant maintenant des zones de fragilité, le Comité a invité le Secrétariat à apporter une attention particulière en 2017 aux activités pour lesquelles les cibles n'étaient que partiellement atteintes. Il a aussi souligné l'importance d'un suivi des progrès réalisés en matière de mise en œuvre des initiatives régionales. Enfin, le Comité a considéré qu'il était important d'utiliser au mieux les leçons tirées de l'expérience acquise en 2016-2017 pour affiner les cibles proposées dans le cadre de résultats du prochain PTB, le Comité devant examiner à sa prochaine session de novembre 2017 les ajustements apportés au projet de PTB 2018 2019.

La plupart des cibles nous ont semblé en effet pertinentes, mais certaines nous paraissent très ambitieuses, alors que parfois certaines cibles fixées dans le PTB 2016-2017 manquent au contraire d'ambition.

J'en viens maintenant au point sur la Stratégie de la FAO pour les activités relatives au changement climatique. En application de la décision du Conseil de décembre dernier, invitant le Secrétariat à présenter à la 121^{ème} session du Comité du Programme une version actualisée de la Stratégie climat, prenant en compte les observations faites par le Conseil et le Comité lors de l'examen de ce document à

la fin de 2016, le Comité a donc examiné la version actualisée, présentée par le Sous-Directeur général du nouveau Département climat, M. René Castro Salazar. Le Comité s'est félicité du fait que cette version finale comporte de nombreuses améliorations au document, tenant dûment compte des observations du Comité et du Conseil, avec notamment un Plan d'action opérationnel plus détaillé, des informations plus complètes sur les moyens financiers et humains alloués à la mise en œuvre, des orientations claires sur la collaboration avec les autres organismes, sur la priorité à donner aux pays les plus vulnérables, enfin un effort d'identification des produits et résultats à atteindre par l'Organisation, ainsi qu'un effort d'identification des indicateurs de suivi. Sur ce dernier point, il a été convenu que le Comité finaliserait ces indicateurs de résultats et cibles à l'occasion de la discussion plus générale sur les ajustements apportés au PTB 2018-2019 lors de sa session de novembre prochain.

En conclusion, le Comité a donc considéré que cette Stratégie avait été finalisée conformément aux orientations données par le Conseil.

Troisième point de l'ordre du jour, le Rapport intérimaire sur le Programme mondial d'éradication de la peste des petits ruminants. Le Comité s'est félicité de la coopération entre la FAO et l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale dans la mise en œuvre d'une Stratégie et d'un Programme conjoints sur ce thème, avec un Secrétariat conjoint, logé au Siège de la FAO à Rome. Le Comité attire l'attention du Conseil sur l'importance de ce Programme, compte tenu: un, des effets dévastateurs de la peste des petits ruminants sur le cheptel des populations rurales pauvres; deux, des conséquences économiques et sociales lourdes pour les pays touchés; trois, de l'extension de cette pandémie qui touche un nombre croissant de pays en voie de développement et qui est aujourd'hui aux frontières de l'Europe; quatre, enfin, du fait que des moyens efficaces de lutte existent, permettant d'envisager une éradication de cette peste en l'espace d'une décennie.

Le Comité attire aussi l'attention du Conseil sur l'importance de la Conférence pour les annonces de contributions, qui devrait être organisée pendant le second semestre 2017. Enfin, le Comité a demandé au Secrétariat de lui présenter à sa première session de 2018 un nouveau rapport intérimaire mettant mieux l'accent sur le lien entre les ressources et les résultats, ce type de programme (intégrant notamment des campagnes de vaccination du cheptel) se prêtant particulièrement bien à une approche par les résultats.

J'en viens maintenant aux questions d'évaluation, qui, comme à l'accoutumée, ont occupé une partie importante de notre ordre du jour.

Trois points ont été soumis à la discussion du Comité. Le premier était le rapport d'évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à l'éradication de la pauvreté rurale, c'est le rapport d'évaluation de l'Objectif stratégique 3.

Le Comité a d'abord souligné la qualité du rapport préparé par le Bureau de l'évaluation, et j'invite tous les délégués à lire cet excellent rapport. Je tiens aussi à souligner la haute qualité des échanges lors de cette session du Comité, et notamment l'excellente contribution du Coordonnateur du Programme stratégique 3, M. Benjamin Davis, confirmant l'intérêt pour le Comité d'avoir régulièrement des échanges approfondis avec les coordonnateurs des Programmes stratégiques.

Tout en prenant en compte que ce programme était encore dans une phase initiale ne permettant pas de mesurer pleinement les impacts des actions conduites, le Comité a souligné l'importance de ce Programme, au cœur de la contribution de la FAO à la mise en œuvre des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD), en particulier les ODD 1 et 2. Le Comité s'est aussi félicité de l'intégration de la question de la parité hommes-femmes dans le rapport.

À la suite de l'examen, le Comité a approuvé les conclusions du rapport d'évaluation, en mettant particulièrement en exergue certains points: un, la nécessité dans cette phase initiale de cibler un nombre limité de pays, identifiés sur la base d'une analyse de la pauvreté rurale et de ses causes structurelles, mais aussi sur la base de l'engagement des autorités nationales et des bénéficiaires de ces programmes; deux, la nécessité de cibler l'action de la FAO sur des domaines où elle dispose de réels avantages comparatifs, en complémentarité des actions conduites par d'autres acteurs, et je pense notamment au PAM et au FIDA; trois, la nécessité de cibler les populations et les segments de populations les plus vulnérables, en particulier les femmes; la nécessité aussi d'accorder une attention particulière aux pays

en crise en lien avec le Programme stratégique 5; quatre, la nécessité de renforcer les capacités des bureaux décentralisés dans ce domaine tout comme les capacités nationales.

Le deuxième sujet au titre des évaluations, examiné par le Comité, concernait le Plan d'action du bureau de l'évaluation pour 2017-2018. Le Comité a approuvé la Stratégie et le Plan d'action présentés par le Bureau de l'évaluation pour 2017-2018.

Il a par ailleurs adressé trois demandes au Secrétariat.

La première: accorder une priorité aux recrutements du bureau de l'évaluation afin que tous les postes vacants soient pourvus à la fin de 2017. Le Comité a souhaité que des informations lui soient présentées sur ce sujet à sa prochaine session. Ces postes sont en effet indispensables pour permettre au Bureau de l'évaluation de mettre en œuvre le Plan d'action adopté.

La deuxième requête: fournir à une session du Comité en 2018 un rapport intérimaire sur la mise en œuvre des recommandations de l'évaluation indépendante de la fonction d'évaluation de la FAO, qui avait été présenté à la session du Comité du Programme de novembre 2016.

La troisième: fournir à la prochaine réunion du Comité en novembre l'annexe attendue sur la prise en compte des questions de parité hommes-femmes dans la mise en œuvre de l'Objectif stratégique 5, cette annexe n'ayant pas pu être produite lorsque le Comité avait examiné le rapport d'évaluation de cet objectif stratégique en novembre dernier.

Le dernier sujet concernait le Programme d'évaluation des stratégies thématiques. Conformément au souhait du Comité que toutes les évaluations thématiques de la FAO, approuvées par ce Conseil, fassent l'objet d'une évaluation des conditions de leur mise en œuvre, le Bureau de l'évaluation a présenté au Comité un programme de travail spécifique pour la réalisation d'évaluations des stratégies thématiques n'ayant pas fait à ce jour l'objet de tels rapports. De ce fait, toutes les stratégies thématiques approuvées par le Conseil feront l'objet d'une évaluation présentée au Comité du Programme dans les cinq prochaines années, y compris les stratégies adoptées en matière de partenariat avec le secteur privé et la société civile, qui feront l'objet de deux rapports séparés.

En conclusion, dans les questions diverses, le Comité a souligné deux points importants pour renforcer l'efficacité de son action. D'une part, la possibilité de tenir annuellement une troisième réunion, d'une durée plus réduite, qui serait totalement dédiée à l'examen des rapports d'évaluation. Ces rapports sont en effet souvent volumineux et complexes, et à l'expérience il s'avère difficile de les traiter pleinement lors de séances largement consacrées à l'examen des documents de planification et programmation budgétaires, alors même que ces rapports d'évaluation représentent les meilleures opportunités d'analyser concrètement l'efficacité des programmes conduits par notre Organisation.

D'autre part, le Comité a demandé à ce que soit diffusée aux membres du Comité la version anglaise des rapports d'évaluation dès qu'elle est disponible, pour lui permettre de préparer efficacement ses séances, sachant bien sûr que la publication dans les différentes langues de travail doit être faite en respectant les délais réglementaires, à savoir deux semaines avant le début de la session du Comité.

Mr Yubo XU (China)

China is making this statement on behalf of the Asia Group. Since the Reviewed Strategic Framework and MTP 2018–2021 and the PWB 2018–19 were discussed in the previous two Agenda Items, we will limit our comments here on items that were not discussed as previous items.

First is about the strategy for FAO's work on climate change. The Asia Group appreciates that the Strategy has been completed reflecting the recommendations made last December by the 155th Session of the Council. We welcome the inclusive process whereby all the technical committees, including COAG, COFO, COFI and CCP have been consulted in the formulation of the Strategy.

Climate change is one of the most serious global issues that we are now facing, including in the Asia Region. Our region is prone and is susceptible to a wide range of natural disasters that threaten agriculture and rural livelihoods.

We note that various agencies are involved in the climate change area. Avoiding duplication and effective collaboration among agencies based on their comparative advantages is crucially important.

In this sense, this Strategy is of paramount importance in defining FAO's approach and the guiding principles in the climate change area. With this strategy, we expect FAO to efficiently and effectively collaborate with other agencies as well as to implement coordinated actions across the different divisions of the Organization.

The second comment is about the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report. We welcome the good progress and the results achieved in the implementation of PWB 2016-17, that 86 percent of 50 output targets for the year 2016 have been fully achieved. We also welcome the achievements FAO made in the cross-cutting themes, especially in gender.

However, there are still several output indicators that have not achieved their targets, such as GIAHS. We would like to request FAO to analyze what is causing this low achievement and continue to closely monitor these indicators and increase efforts to achieve their targets.

On the other hand, among the indicators that have achieved their targets, there are several indicators which show achievements far exceeding their target, which makes us think it is necessary to check the target levels once again. We expect FAO to set more appropriate output target levels for PWB 2018-19.

The third comment is about the *Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR)* Global Eradication Programme. The Asia Region is one of the regions that suffer from PPR and we welcome that good collaboration is taking place between FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in eradicating PPR. PPR can have devastating effects on the livestock of poor rural populations and severely affect their economies. We would like to stress the importance of eradicating PPR as in the Report of the Programme Committee.

The last comment is about the evaluation of FAO's contribution on Strategic Objective 3. We support all the recommendations made in this evaluation report, including prioritizing a limited number of countries while still providing some support to others which would be important for FAO to achieve the results effectively and efficiently. We wish to highlight the request for special consideration to countries affected by conflict, natural disasters and humanitarian crises in close collaboration with Strategic Programme 5.

We understand that Strategic Programme 3 is a relatively new area of work and has a direct link with Sustainable Development Goals, in particular with SDG 1 and SDG 2. It needs to have a cross-sectorial approach and to give particular importance to vulnerable people, including women. We encourage FAO to focus on its comparative advantage and collaborate with other agencies such as IFAD and the World Bank in order to make further progress in Strategic Programme 3 and contribute to SDG 1 and SDG 2.

With these comments, the Asia Group endorses the report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee.

Mme Adjiri Emilienne AGOSSA (Bénin)

Monsieur le Président, je vous remercie surtout pour vos efforts dans la conduite de nos délibérations. Le Bénin intervient sur ce point à l'ordre du jour au nom du Groupe Afrique et accueille avec satisfaction le rapport de la 121^{ème} session du Comité du Programme, qui s'est tenue le mois dernier en préparation du Conseil. Certains points soulevés par le Comité du Programme ont déjà été discutés lors de l'examen du Cadre stratégique et du PTB.

Le Groupe Afrique voudrait faire quelques commentaires sur les autres points mentionnés dans le rapport du Comité du Programme. Concernant l'examen à mi-parcours, rapport de synthèse 2016, le Groupe Afrique félicite la FAO et remercie le Comité du Programme de mettre en relief, au point 6 f), que les réalisations sont en bonne voie pour ce qui est des services et de la qualité technique, s'agissant notamment des thèmes transversaux contribuant aux objectifs stratégiques.

En référence au point 6 g), nous apprécions tout particulièrement que le Comité du Programme suggère au Secrétariat d'affiner le processus de définition des cibles pour 2018-2019, compte tenu de l'expérience acquise durant l'exercice biennal 2016-2017, afin de fixer des cibles de produits de la FAO plus appropriées. Venons-en maintenant à l'évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à la réduction de la pauvreté rurale, le Groupe Afrique approuve entièrement les commentaires du Comité du Programme.

En ce qui concerne la Stratégie et le Plan d'action du Bureau de l'évaluation, de nouveau, le Groupe Afrique apporte son soutien total aux observations du Comité du Programme et nous attendons avec intérêt de pouvoir examiner l'annexe qui sera fournie sur les questions relatives à la parité hommes-femmes dans le cadre de l'évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à l'Objectif stratégique 5. Pour finir, sous le chapitre «questions diverses», le Groupe Afrique, composé de pays anglophones, arabophones, francophones, hispanophones et lusophones, ne comprend pas pourquoi, au point 13 b), il est fait mention qu'il est convenu que les documents relatifs aux évaluations devraient être mis à disposition en anglais dès que possible. Nous voudrions rappeler que la FAO est une organisation multilinguistique. Dans un souci d'accès équitable et égal à l'information le Groupe Afrique voudrait souligner que les documents devraient être disponibles dans toutes les langues, au même moment. D'autant plus que de nombreuses évaluations sont écrites originellement en français ou en espagnol. Avec ces quelques commentaires, le Groupe Afrique voudrait saluer le travail du Comité du Programme.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Germany)

I would like to pass on the floor to Malta who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Montenegro, and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We endorse the conclusions of the Programme Committee (PC) and would like to highlight a few issues, taking into account the fact that the strategic framework, the PWB and the MTP are also discussed under other items of the agenda.

First, we welcome the completion of FAO's Strategy on Climate Change as requested by the 155th session of the Council. We would like to express our appreciation for the extensive consultation process that took place to prepare it and our satisfaction with this version that embraces the recommendations made by the Council at its last session. We are also pleased with the increased means that are to be devoted to climate change adaptation and mitigation in the next biennium, and in this regard we would like to stress the importance of FAO's work on climate change and agriculture in the context of countries' NDC's. We are looking forward to its implementation and to the review of outputs and indicators of the Action Plan at a future session.

Looking ahead, transparent monitoring of FAO's implementation of the climate change strategy will be essential. International Climate Funds will look for this when making decisions about what projects to fund. We encourage FAO, in its implementation, to collaborate effectively with other multilateral agencies, including those based in Rome.

Mid-term review: we welcome the good progress and results achieved in the implementation of the current PWB as highlighted in the PC report, and support the PC's suggestion to pay further attention to the areas rated as partially achieved as well as the proposal to refine the target setting process for 2018-19 taking into account lessons learned from the experience of PWB 2016-17 implementation.

We also want to thank the Secretariat for the progress report on the implementation of the *Peste des Petits Ruminants* Global Eradication Programme, as it is an important issue for rural populations and their food security and nutrition. We commend the collaborative work of FAO and OIE on this flagship programme for both organizations and are looking forward to the next progress report to be presented to the Programme Committee in early 2018.

We would like to express our appreciation for the first evaluation of FAO's contribution to Strategic Objective 3. We agree with the overall conclusions proposed to improve implementation, and stress in particular the need to focus on FAO's comparative advantages, to encourage working in collaboration with relevant partners and organizations and, last but not least, to enhance targeting of a limited number of prioritised countries on the basis of an analysis of poverty and its structural causes.

We fully endorse the recommendations regarding the Office of Evaluation strategy and Action Plan 2017-18. Indeed, we would like to underline the importance we attach to the various evaluations

presented. We appreciate the continuous efforts made these last few years to better include the gender dimension in those evaluations, as it is a critical point for us. Furthermore, we welcome the idea of holding specific evaluations of FAO's thematic strategies.

In conclusion, we wish to convey once more our appreciation for the focused discussions provided by the Programme Committee. Indeed, the Programme Committee is pivotal in the process of elaborating the strategic programming of FAO and in the monitoring of results, with the aim of achieving a constant improvement in the impact of our Organization.

The EU and its Member States would like to strongly highlight the importance attached to the Programme Committee's as well as the Finance Committee's work in the governance process of FAO. To this end the EU and its Member States would like to ensure the continuation of regular meetings of the Programme and the Finance Committees, of which at least two sessions per year should continue to be held. The credibility of said governance processes, including through a constructive dialogue between the Secretariat and its governing bodies and through a solid and fair accountability process, is of paramount importance in obtaining the essential political and financial support from Member States.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The intervention by Afghanistan is limited to three topics covered by the Programme Committee in its 121st session, namely: Strategy for FAO's work on climate change; Mid-term Review Synthesis Report-2016; and Evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO3).

FAO's Climate Strategy: Being located in a region most threatened by water scarcity, prolonged draughts and menacing desertification, Afghanistan endorses the "Strategy for FAO's work on climate change". The strategy, which is comprehensive, aligned with COP 21 and COP 22 and linked to the five targets of SDG 13, is intended to assist any member country committed to its intended National Determined Contribution (INDC).

Afghanistan supports the seven principles which guide the Strategy, the three Outcomes and the 34 contributions to climate change expected from FAO's five Strategic Objectives and Objective 6. Annex 3 of document PC 121/2 submitted to the Programme Committee shows that in the PWB 2016-17, 25 percent of net appropriation allocated to the five Strategic Objectives was linked to climate change-related activities and 15 percent of the 2016 field projects portfolio addressed climate-related issues. These are impressive figures which we see for the first time.

Chairperson, all the three Rome-based agencies now have a policy on climate change. At the country level, it should be possible for the three agencies to exercise closer coordination in support of the INDCs.

Afghanistan appreciates the Mid-term Review Synthesis MTR for 2016, and notes that key performance indicators (KPI) are on track and that the management of the programme has been strengthened through the appointment of Strategic Programme Leaders. It takes note that the 48 Outputs covered by the five Strategic Objectives focus on three main areas: (i) improving capacity (ii) support national and regional authorities and institutions and (iii) improve procedures, practices, methods and standards. From Annex 2 of PC 121/3, one can conclude that in 2016 out of the 48 Outputs, 19 dealt with capacity building, 21 consisted of support to national and regional authorities and institutions and 8 dealt with improving procedures, practices, methods and standards. Afghanistan also appreciates the extensive coverage given to the performance of Objective 6 as explained in paragraphs 69 to 93 of PC 121/3.

Evaluation of Strategic Objective 3: Considering the multi-dimensional nature of Strategic Objective 3 (Reduce rural poverty), its evaluation is bound to be wide in scope. Strategic Objective 3 has three Outcomes and ten Outputs. The fulfilment of the ten Outputs is the sole responsibility of FAO; the achievement of the three Outcomes is the responsibility of governments with support from FAO and other partners. The Mid-term Review Synthesis Report 2016 lists these outputs and measures their performance until 2016.

The evaluation of Strategic Objective 3, instead of judging performance on the basis of its ten Outputs and their potential contributions to the three Outcomes, is piloted to respond to five predetermined questions as listed in paragraph 5 of the Summary Evaluation Report. By adopting this approach, one

wonders in what way the 12 findings of the evaluation report link up with the expected ten Outputs and three Outcomes of SO 3. In short, what has been the linkage?

That said, we can go along with the six conclusions and six recommendations of the evaluation report (paragraphs 68-80) and the Management Response to the evaluation report.

With these comments, and Afghanistan's strong support for the PPR Global Eradication Programme, my country endorses the Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee.

Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairuddin MOHD (Malaysia)

Thank you Ambassador Serge Tomasi, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, for presenting this report.

Malaysia's interventions on this document shall be based solely on "Strategy for FAO's work on climate change".

We welcome the review of the Programme Committee on FAO's strategy and action plan on climate change. We note that the strategy reflects the recommendations made by this Council back in December. We further welcome the three outcomes of the strategy and action plan, especially in enhancing capacities of Member Nations on climate change through FAO leadership as a provider of technical knowledge and expertise.

Noting, that there are many approaches for mitigation and adaptation. Crop modelling activities need to be enhanced in order to predict the impact of climate change on crop yields and farmers' income. It would also be crucial to intensify research into pest and diseases, in anticipation of changing patterns of such incidences due to climate change. More research to develop additional varieties, which are tolerant to floods, droughts and extreme temperatures, is needed.

As the world population is projected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050, we face more challenges in land and water resources utilization.

Therefore, comprehensive strategies to improve climate resilience and management, both in terms of adaptation and mitigation measures, should be at the forefront.

We welcome the reasonable allocation of USD 3.7 million for climate change adaptation and mitigation to the PWB as well as the establishment of the new Department of Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water. We hope this Department will play its important role particularly in supporting developing nations to face climate change.

We acknowledge FAO's accreditation to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). We urge FAO to support developing nations in securing GCF to promote low emissions and climate resilience to enhance agriculture sustainability particularly to develop and implement country-led projects on adaptation and climate-smart agriculture.

With these comments, Malaysia endorses the Report of the 121th Session of the Programme Committee.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

La Côte d'Ivoire appuie la déclaration faite par le Bénin au nom du Groupe Afrique. Elle se félicite de la qualité du document présenté par le Comité du Programme. La Côte d'Ivoire a fait sienne les recommandations contenues dans le document CL 153/3.

Nous voulons insister sur le point relatif aux rapports intérimaires sur la mise en œuvre du Programme mondial d'éradication de la peste des petits ruminants. Le programme de lutte contre ce fléau mondial a été lancé en mars 2015, en Côte d'Ivoire, par la FAO et l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale.

Cette maladie animale frappe durement sur le plan économique les populations rurales les plus pauvres. Le petit ruminant constitue souvent le seul bien détenu par les hommes et les femmes en zone rurale. Aussi, la Côte d'Ivoire voudrait-elle insister sur la recommandation au paragraphe 7 c) et lancer un appel aux États Membres les invitant à faire des contributions en faveur de ce Programme dont l'objectif vise à éradiquer cette maladie en l'espace de dix ans.

Enfin, la Côte d'Ivoire appuie le Bénin sur la question relative aux documents d'évaluation qui doivent être disponibles dans toutes les langues de travail de la FAO.

Sra. Martha BÁRCENA COQUI (México)

México apoya la declaración de El Salvador en nombre del GRULAC, así como el Informe del Comité del programa, y felicita a su Presidente por su realización. Hay varios aspectos en este Informe de particular relevancia, como es la Evaluación de la contribución de la FAO al logro del Objetivo Estratégico número tres, de lucha contra la pobreza rural, y la revisión de la estrategia para el trabajo de la FAO sobre cambio climático, de gran relevancia para todos los.

En esta ocasión quisiera referirme a un tema que no está incluido en el informe del Comité de programa, pero que México tiene interés en que se considere en un futuro por su relevancia. El día de ayer, el Director General Graziano da Silva hizo referencia a varios retos que tenemos en materia de Gobernanza. En específico, mencionó la proliferación de reuniones oficiales cuyo costo en este milenio ascendió a 72, o ascenderá a 72 millones de dólares.

Por ello, nos pidió reflexionar sobre la conveniencia de disminuir la frecuencia y la duración de las reuniones oficiales, en particular de los Órganos Rectores, y nos dio como ejemplo la compactación de los días para la próxima Conferencia de la FAO.

La Delegación de México agradecerá al Comité de Programa incluir en sus deliberaciones futuras la necesidad de reflexionar sobre este asunto que el Director General nos solicitó el día de ayer.

Sr. Nazareno Cruz MONTANI CAZABAT (Argentina)

En primer lugar, queremos agradecer al Embajador Tomasi por la presentación del Informe.

Nos vamos a referir a los diversos puntos, a la excepción de la cuestión del Marco Estratégico Revisado y el Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 y el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto para el 2018-2019, ya que estos asuntos los hemos abordado en ocasiones anteriores.

En primer lugar, la Delegación argentina desea dar la bienvenida al Informe del 121º periodo de sesiones de Comité del Programa. Con respecto a dicho Informe, queremos señalar dos puntos en particular. En relación con la estrategia de la FAO para el trabajo en materia de cambio climático, la Argentina desea dar la bienvenida a dicha estrategia. Celebramos la última versión y constatamos la evolución que ha tenido la estrategia en las distintas revisiones. En particular, acordamos con la visión presentada en el documento de la estrategia con los principios rectores y con los logros previstos. Asimismo, queremos destacar que el Plan de Acción contenido en dicha estrategia está adecuadamente integrado a la estructura de la Organización a partir de la determinación de logros claros y concretos.

En este sentido, la República Argentina otorga particular importancia a la implementación de la estrategia a nivel de las Oficinas Descentralizadas. En este sentido, vamos a hacer un seguimiento muy cercano de esta cuestión. Asimismo, como hemos reiterado en determinadas ocasiones, quisiéramos señalar que, en algunos párrafos del documentos, por momentos se incorporan referencias a términos que no han sido multilateralmente acordados en los acuerdos internacionales alcanzados en materia de desarrollo sostenible y medio ambiente como, por ejemplo, el término de “financiación verde” en el párrafo 38, o “desarrollo verde” en el párrafo 43.

Asimismo, a lo largo de la estrategia se hace mención al concepto de “agricultura climáticamente inteligente” y quisiéramos destacar una vez más que este concepto no tiene un consenso multilateral y creemos que circunscribe la racionalidad de la agricultura a la dimensión climática sin considerar las dimensiones económicas y sociales. Es por esto que nosotros preferimos, en general, la utilización del concepto de “agricultura sostenible”.

En relación con la Evaluación de la contribución de la FAO a la reducción de la pobreza, la República Argentina quiere manifestar su gran satisfacción por la elaboración de esta evaluación, ya que consideramos que es una herramienta importante en la tarea de facilitar el logro del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible número uno de la Agenda 2030, y porque sí incluye la dimensión de género en este terreno, lo cual es fundamental. O sea, que las mujeres puedan realizar un aporte vital en la

erradicación del hambre, de la extrema pobreza y de la malnutrición, dado su rol decisivo en la agricultura y los sistemas alimentarios.

Por último, quisiéramos hacernos ecos del punto mencionado por la Delegación de México respecto de algunas cuestiones mencionadas por el Director General el día de ayer en su discurso en materia de desafíos en términos de gobernanza. Y nos parece que estas cuestiones que han sido planteadas deberían ser abordadas por el Comité del Programa, de manera que se dé espacio a una reflexión y ver de qué forma se pueden generar ciertos ahorros adicionales de costos, por ejemplo, con esta propuesta del Director General con respecto a la revisión de la duración de algunas reuniones y poder tener un análisis comprensivo. Nos parece que el Comité del programa puede ser un lugar apropiado para llevar a cabo este análisis.

Mme Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Je voudrais prendre la parole pour remercier l'Ambassadeur Serge Tomasi pour son *leadership* et son engagement comme Président du Comité du Programme, particulièrement parce qu'il a fait avancer avec beaucoup d'énergie les thèmes transversaux, notamment sur le changement climatique et la question de parité hommes-femmes, mais aussi pour ses efforts de réforme des sessions du Comité du Programme afin de les rendre plus efficaces, efficientes et substantives.

Continues in English

On this point, I would like to say that Canada is a member and sits on the Programme Committee and we support the recommendations of the Programme Committee, so we will limit our intervention to two points.

The first point is about the Strategy on Climate Change. We just wanted to praise the process that was spearheaded to develop the corporate Strategy because it was inclusive and went through an extensive consultation process, and we also welcome the fact that now we see some actions done in the Strategy and tomorrow we are looking forward to the side event on *Climate-smart agriculture: country experiences and lessons for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) implementation*.

I also wanted to touch upon the discussions that occurred on the evaluation of the SO3 on poverty reduction because I think it is a good example of how discussions at a governing body can be very substantive. It was very interesting to learn more about what was FAO's comparative advantage and to see that their approach is aimed at trying to leverage that advantage in the working partnership.

We also very much appreciated the fact that the evaluation as requested included an annex and included a gender analysis through every step. Related to that, and as well to the recommendations for poverty reduction, there was a recommendation about communications and branding and the fact that, again in this area, I think FAO could benefit from articulating better its added value and comparative advantage which is still little known.

In that respect, there were many recommendations about further integration of gender which were accepted and endorsed by Management. One of them is really important. It is the last one which says that says that FAO will intensify its engagement to promote gender equality and rural women's empowerment in poverty reduction interventions, building on work across all SP3 outcomes and on proven approaches with transformational potential for narrowing the development gap between men and women, boys and girls.

This will require buy-in and collaboration across strategic programmes at all levels of the Organization. I think the evaluation says that we should, in terms of focusing for FAO, scale up approaches that work. And it relates again to the visibility. There are a lot of things that FAO does in this area with other cross-cutting themes like climate change that we do not know about.

I think one of the recommendations that I would like to put to Senior Management is to also look at the structure of the Organization and the organigramme and why gender is not seen anywhere? It is a cross-cutting theme. You have mainstreamed it in the Programme of Work and Budget. You have said that you would devote more attention to it.

So one possibility would be to look at the division that deals with gender and integrate gender in the title of the division.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

La Delegación de Chile acoge satisfactoriamente el Informe del 121º Comité de Programa, que como han dicho otras delegaciones, aborda temas que ya hemos revisado en este Consejo. Quisiéramos destacar que respaldamos la estrategia de FAO y el Plan de Acción para el Cambio Climático, tema de gran preocupación para nuestro país y para nuestra región.

Nos sumamos a lo expresado por México y Argentina en materia de Gobernanza. Quisiéramos destacar los esfuerzos en ahorro que ha venido realizando la Administración del Director General desde el año 2012. Entendemos que se ha avanzado mucho dentro de sus posibilidades y autonomía, y que está la voluntad de continuar buscando formas adicionales de ahorro. En este sentido, y considerando el escenario financiero complejo en el que nos encontramos, quisiéramos llamar la atención de los Miembros del Consejo a la cuestión mencionada por el Director General en su discurso de apertura el día de ayer en relación a los altos costos de Gobernanza y de la Organización. En particular, sobre el número de reuniones que se realizan en cada bienio, cifra que supera en costos los 70 millones de dólares. Quisiéramos que este tema podría ser objeto de una discusión en futuras revisiones de los Órganos Rectores con el fin de encontrar un uso más eficiente de nuestro tiempo y recursos en la toma de decisiones.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

On behalf of the 15 member countries of the Caribbean sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago appreciates the insightful report presented by the Chair of the Programme Committee and wishes to make two brief points.

First of all, with respect to climate change, countries of the Caribbean sub-region have a very deep interest in this particular issue. As you would appreciate, most of the countries are small island developing states whose entire land mass may be found as a coastal zone area, very much susceptible to the varying degrees of climate change.

The level of vulnerability makes us very appreciative of the initiatives proposed under the Climate Change Strategy and aligns to the opportunities for improving our preparedness. However, we note that this is a very complex issue and while we welcome the review of the work on the strategy, we draw attention to the fact that the needs will be extremely demanding in terms of technical support.

And while we look forward to the programme to be unveiled by FAO, we have expectations that with enhanced strategic alliances, expanded support may be leveraged for dealing with this critical area.

Secondly, on the issue of PPR, we note and appreciate the work being done to eradicate PPR. But perhaps to clarify our own understanding about the status of FAO and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) collaboration on building national capacity and strengthening national animal diseases surveillance and prevention systems, particularly in potentially vulnerable countries in respect of animal diseases generally.

M. Serge TOMASI (Président du Comité du Programme)

Je crois qu'étrangement la seule question qui m'a été posée concerne la gouvernance de l'institution, qui n'est pas une compétence du Comité du Programme, mais je répondrai sur cette question parce qu'elle est grave et sérieuse.

D'abord, sur les commentaires qui ont été faits sur les différents sujets, en commençant par le rapport intérimaire sur la mise en œuvre du Programme de travail et budget (PTB). Je crois que beaucoup d'entre vous, effectivement, ont souligné que l'exécution, à ce stade, du PTB est satisfaisante, qu'il y a des retards sur certains indicateurs, la Chine notamment a mis en lumière les retards sur les SIPAM (Systèmes ingénieux du patrimoine agricole mondial). Effectivement, le Comité a demandé au Secrétariat d'être particulièrement vigilant dans l'exécution du Programme en 2017, sur les secteurs pour lesquels on avait enregistré des retards et je pense que la réunion du Comité du Programme de novembre 2017 devra accorder une attention particulière à ces secteurs.

Ensuite, plusieurs d'entre vous, le Groupe Afrique, le Groupe Asie, ont dit qu'il fallait, effectivement, affiner les indicateurs. Je dirais trois choses là-dessus: un des problèmes du Comité, qui renvoie à la question du nombre de réunions, est justement qu'il n'a clairement pas le temps matériel de faire un examen approfondi des indicateurs des cibles et des produits. C'est pourquoi je pense que nous avons besoin d'une troisième réunion annuelle de ce Comité.

Cependant, les questions qui se posent ne sont pas tant sur la pertinence des cibles qui, pour la plupart, nous semblent assez adéquates, mais plutôt – et c'est très difficile à évaluer – quel est effectivement le bon niveau d'ambition pour ces cibles. Nous avons constaté, en effet, que sur certains produits et résultantes, certaines cibles étaient peut-être trop ambitieuses par rapport aux capacités de l'Organisation, et, à l'inverse, pour d'autres, on avait peut-être manqué d'ambition, car on pouvait atteindre des résultats plus importants.

Sur la Stratégie climat, je remercie la Malaisie et l'Afghanistan qui ont bien mis en lumière les raisons de l'importance de cet engagement de notre Organisation dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, notamment pour les pays les plus vulnérables. À la fois dans une approche équilibrée entre atténuation et adaptation, la Chine a souligné à juste titre qu'il faut bien cibler les interventions de la FAO sur ces avantages comparatifs, et je crois qu'elle a aussi souligné l'intérêt du processus participatif qui a été suivi et que j'ai trouvé, pour ma part, exemplaire. Effectivement, ce projet de stratégie a pu être débattu dans tous les Comités techniques, dans les Conférences régionales, pour passer ensuite au Comité du Programme, faire l'objet d'une discussion dans une séance informelle du Conseil pour être approuvé par le Conseil à sa séance de décembre 2016, puis finalisé par le Comité du Programme en veillant à la prise en compte des observations du Conseil; tout ce processus, à mon avis, nous a permis de grandement améliorer cette Stratégie, et même, dirais-je, d'avoir une stratégie appropriée. Tout cela exige en effet du temps et des réunions, mais je crois que le résultat est à la hauteur des efforts que nous y avons consacrés.

Sur la peste des petits ruminants, je partage pleinement ce qui a été dit, car souvent le cheptel est le seul capital dont disposent les populations les plus pauvres. Aussi la disparition de ce cheptel a des conséquences dramatiques. Il serait donc extrêmement positif de mobiliser les ressources attendues pour financer ce Programme, sachant que c'est justement sur ce type de programme que nous pouvons démontrer des résultats et faire un lien entre la mobilisation des ressources et les résultats obtenus. Encore une fois, cette peste des petits ruminants peut être éradiquée en l'espace d'une décennie, il faut donc être à la hauteur des enjeux.

Sur l'Objectif stratégique 3, je suis là aussi frappé, peut-être par la responsabilité des organismes ayant leur siège à Rome, comme celle des ministères de l'agriculture et des ministères de l'économie, sur leur responsabilité pour atteindre l'Objectif 1 et l'Objectif 2 des Objectifs de développement durable. L'objectif est d'éradiquer la pauvreté absolue en 2030 et nous savons que deux tiers des personnes vivant en situation de pauvreté absolue vivent dans des zones rurales. Par conséquent la capacité à assurer le développement des zones rurales sera absolument déterminante pour atteindre cet objectif. Il y a donc là une responsabilité particulière des organismes romains.

Et je répète ce que j'ai dit à la réunion du Comité du Programme: il y a une opportunité historique pour la FAO et le FIDA de nourrir un partenariat opérationnel beaucoup plus fort dans la lutte contre la pauvreté rurale; la FAO, en aidant les pays à intégrer pleinement ces questions dans leurs politiques nationales, et ces politiques nationales pouvant être expérimentées et déclinées sur le plan opérationnel par des programmes financés par le FIDA. Compte tenu du parcours du nouveau Président du FIDA, qui est à la fois un spécialiste de la lutte contre la pauvreté et des questions d'emploi, il y a là une coopération nouvelle à imaginer entre la FAO et le FIDA. Et je souscris aussi à ce qui a été dit, notamment par l'Union européenne, bien sûr, qu'il est important de cibler les efforts sur les pays les plus pauvres et les segments des populations les plus pauvres.

Sur les questions de traduction, le Groupe Afrique a réagi à cette proposition – je dois dire que lorsque je l'avais avancée il y a un an, elle n'avait pas fait consensus à l'époque au sein du Comité du Programme, mais cette fois-ci elle l'a obtenu. Croyez bien, Madame, que pour un ambassadeur français, proposer que les rapports soient d'abord diffusés dans leur version anglaise, ce n'est pas naturel. Vous savez combien nous sommes attachés, non seulement à la francophonie, mais plus encore à la diversité

linguistique qui est la mère nourricière de la diversité culturelle. Nous avons fait cette proposition d'une façon très pragmatique en nous demandant quel est notre problème. Actuellement, comme nous n'avons que deux réunions par an, nous avons une douzaine de rapports à examiner. J'ai compté qu'en moyenne nous avons 1400 pages à analyser.

Comme les rapports ne sont diffusés, normalement, que deux semaines avant les réunions, nous avons dix jours ouvrables pour examiner tous ces rapports. C'est un laps de temps très réduit, d'autant plus que tous les Comités du Programme doivent suivre le reste de l'agenda des trois organismes ayant leur siège à Rome. Cette proposition est donc simplement motivée par des raisons pragmatiques: heureusement, ou malheureusement, les rapports sont élaborés à la FAO, généralement en anglais, parce que c'est la langue de travail de la plupart des agents qui travaillent dans cette Organisation. Il y a ensuite tout un processus de contrôle de qualité, d'approbation par la Direction générale et de traduction - avec des exigences de temps, bien sûr, pour leur traduction dans toutes les langues de travail. Cela reporte d'autant plus le moment où les rapports sont disponibles pour permettre aux membres du Comité de se préparer.

Nous avons donc considéré que dès que les rapports étaient disponibles dans une langue de travail, et nous savons que c'est essentiellement en anglais, il était plus raisonnable de les mettre à la disposition des membres du Comité, sachant bien sûr que nous demandions au Secrétariat de respecter pleinement le délai réglementaire de mise en ligne de tous les rapports dans toutes les langues de travail de l'Organisation, qui est normalement de deux semaines, au moins, avant la réunion du Comité.

J'en viens maintenant à la question de la gouvernance: d'abord, je ne pense pas que ce soit le rôle du Comité du Programme que de se pencher sur ces questions. Dans les Textes fondamentaux de notre Organisation, le Comité du Programme n'a pas la charge de la gouvernance de l'institution, il est chargé des activités programmatiques et de définir les priorités de la politique d'évaluation, mais certainement pas de la gouvernance. Cela pourrait être peut-être le rôle du Comité des questions institutionnelles et juridiques, mais c'est surtout, je crois, le rôle du Conseil.

Sur la question du coût: actuellement nous avons deux réunions par an, au cours desquelles nous devons examiner une douzaine de rapports, soit environ 1400 pages, et chaque fois nous sommes obligés de donner la priorité aux documents de planification et de programmation budgétaire, qui sont très liés au cycle des séances du Conseil, décembre et avril. Par conséquent, malheureusement, nous n'avons pas toujours le temps de débattre de l'autre volet, c'est-à-dire l'examen des rapports d'évaluation, qui est une compétence propre du Comité, car ils ne sont pas examinés par le Conseil, mais seulement par le Comité du Programme, et comme je l'ai dit c'est à travers ces rapports d'évaluation que l'on voit, *in fine*, le véritable résultat de l'action produite.

Nous avons donc proposé de réfléchir à l'idée de séparer ces discussions, de garder les deux réunions, éventuellement raccourcies, qui seraient consacrées exclusivement aux politiques budgétaires et à la définition des programmes et d'avoir une réunion par an, elle aussi raccourcie, où l'on rassemblerait toutes les questions touchant aux évaluations. Je pense que cela aiderait aussi le Secrétariat à respecter ses délais de publication des rapports parce que c'est aussi un défi pour le Secrétariat que de publier tous ces rapports avant les mêmes réunions. Je ne crois pas que cela changerait fondamentalement le coût de fonctionnement du Comité.

Maintenant, je vais répondre très clairement au Groupe Amérique latine et Caraïbes (GRULAC) parce que je suis frappé que le GRULAC, comme le Directeur général, pose aujourd'hui la question de la gouvernance de cette institution. Je vous dirais en tant qu'adepte du parler vrai en diplomatie que ce n'est pas seulement une erreur, mais une faute. Vous soulevez un sujet qui va fracturer ce Conseil. On n'ouvre pas un débat sur la gouvernance d'une institution à deux ans de la fin de son mandat. J'ai toujours soutenu le Directeur général chaque fois qu'il proposait des réformes importantes, et il en a fait tant sur le programme que sur l'organisation du Secrétariat. Mais ouvrir aujourd'hui un débat sur la gouvernance de la FAO, je pense que c'est une faute. Et ce Conseil se fracturera sur ce sujet. Je pars au cours du mois prochain et je ferai un rapport d'activités à mes autorités. Je les appellerai à être extrêmement vigilantes sur ce sujet. Je ne crois pas qu'aujourd'hui il y ait un problème de gouvernance à la FAO. Je crois qu'il y a un problème de mobilisation de ressources pour l'exécution efficace des programmes afin de mettre en œuvre les objectifs de développement durable.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I will pass the floor to the Secretary-General for an announcement.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Delegates are reminded of the need to register for Council if they wish to be included in the list of participants of this session. The Provisional List of Participants will be available tomorrow morning at the Documents Desk and delegates are invited to check that their names and titles are accurate. Any corrections or amendments should be submitted to the Documents Desk for inclusion in the final list.

I also wish to inform Members that a buffet lunch at 12.45 will be offered in front of the Iran Room before the Side Event on *Sustainable Food Systems in the New Urban Agenda*, which will take place from 13.30 to 14.30 in the Iran Room.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, we will resume our work this afternoon at 14.30 hours sharp.

The meeting rose at 12:33 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 33

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.33

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2017 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| FOURTH PLENARY MEETING QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 25 April 2017 |

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.45 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.45
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- Item 6. Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee (27-31 March 2017) (continued)**
Point 6. Rapport de la cent vingt et unième session du Comité du Programme (27-31 mars 2017) (suite)
Tema 6. Informe del 121.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (27-31 de marzo de 2017) (continuación)
(CL 156/3)

CHAIRPERSON

I declare the Fourth Meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council open.

We continue with item 6, *Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee*. I will now pass the floor to the Secretariat to reply to the issues raised during the discussions this morning.

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

I would like to reply in two or three main comments about the support we receive from the Member Countries.

The first point will be on the Climate Change Strategy. I would like to thank you for your support throughout the process. As it has been said by the President of the Programme Committee and from all the regions, it has been maybe the most inclusive and consultative process in FAO during the preparation of a strategy. As it has been said, the draft strategy went through all the Technical Committees and we had three Programme Committee meetings and one informal meeting where the Climate Change Strategy was discussed. This means that we have a strategy owned by the Member Countries and also owned by the Secretariat which is very good.

It is our strategy. It is a consensual strategy in the content, in the outputs, in the deliverables and I think we will all collaborate throughout the implementation and the monitoring of the Climate Change Strategy. This I believe is what I could say regarding the strategy. As it has been mentioned, the strategy is aligned with the Climate Change Convention. It has aligned all of the agreements related to climate change as well as calls for a strong partnership in-house on how we can coordinate our work on climate change and how we can and should collaborate with other United Nations agencies.

I would start with the Rome-based Agencies. We have established a group meeting every six months and we signed a memorandum of understanding with UNFCCC and we have had a memorandum of understanding with UNEP.

One of the main elements is how we can coordinate our work on climate change. For sure, when you consider climate change in the context of agriculture and food security, I would say that FAO has a comparative advantage. We see ourselves with a leadership role for leading this process and working with the other agencies in this regard.

Another important aspect is collaboration with the financial institutions. It has been mentioned today that FAO has been accredited to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), but we are also working with other financial institutions on how we can support them when formulating projects relating to climate change and also how we can help the countries formulate, present and implement projects related to climate change.

One of the important outcomes is how to support the countries and how to support the countries implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions and their agreement in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. You can see it is one of the outputs of the Climate Change Strategy.

This being said, I would like to thank all of you for the support. Let me especially thank and commend the role played by the President of the Programme Committee. I think Ambassador Tomasi was the one pushing us to all of these meetings and to collaborate throughout the consultative process. Thank you, Ambassador Tomasi for your leadership in this regard.

The next point is linked to the *Peste des Petits Ruminants* (PPR). As it has been said, PPR is very important. If you see the majority of the poor have PPR as their burden. We would like to eradicate PPR

and it would be the second animal disease to be eradicated. You remember that the first one eradicated was Rinderpest and our aim is to eradicate *Peste des Petits Ruminants* in the next ten years.

For sure it is an aim, an objective we cannot reach alone. We need your technical support and we need your financial support. Linked to the question of Trinidad and Tobago, I could say that the eradication of PPR will have three main areas. The first one is organizing regional consultations to identify the gaps and priorities for each region. We have so far organized five regional consultations and it came strongly from the regional consultations that capacity development is a common priority. It will be also our priority when implementing our plan.

The second area is to strengthen the veterinary system. We know that especially in developing countries veterinary systems are weak. The idea is to give a priority to address how we can really help those countries increase their capacity in the veterinary system.

The third area is the capacity through vaccination systems. Vaccination is a very important means to prevent PPR and is also one of the main areas to be developed throughout the implementation of the PPR eradication work. We work, as it has been said, very closely with OIE and this is not the FAO programme, but it is a joint programme we have with FAO with OIE. We are jointly mobilizing resources.

The Director-General and the Director of OIE will go this month to the European Commission to jointly mobilize resources for the PPR eradication work. As I said, we also count on your generous contribution to fill the gaps of the programme. We need to achieve this aim of eradicating PPR in the next ten years.

The last question is linked to China and GIAHS. Indeed it has been mentioned by the Representative of China that in the Midterm Review the outputs and outcome linked to GIAHS has not been achieved. We do not have a concrete output linked to GIAHS. GIAHS is included in the outcome 2.1 related to sustainable agriculture practices.

Indeed GIAHS is a programme included in the larger output but we are on track to achieve our goals regarding GIAHS and what is established. The achievement is only 30 percent and is related to sustainable agriculture practices.

I think it was not read well what is presented in the Midterm Review but we can have a bilateral discussion and I can explain better, if you so wish, because I do not think we should enter into this detailed discussion here in this forum.

I think I concluded my comments and I pass the floor to Mr Gustafson.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)

I have two points that should be relatively quick. First, on the Midterm Review and the percentage of targets that were met. It is I think as we have discussed earlier to the changes that we have made in implementing the Strategic Framework and the Results Framework and the way we report it.

I think it really is a huge step forward for us in a number of ways that helps us deliver, report and understand the complexity of what we are doing, but it is inherently a challenge.

For one thing, everything that FAO does is compressed inside these 50 objectives. The Results Framework is largely based on identifiable changes at the country level. Inherently the level of aggregation for FAO's work at the country level, but to put every piece of work into these targets is always going to be a bit complicated, particularly when most of that work is accomplished through voluntary funded projects, as a number of which we are reporting on were formulated prior to the existence of the Strategic Framework. Others are the result of funding that was not necessarily secured at the time that the target setting was made.

So there is always a moving target, if I could put it that way. But it is I think inevitable that we have this kind of challenge. I think it is, in fact a really good part of the process. But I think when you boil it down and we end up with an indicator on the percentage of targets that were met is again at such an aggregated level that it is an important indicator.

What we would like to discuss in more detail are the actual results and what happened in a given situation in a country within a given area, or even within one of the Strategic Programmes, and so on. At a more disaggregated down level. I think we are really pleased at this point with the extent of which we came close in planning what those indicators would look like at the end for reporting.

We are in the process now of planning for 2018-2019. Many of these issues come up again. The next level down for us in planning is milestones within each of the Strategic Programmes. Again, coming up with those milestones in the interaction between the Country Offices, the Technical Divisions and the Strategic Programmes is a real challenge.

The more we do that, the more we refine that, I think, the better we will be. But there is always going to be some level of over-achievement or under-achievement given the variables involved as we go through the years.

The second point is on the evaluation of Strategic Programme 3. It is very gratifying I think to hear the comments from Members not only on the results of that evaluation, but on the utility of going through that process. It was, as you know, the second Strategic Programme that was evaluated.

It is very early in a broader sense, very early on in the process, so there was some concern at the outset about how useful an evaluation at this point in the process would be. But in fact – and I think that gets to the question raised by Afghanistan on the relationship between the questions in the evaluation and what is actually in the programme. It is partly a function of where we are in the process.

From the Management side we did find the evaluation very helpful in this kind of formative stage in understanding the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities, the constraints to that Strategic Programme. Even for myself, I found the discussion very valuable and the Report very valuable in coming to grips with the issues and the opportunities of where we are going to take this forward.

I think it was also a particularly good example of the kind of constructive interaction with the Office of Evaluation, on how we do that, not just looking at the results and what has come out of it but looking at how we are working, what countries need, what countries think of this, what other stakeholders think of this. We found, from the Management side, the whole exercise to be extremely valuable.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador Tomasi, and to the Secretariat for your response. I also want to thank the Members for their contribution on this Agenda Item 6.

I want to make conclusions on this item.

1. The Council endorsed the Report of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee, and
 - (a) Welcomed the Mid-term Review Synthesis Report 2016 and appreciated the good progress and results achieved in implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 with 86 percent of the 50 output targets for the year 2016 fully achieved. While stressing the importance of reporting on the progress on the regional initiatives and the identification of priority areas to be considered for new regional initiatives in the next biennium, and looked forward to refinement of the target setting process for 2018-19.
 - (b) Appreciated the progress made on the implementation of the *Peste des Petits Ruminants* Global Eradication Programme and looked forward to outcomes of the pledging conference to announce the contributions achieved at the end of 2017 toward their goal of eradicating this disease within a decade.
 - (c) Welcomed the recommendations of the evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO3) and endorsed the action proposed by the Management for recommendations accepted.
 - (d) Appreciated that the Strategy for FAO's Work on Climate Change had been completed in line with the recommendations made by the 155th Session of the Council, noting its importance in defining FAO's activities in support of climate change adaptation and mitigation, notably by assisting Members in achieving their intended contribution in this area.
 - (e) Endorsed the proposed Office of Evaluation Strategy in the Action Plan 2017-18 and the proposal for evaluation of FAO's thematic strategies.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

Just a quick suggestion. In the paragraph on the Climate Change Strategy, could you refer to the work that the Programme Committee will be doing in November to finalize the output targets for the Action Plan on the Climate Change Strategy? I think that is quite important and will play a key role in the adjustments to the PWB.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me go through point (d): Appreciated the Strategy for FAO's Work on Climate Change had been completed in line with the recommendations made by the 155th Session of the Council, noting its importance in defining FAO's activities in support of climate change adaptation and mitigation, notably by assisting Members in achieving their intended contribution in this area and looked forward to the completion of the definition of targets in the next session of the Programme Committee.

Item 8. Report of the 104th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (13-15 March 2017)

Point 8. Rapport de la cent-quatrième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (13-15 mars 2017)

Tema 8. Informe del 104.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (13-15 de marzo de 2017)

(CL 156/2)

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, with your agreement, I wish to propose that we now take Item 8, *Report of the 104th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*. This would accommodate the Chairperson on the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) who has to depart shortly.

Can I take it that the Council agrees with my proposal?

The document before Council is therefore CL 156/2. I now invite Ambassador Ivanov, Chairperson of CCLM to introduce the Report.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

I would like to express my pleasure to present the Report of the 104th Session to CCLM, which was held from 13 to 15 March 2017. The Agenda included three items.

At the outset, the CCLM examined the Draft Council Resolution entitled *Amendments to the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locusts in the Central Region* set out in Appendix I to the Report and agreed to forward it to this session of Council for its approval. Therefore, the Council is invited to approve the Resolution and to note that the amendments will take effect from the date of approval of the Council.

Our second item related to the developments that are taking place within FAO to support the use of "PaperSmart" approaches to increase efficiency and accessibility and reduce the amount of paper used for official documentation and correspondence.

The progressive implementation of the "PaperSmart" approach will result in the increased use of modern communication technologies to dispatch letters of invitation and other official meetings, documentation for sessions of the FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies. Consequently, this will result in the elimination of airmail as a method of dispatch including for the letters of invitation transmitting the provisional agenda, for instance to the FAO Conference and FAO Council.

Against this background, the CCLM has examined a draft Conference Resolution to formally amend Rule XXV, paragraph 6(a) of the General Rules of the Organization, the only rule in the Basic Text which refers to specific means of dispatch of official documents.

Therefore, the Council is invited to endorse the draft Conference Resolution set out in *Appendix II* of the Report and to forward it to the Conference for approval.

I wish to bring to the attention of the Council Members, as a result of the implementation of the “PaperSmart” approach, it is anticipated that wherever reference is made in the Basic Text to the dispatch, circulation or communication of documents to Members such action will include distribution by electronic means. It is also considered that this approach should apply to all Governing Bodies and to all Statutory Bodies.

Finally, the CCLM reviewed a document on activities of the Development Law Service Information Report. The Council is invited to take note of the contribution of the Development Law Service in supporting Members’ efforts towards sustainable development in light of the role of Legal Frameworks and the dissemination of information in the achievement of the Global Development Agenda, including food and nutrition security.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

Japan has the honour to deliver this Joint Statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Regional Group would like to thank the Chair of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, Ambassador Lubomir Ivanov, for presenting the Report of the 104th Session of Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

We would also like to seize the opportunity to recognize the work by all the members of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, and to commend the Secretariat for its work preparing the necessary documents.

Having to carefully study the Report of the 104th Session of the CCLM, we wish to provide our views as follows:

On the proposed amendments of the *Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region*, we take note of the need for the Commission to strengthen its capacity to react in case of locust outbreaks, as well as taking into high consideration of the detailed review and discussion during its 30th Session in order to reflect the current reality and to fulfil the needs of the members countries within the Commission. The Asia Regional Group shares the same view with the Committee to endorse the proposed amendments submitted by the Commission and requests to all members of the Council to move forward with regard to the issue, with the appropriate approval within its mandate.

On the “PaperSmart” approach and editorial adjustments to the Basic Texts, the Asia Regional Group shares the same view with the Committee to support the “PaperSmart” approach which is in line with measures presently being introduced throughout the United Nations System in order to increase efficiency and accessibility and to reduce the amount of paper used for documentation and correspondence. Thus, it will increase the use of modern communication technology to dispatch various important related documents in the process.

Further, we support the endorsement and subsequent transmission to the Conference of the amendment of Rule XXV, paragraph 6(a) of the General Rules of the Organization as stated in the Draft Conference Resolution.

On the Activities of the Development Law Service, the Asia Regional Group is also in line with the Committee and welcomed the contribution made by the Development Law Service of the Legal Office in the context of UN System coordination on matters of global importance, in particular, the One Health approach in regulating antimicrobial resistance. We would also like to reiterate our position to support the Committee in recognizing the Development Law Service for its role within the legal frameworks and the dissemination of information in the achievement of the global development agenda in food security and nutrition issues, and continue supporting Members’ efforts towards sustainable development. We also take this opportunity to praise Development Law Service (LEGN) for its periodic continued effort to apprise the Committee on its work.

With this note, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Report of the 104th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NDONG NCHAMA (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial y la Republica de Zambia hacen esta declaración en nombre de los Países del Grupo Africano; los cuales acogen con beneplácito el Informe del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos de la FAO, en su 104.º período de sesiones, celebrado en Roma, del 13 al 15 de marzo de 2017. En este sentido, felicitamos a la Secretaría por reflejar en el informe de forma concisa las conclusiones retenidas durante los debates.

En efecto, aprovechamos esta oportunidad para expresar nuestra profunda gratitud a S.E. Lubomir Ivanov por su liderazgo y sabiduría con la que dirigió los debates durante su mandato como Presidente del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos de la FAO. Por lo que, queremos desearle lo mejor en sus futuras responsabilidades.

Recordarles asimismo que dicho Comité examinó la enmienda propuesta sobre “el Acuerdo para el establecimiento de una Comisión para el Control de la Langosta del Desierto en la Región Central”, presentado por el Asesor Jurídico; al respecto se concluyó que las enmiendas no implicarían nuevas obligaciones financieras para los Miembros de la Comisión.

El Grupo Africano acoge con beneplácito la aprobación del proyecto de Resolución del Consejo que figura en los apéndices 1 y 2 del Informe y se congratula que esta enmienda, según su definición de "Región Central", refleje también Sudán del Sur. Lo que eventualmente permitiría que Sudán del Sur se integre como Miembro de la Comisión, si se concluyera en virtud de los procedimientos existentes.

Acogemos también con satisfacción el hecho de que la enmienda sea de interés para la Región Central, ya que fortalecerá su capacidad de reacción en caso de futuros brotes de langosta, lo que constituye una preocupación importante para la Región.

El Grupo Africano toma nota con interés sobre la contribución de esta Comisión a la protección de la producción de cultivos y de pastos en los Países Miembros, a la seguridad alimentaria y la lucha contra el hambre en África, mediante planes de investigación y capacitación a nivel nacional, regional e internacional.

Manifestamos con énfasis nuestra satisfacción con las enmiendas de redacción a los enfoques "inteligentes sobre el papel" que figuran en el documento CCLM 104/3 y respaldamos la resolución de la Conferencia a la luz de los avances tecnológicos conocidos actualmente en el mundo.

Asimismo, el Grupo Africano manifiesta su satisfacción a la contribución del Servicio de Derecho del Desarrollo, en particular, a la prestación de apoyo técnico, dentro del marco jurídico, a los Países Miembros para cumplir con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

Con esas declaraciones, el Grupo Africano aprueba las recomendaciones que figuran en el informe.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación de Argentina en calidad de Vice-presidencia del GRULAC solicita la palabra para la Delegación de El Salvador, la cual ejerce la Presidencia del GRULAC.

Sra. Sandra Elizabeth ALAS GUIDOS (El Salvador)

Realizo esta intervención a nombre del Grupo de Países Latinoamericanos y del Caribe (GRULAC).

Agradecemos la presentación del documento CL 156/2 y acogemos con satisfacción las deliberaciones realizadas por el Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos en su 104.º período de sesiones.

El GRULAC, por ende, favorece la aprobación de la resolución titulada “Enmiendas al Acuerdo para el Establecimiento de una Comisión de Lucha contra la Langosta del Desierto en la Región Central” en el entendido que las enmiendas entrarán en vigor a partir de su aprobación por el Consejo. La "región central" a la que se refiere el título de la Comisión de lucha contra la langosta del desierto comprende algunos países africanos y del cercano oriente.

Asimismo, acogemos con agrado el “Enfoques para la reducción del uso de papel y ajustes de redacción en los Textos fundamentales” y refrendamos el proyecto de resolución de la Conferencia por el cual se

enmienda el párrafo 6 a) del artículo XXV del Reglamento General de la Organización, en espera de su aprobación en la Conferencia.

Y por último, tomamos nota de la contribución del Servicio del Derecho para el Desarrollo mediante el apoyo prestado a los esfuerzos de los Miembros con miras a lograr un desarrollo sostenible, a la luz de la función de los marcos jurídicos y la difusión de información con vistas al cumplimiento del programa mundial de desarrollo.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

I think this is a good example of consensus reached in a very wise and positive way, and I thank all those that expressed appreciation to the work of the CCLM, including my modest contribution to that.

I just want to say that the successful work in the CCLM would never be possible without the excellent support of the Legal Counsel and his team and, of course, all the Members in the CCLM. So I have to thank them indeed and thank the whole Membership for the support we got.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I can conclude on Item 8, the *Report of the 104th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters* which took place from 13 to 15 March 2017.

1 The Council approved the Report of the 104th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters;

In particular, the Council:

(a) approved the Resolution “*Amendments to the Agreement for Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locusts in the Central Region*”, set out in *Appendix...*, and noted that the amendments would take effect from the date of approval by the Council;

(b) endorsed the Draft Conference Resolution entitled “*Amendment to the Rule XXV, paragraph 6(a) of the General Rules of the Organization*”, set out in the *Appendix...*, to be submitted to the 40th Session of the FAO Conference for adoption, and

(c) took note of the contribution of the Development Law Services in supporting Members' efforts towards sustainable development in light of the role of legal frameworks and the dissemination of information in the achievement of the global development agenda.

That is the end of the conclusions, which seems to be accepted by the Members. So I can say we have come to the end of Item 6.

Item 5. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee and 166th Session of the Finance Committee (March 2017)

Point 5. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent vingt et unième session) et du Comité financier (cent soixante-sixième session) (mars 2017)

Tema 5. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 121.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 166.º período de sesiones (marzo de 2017)

(CL 156/5)

Item 5.1 Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization

Point 5.1 Évaluation indépendante des capacités techniques de l'Organisation

Tema 5.1 Evaluación independiente de la capacidad técnica de la Organización

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

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to Item 5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee and the 166th Session of the Finance Committee*, as contained in document CL 156/5.

There is only one remaining item to consider in the Joint Meeting Report, namely sub item 5.1, *Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization*. Since the Reviewed Strategic Framework and the MTP and PWB were considered yesterday by Council.

I now invite Mr Mehboob, Chairperson of the Finance Committee who chaired the Joint Meeting, to present the inputs from the report on this subject.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to present the outcome of discussions of the Joint Meeting of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee and the 166th Session of the Finance Committee on the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization presented in documents C 2017/26 and C 2017/26 Supplement 1.

I am pleased to welcome Mr Anil Sood, the Independent Consultant who together with Mr Kevin Cleaver and Mr Amnon Golan produced the Independent Assessment Report.

I will provide a brief overview of the debate on this issue at the Joint Meeting and then invite Mr Sood to provide remarks and respond to queries on the Report. Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, is invited to provide any comments with regard to the Management Observations.

The Joint Meeting welcomed the main findings of the Report, especially an increase in technical capacity of the Organization had occurred from 2012 to 2016, both at the Headquarters and in the decentralized locations, in spite of the background of the flat nominal budget level and overall decline in the number of positions in the period under review.

The Joint Meeting also noted that the conclusions of the Report were consistent with those of other recent independent and external assessments of FAO, including the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, and Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

With reference to the future, the Joint Meeting felt that monitoring of technical assessment capacity should be carried out by the Secretariat on a regular basis, including in conjunction with workforce planning exercises, with involvement of the Office of Evaluation. It also noted that in future reporting to Members, assessments could include qualitative analysis, and exposition of disaggregated data.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Mr Anil Sood, Independent Consultant, to present the report of the Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity. Mr Sood, you have the floor.

Mr Anil SOOD (Independent Consultant, Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity)

I am delighted to have this opportunity to present the findings of the Independent Assessment of the Organization's Technical Capacity which was requested by the Council in its Session of November–December 2015.

As it has already been mentioned, the assessment was conducted by a team of external consultants which I was a part of.

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretariat for promptly and fully responding to all of the team's requests for data and information.

The assessment seeks to answer the question of how FAO's technical capacity has evolved between 2012 and 2016 in the face of ongoing organizational changes. The scope of the assessment and the methodology followed the road map that was discussed at the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in November 2016.

As was discussed briefly earlier, the road map is now included as Annex 1 of the Report. I should also note that a draft of the assessment was presented at the informal briefing for Permanent Representatives earlier this year on 9 February.

Let me start with a few words about the context. Significant changes, so-called “Transformational Changes” were launched at FAO starting in 2012. These included:

- A Strategic Thinking Process that led to a new strategic direction – with the articulation of five Strategic Objectives and the sixth cross-cutting Objective of technical quality;

- Organizational changes that were implemented in an iterative process and have led to the matrix management arrangement that is now in place.

These changes were proposed within the context of full preservation of the expertise and capacity at Headquarters for technical work on norms, standards and global public goods. It is important to note that these changes have been accomplished in the context of a budget which has remained flat in nominal terms since 2012 while staff costs have been rising.

Turning now to the findings of the Assessment: the technical capacity was defined as ‘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.’ In line with this definition of technical capacity, the assessment covers two dimensions: the human resources dimension and the dimension of Delivery of FAO’s technical work.

On the Human Resources side, the assessment covers staff and non-staff Human Resources funded both by the General Fund and by Trust Funds. As you well know, FAO has a rather complex Human Resources architecture because of these different sources of funding and different categories. That is also illustrated in Annex 1 of the Report.

Total General Fund funded posts declined by a little over two percent in the period covered by the assessment due to the need to absorb staff cost increases within the flat nominal budget. Within this reduction, FAO managed a strategic shift toward increased technical capacity:

- Total technical capacity increased by close to three percent.
- Importantly, core technical capacity increased by about 19 percent.

The shift was made possible by the realization and redeployment of significant efficiency gains and administrative streamlining. This has been accompanied by a shift across different technical areas and enabling functions in line with the revised Strategic Framework. Capacity was increased in a number of areas, including technical cooperation, information and knowledge management, economics, nutrition and food safety; an increase of 169 posts overall. There was also a small decline in some areas such as land and water management, livestock, land tenure and statistics; all together a decline of seven posts.

Further, General Fund funded non-staff Human Resources, mostly consultants, increased by 233 full time equivalents, which amounts to an increase of about a third, 33 percent between 2014 and 2016. Here we used 2014 as the reference because systematic non-staff data was collected starting in 2014 and was not available for 2012.

When we add Trust Fund funded Human Resources, the total technical capacity increase amounts to 457 or a little over 8 percent. When we look at the location of this technical capacity, it has increased at both Headquarters by 244 or a little over 13 percent and in the decentralized offices by 213 or 5.6 percent.

A few words about the qualifications and experience of the staff. New recruits are more qualified:

- In 2010, 91 percent of the recruits had Master’s or higher degrees and 42 percent had PhDs
- In 2015, these percentages were up to 98 percent Master’s and 47 percent or almost half having PhDs

This has contributed, of course, to an overall improvement in staff qualifications. In the core technical category, Ph.D. level, doctorate level staff now account for 46 percent.

Looking at the experience of FAO staff, it averages between 24 and 25 years with somewhere between 11 and 15 of those years being spent at FAO and 10 to 14 outside the Organization.

Some concern has been expressed about the experience of consultants used by FAO. In fact, FAO consultants have substantial experience, including at FAO. Half of the current complement of consultants have over three years of FAO experience, a third over 5 years and 20 percent over 10 years of experience at FAO.

Let me briefly address the delivery dimension. Trends in delivery of Products and Services in the 2012-16 period have been positive. There were large increases in the number of standard-setting instruments, publications and countries benefitting from South-South Cooperation.

Importantly, FAO met or exceeded 86 percent of its Strategic Objective output targets in 2016, this included meeting or exceeding all targets related to Strategic Objective 4 (Inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems), Strategic Objective 5 (Resilience to threats and crises), and the 6th cross-cutting objective of enhanced technical quality.

Assessment of FAO publications has also been positive:

- Publications, particularly the State of the World Flagship publications, are widely read, and have improved; users report satisfaction with technical content of these publications;
- Environmental issues, social inclusion were seen to be addressed less satisfactorily.

As was already mentioned, three external reviews of FAO were carried out in this period by MOPAN (Multilateral Performance Assessment Network), by Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, and by DfID - the UK Department for International Development. All of the reviews, while noting some areas where FAO can do better, also noted a marked improvement in FAO's performance in the period covered by this assessment.

As part of the assessment, our team also looked forward and considered some of the opportunities that lie in front of FAO for the future. The Programme of Work and Budget for 2018–2019 already includes a number of measures to strengthen programme delivery in 4 areas:

First, enhance internal management arrangements for Strategic Programme leadership; second, strengthen links between HQ and Decentralized Offices, and the coverage of the Decentralized Offices; third, upgrade the monitoring system for programme delivery and results; and fourth, rationalize and streamline organizational capacity at HQ, while retaining overall technical capacity.

These measures, in our view, would help to consolidate the gains that have been intended through the recently made changes.

The assessment also suggested FAO consider some further steps. Importantly, matrix management that has now been put in place will need continued attention to effectively meet the challenge of strengthening both programme delivery capacity and the technical capacity of the Organization. The report also points to other opportunities for improvement.

As part of workforce planning, FAO should consider biennial technical capacity assessments as part of the PWB process.

In that context and otherwise, it would be useful to consistently maintain an integrative perspective of all Human Resources – staff and non-staff, funded from the General Fund, funded from Trust Funds, as has been attempted in this assessment of technical capacity.

Better monitoring of the delivery of products and services would also help, including to pay greater attention to quality.

The team felt that the introduction of a time recording system would enable better planning, resource allocation and monitoring of the utilization of resources.

Finally, sharing services with IFAD and WFP, with FAO taking the lead on technical expertise, would bring significant synergies and efficiency gains.

Since we shared the Report, we have seen the Management Response and it is reassuring to see that Management agrees with the proposed next steps.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, Climate and Natural Resources, who will present the Management Observations on the Report of the Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity.

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

I am pleased to present the Management Response.

First of all, I would like to thank Mr Anil Sood and his team for the work and the presentation he has just made. As it was mentioned by the Director-General yesterday and also during the Joint Committee, FAO over the last year has made strong efforts to identify efficiency savings, streamline work, re-profile administrative posts, and de-emphasize areas where FAO has lost its comparative advantage or where other partners can do better or are doing similar work that FAO is doing.

The savings were invested in technical priority areas identified by Member States. Also as it has been mentioned by the Report, FAO has used Non-Staff Human Resources, in particular high skilled consultants contracted as needed. They have ensured the retention of technical capacity over a sustained period of time and it has also ensured the flexibility and capacity building in emerging areas as nutrition. Climate change, as you know, was not in the past priority areas for the Organization.

Worth mentioning is the use of partnership and South-South Cooperation which provides an important opportunity to supplement and enrich FAO technical capacity. All of this has been done within the context of a flat budget. The Report finds that all these efforts made it possible to maintain and even increase our technical capacity.

The new priorities and the global challenge presented in the Strategic Framework and the PWB call for a strong FAO with highly qualified and experienced technical staff at all locations, Headquarters, and the Decentralized Offices.

FAO welcomes the findings of the Independent Technical Assessment, welcomes that technical capacity has increased from 2012 to 2016 in the context of a flat budget, and overall decline of the number of posts. As it has been said, we reduce administrative posts in order to increase technical posts. This was possible through investment of savings arising from streamlining of administrative procedures and elimination of bureaucracy.

Moreover technical capacity increased both at Headquarters and Decentralized Offices. It was broadly aligned with FAO Strategic Framework with no staff resources providing the necessary flexibility to meet the demand. Most indicators of staff quality and experience have improved as it has already been mentioned, as well as the delivery of key products and services that drive normative work and PWB outputs.

Those are not only the findings of the Independent Assessment. Those findings have been supported by other donor assessments. We have the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). We have the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). We have the Department for International Development (DfID) of the United Kingdom and also evaluation is done through our FAO Office of Evaluation.

This evaluation is the first ever quantitative assessment of FAO technical capacity. I think I can also say that it was the first evaluation done for the Organization with the scope and objective of this work. It was really difficult for me when we started doing this evaluation to find a definition of technical quality. It was practically impossible and we have had to adapt several definitions to our context.

Also this evaluation, as it has been said, for us it will be a benchmark because it was difficult to constitute a series. FAO did not have at that time, consistency in the data available, and we could not compare the different information in order to build a series. We believe that from now on we have a benchmark where we can do other analysis and we can compare with, I can say, assurance in what we are doing.

The Report pointed out gaps in available data and the monitoring of technical inputs and outputs. Therefore, we agree with the Report presented by the consultants and we will focus our future work on continuing the improvement of the Metrics Management Approach so that we can strengthen both the programme delivery and the technical capacity.

We will improve the planning and monitoring of the technical inputs and outputs. As also it has been said, not only the quantitative but the qualitative analysis of the inputs and outputs.

We will pursue the opportunity to leverage FAO technical expertise in work with other United Nations Agencies. It has been also called that we should strengthen and it has been also referred by our Member

Countries that we should strengthen the work with the Rome-based Agencies especially the work done in the field.

We will institutionalize both quantitative and qualitative dimensions on future assessments. It has been said that we did not integrate the qualitative assessment. The qualitative assessment I can say that it was not requested when we defined the terms of reference of this exercise but we agree that it is important to have a qualitative assessment and it has to be part of the future assessment and analysis as it has been also recommended by the technical assessment.

We will continue planning, monitoring and adaptation of the necessary technical skill mix to better deliver the normative and the programmatic product and services. FAO also agrees that there may be work in the future assessment to have a global analysis of the Human Resources including the general service staff in the Human Resources dimensionality.

We should have a greater disaggregation of quantitative data. As I said, we could not allow ourselves to have a disaggregated data as well as more nuance qualitative analysis. This type of assessment will be part of the continuous management of the Organization. It will not be done when requested by our Member Countries but it will be embedded in the Management of the Organization, in the continuous Management. And for sure, we consider we would benefit from the involvement of our Office of Evaluation to ensure a coherent and independent substantiation of the work.

This morning you all agreed on the evaluation done on SP3 that it was commended by the Member Countries. We consider that we have a strong and competent Office of Evaluation, which is independent, it has a double accountability of line of reporting and they should be used and will benefit from the work done by our Office of Evaluation.

To conclude, I would like to say that we look for our Organization to be Fit-for-Purpose in order to implement the Sustainable Development Agenda and to deliver the FAO Strategic Framework.

Sr. José Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Ecuador solicita la palabra para la Delegación de Venezuela que hará una declaración a nombre del Grupo de los 77 más China.

Sr. Elias Rafael ELJURI ABRAHAM (Observador de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

El Grupo de los 77 más China toma nota con reconocimiento del Informe sobre la Evaluación independiente de la capacidad técnica de la FAO, en particular su conclusión 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 a través de la reinversión de las reducciones administrativas en puestos técnicos y recursos.

También tomamos nota que las principales conclusiones de esta evaluación están en consonancia con otras evaluaciones, como aquella realizada por el Grupo de la Red para la Evaluación del Desempeño de las Organizaciones Multilaterales (MOPAN, por sus siglas en inglés) y el Departamento de Desarrollo Internacional del Reino Unido, lo 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 estructura de gestión modernizada y a los ahorros de eficiencia.

El Grupo felicita a la Administración de la FAO por los esfuerzos que culminaron con un incremento total del 7,3 por ciento, entre los años 2014 y 2016, en términos de dimensiones de los recursos humanos, así como en un aumento en la entrega de productos y servicios clave que impulsaron su labor normativa entre los años 2012 y 2016.

Sin embargo, observamos que la evaluación señaló los desafíos relacionados con los datos y una serie de oportunidades para mejorar el monitoreo. El Grupo coincide en particular con la recomendación para la FAO de desarrollar una perspectiva integrada de todos los recursos humanos desplegados para ofrecer sus programas, prestando mayor atención a la dotación de recursos humanos que no forman parte del staff. También estamos de acuerdo con la sugerencia para la FAO de examinar la institucionalización de la evaluación de la capacidad técnica, a través de los ejercicios ordinarios de planificación estratégica de la fuerza de trabajo vinculados al Programa de Trabajo bienal.

El Grupo de los 77 más China también apoya a la recomendación para la FAO de reconsiderar la cuestión de compartir los servicios administrativos y las oficinas descentralizadas con el FIDA y el PMA, con el objetivo de reducir los costos y mejorar la eficiencia.

El G-77 más China reconoce que esta primera evaluación independiente fue realizada con el objetivo de abordar la cuestión de cómo la capacidad técnica de la FAO se había desarrollado, entre los años 2012 y 2016, sobre una base cuantitativa. También estamos de acuerdo en la importancia de dicho ejercicio, así como en la necesidad de su continuación en el futuro sobre una base permanente e institucionalizada.

Tomamos nota de que esta primera evaluación también puso en manifiesto amplias mejoras en los indicadores relacionados con la calidad y experiencia del personal. En esta nota, el G-77 más China apoya la recomendación de la Reunión Conjunta del 121.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa y del 166.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas para futuras evaluaciones, con el objetivo de incluir análisis cualitativos y exposiciones de datos desglosados.

En conclusión bajo el punto de vista del G-77 más China, no hay duda 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 los 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 continúe en 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 en la cooperación y asistencia técnica.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We would like to thank the Assessment Team for their work. We would like to thank the Management for their comments to the findings.

We would also like to highlight that we need to welcome this type of assessment that sets in an objective way of the FAO technical capacity. This is a necessity and it is very important.

We appreciate the attention paid to South-South Cooperation in this Report. On page 80 we see South-South Cooperation has been mentioned twelve times. Here we would like to highlight that, perhaps, there are some data that are not quite exact when it comes to the professional staff selected in South-South Cooperation projects. We would like FAO to verify this information and correct it. For example, the number of people who were trained as part of the South-South Cooperation agreements; we do not have any direct data here.

We also appreciate Management's response in which it says that South-South Cooperation was not highlighted in order to provide more opportunity, so we would also appreciate the attention from the Management on to South-South Cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to say that China would like to highlight the important role of South-South Cooperation within FAO. South-South Cooperation can provide more services and contribute more to the work of FAO.

M. Simon Dieudonné SAVOU (Congo)

La République du Congo prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique. Le Groupe Afrique approuve la déclaration du Groupe des 77 et la Chine faite par le Venezuela.

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. À l'occasion, nous notons particulièrement que l'aspect quantitatif est mis en avant tel que 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 récemment réalisées, notamment par le

Réseau d'évaluation de la performance des organisations multilatérales, le Ministère britannique du développement international et le Ministère fédéral allemand de la coopération économique et du développement, ce qui montre à suffisance la pertinence des résultats de cette évaluation.

Le Groupe Afrique note par ailleurs avec satisfaction, l'augmentation des capacités techniques de l'Organisation observée pour la période allant de 2012 à 2016, au Siège et dans les bureaux décentralisés, et saisit l'occasion afin de féliciter le Directeur général pour les avoir alignées sur le Cadre stratégique de la FAO et cela dans un contexte de budget à valeur nominale inchangée et de l'utilisation de ressources humaines hors personnel pour assurer la flexibilité.

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 le changement climatique, 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 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 et recommande à la Conférence l'approbation du Rapport sur l'évaluation des capacités techniques de la FAO.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación de Argentina en calidad de Vice presidencia del GRULAC solicita la palabra para la Delegación de El Salvador, que ejerce la Presidencia del GRULAC.

Sra. María Abelina TORRES DE MEILLIEZ (El Salvador)

La Delegación de El Salvador realiza esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

En primer lugar, hacemos nuestra la declaración efectuada por el G-77 más China sobre este mismo tema.

La evaluación sobre las capacidades técnicas de la FAO para el período 2012-2016 es la primera que se realiza y, por ende, constituye un primer paso. Asimismo, sienta las bases para futuras evaluaciones aportando certidumbre y un punto de partida claro.

Es importante destacar que la presente evaluación responde al alcance y a los términos de referencia oportunamente solicitados y acordados por los Estados Miembros. Asimismo, es el resultado de un proceso que incluyó la realización de un seminario informal en el cual los Miembros del Comité del Programa pudieron presentar inquietudes y sugerencias al equipo de consultores externos. La elección de un equipo con una vasta experiencia, su trabajo y la calidad de su informe, reflejan la independencia de esta evaluación.

Acogemos con satisfacción el aumento de la capacidad técnica de la FAO en el período analizado, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas, lo cual es un gran logro en el marco de un presupuesto con crecimiento nominal cero. Destacamos también que la tasa de vacantes brinde flexibilidad para aumentar la capacidad técnica de la Organización, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas.

Subrayamos como fundamental que las principales conclusiones de la evaluación hayan sido confirmadas por la Red de Evaluación del Desempeño de las Organizaciones Multilaterales (MOPAN, por sus siglas en inglés), el Departamento del Reino Unido para el Desarrollo Internacional (DFID) y el Ministerio Federal de Cooperación Económica y Desarrollo de Alemania (BMZ).

Esta evaluación, cuyo enfoque es particularmente cuantitativo, permitirá en el futuro realizar un seguimiento regular sobre capacidades técnicas y avanzar en un análisis también cualitativo.

Este seguimiento podrá realizarse a través de informes periódicos a los Estados Miembros, con la participación de la Oficina de Evaluación de la FAO.

Reiteramos el agradecimiento a los consultores externos, al Director General y a la Administración de la AO por el documento que se nos ha presentado, que como mencionamos, representa un primer paso para avanzar en el análisis en este terreno. También subrayamos nuevamente el apego de los consultores externos a los términos de referencia establecidos y la independencia con la cual trabajaron.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank Mr Mehboob and Ms Semedo for their presentation. We would also like to thank the independent consultants, including Mr Sood who prepared the Assessment Report on FAO's Technical Capacity, including sector specific experts at Headquarters and the Decentralized Offices.

We take note of the Report's findings. The assessment has provided useful information which will serve as a baseline reference for other studies in the future. As regards to specific proposals set out in the Report, we call for a cautious approach to the idea of introducing a staff time recording system at FAO because it could unreasonably increase the bureaucratic and financial workload for the Secretariat.

We also support the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees on the advantages of involving the Office of Evaluation of FAO in the preparation of this type of Reports in the future.

In conclusion, we note that the Assessment Report and its translated versions in all FAO languages were provided to Members of the Joint Meeting at a very late juncture. We expect that the Secretariat will avoid such a situation arising again in the future.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

La Delegación de Nicaragua se suma a las declaraciones realizadas por el G77 más China y GRULAC.

Nicaragua agradece la presentación del informe sobre la Evaluación Independiente de la capacidad técnica de la FAO, las reuniones informativas y las observaciones proporcionadas por la Administración.

No obstante el presupuesto nominal invariado, hemos observado que la capacidad técnica de la FAO tanto en la sede como en el terreno ha mantenido la efectividad y calidad esperadas. En este sentido no cabe duda que la función de la Organización como facilitadora de la cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular, ha permitido alcanzar a nivel regional objetivos de desarrollo basados en conocimiento especializados, transferencia tecnológica, entre otros, garantizando la calidad técnica y las ventajas complementarias.

Consideramos esta primera evaluación como un hecho histórico, observamos con satisfacción los resultados derivados, su pertinencia y el potencial alcance que esta puede representar para el continuo mejoramiento de la actividad propia de la Organización.

Tomando en cuenta el esfuerzo y los resultados de este tipo de evaluación, la Delegación de Nicaragua considera que este ejercicio puede perfeccionarse en el futuro e institucionalizarse como una buena práctica y como instrumento de planificación vinculada con el Programa bienal de trabajo.

Finalmente reconocemos que esta primera evaluación independiente fue realizada para analizar la evolución de la capacidad técnica de la FAO entre 2012 y 2016 en términos cuantitativos, no hay duda de que los resultados demuestran el éxito de los cambios en la dirección estratégica por lo que nos congratulamos con la Administración de la FAO por el trabajo realizado.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

I would like to ask you to pass the floor to Malta, the European Union Presidency.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Montenegro, as well as San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

Technical capacity is essential for the FAO, it is its 'raison d'être' as a knowledge-based Organisation. Every FAO member relies on the FAO's knowledge and technical expertise. That is why this assessment is so important.

We thank the consultants for the final version of the Report. We had high expectations of the assessment, several of which have not been fulfilled. First of all, an unacceptably late release of the final report, which made it difficult for the members of the Finance Committee and the Programme Committee to analyse it thoroughly and have an informed discussion.

Secondly, we are not fully satisfied because the final version of the Report does not differ much from the earlier draft presented at the informal seminar on 9 February. Indeed, the great majority of the fundamental comments made at that seminar or submitted in writing afterwards either were not taken into account or were incorporated in a rather superficial manner.

For instance, our concerns regarding the categorisation of a number of areas as technical work, the elusive differentiation between 'core' and 'enabling' technical capacity, and the problems related to the high vacancy rate have not been considered. The report still does not include gender disaggregated data, nor is information provided on the proportion of the Regular Programme technical budget allocated to selected areas and the percentage change over time.

We would also like to underline the fact that this assessment has revealed important challenges when it comes to the availability of the FAO's human resources data. These challenges need to be addressed in the near future and we would encourage the Secretariat in this respect to develop an integrated perspective of all human resources devoted to delivering FAO's programmes.

At this point, we have a report which gives us a merely quantitative assessment. We see this assessment as just a first step in the process of analysing the FAO's technical capacity more comprehensively. As a next step, we need, before the 41st Conference in 2019, an external independent qualitative assessment to complement the quantitative one we are discussing today.

Both the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee should be fully involved in this future exercise, because evaluation and human resources issues fall within the core mandates of these Committees. In addition, the membership should be appropriately consulted in this future exercise, including the Terms of Reference - which should be agreed by the Council.

On an interim basis, we are ready to go along with the proposal that monitoring and reporting on technical capacity should continue with the involvement of the Office of Evaluation. We also support the recommendation concerning sharing administrative services and decentralised offices with IFAD and WFP.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. The Near East Group welcomes the final report of the Consultants on the Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity, the Management response to the report and the views expressed by the Joint Meeting of Programme and Finance Committees. It acknowledges that the report is of quantitative nature as envisaged in the Roadmap.

The Near East Group draws the following eight conclusions from the Report of the consultants under debate that took place in the joint Session meeting.

Between 2012 and 2016, the Core technical capacity under PWB increased by 124 posts. For Non-PWB, the increase was 34 posts, leading to a total increase of 158 Core technical posts (Table 1, page IV). The Near East Group considers this as progress towards the enhancement of FAO's technical strength.

The percentage of core technical posts to total D and P posts under the PWB rose from 63.8 percent in 2012 to 73.4 percent in 2016; for Non-PWB from 28.5 percent to 57.5 percent. The Near East Group considers this as good progress since it demonstrates the shift from Enabling Technical posts to Core Technical posts. The Enabling Technical posts declined from 358 posts in 2012 to 235 posts in 2016, that is by 23 percent (Table 1, page IV).

From table 3 that is GF and TF-funded posts, the technical capacity at Headquarters increased by 14 posts and for the Decentralized Offices (DOs) by 71 posts. The larger increase in DOs is appreciated but the Near East Group as it conforms with the demands made by member countries in each of the five Regional Conferences.

From the analysis of table 3 (page V), one can conclude that between 2014 and 2016 the number of Non-Staff Human Resources (NSHR) increased by 8.7 percent. The percentage increase of GF-funded NSHR was 33 percent compared with 4.3 percent for TF-funded NSHR. However, the bulk of the NSHR relate to Trust Funds, 78 percent in 2016. The Near East Group fully recognizes the importance of Trust Funds in supplementing the Core technical capacity of FAO.

In table 3, the figures of staff and NSHR are added. Conceptually, such addition is not justified. NSHR are assignments of different durations and are not to be treated as posts. It would have been appropriate to show the NSHR figures in terms of person per years or person per months. Therefore, the figures of 5595 and 6052 in table 3 as total technical posts is doubtful. We do not think that FAO does not have 6052 technical posts. In fact, the actual technical D and P- posts are 1479 (Annex IX, page 130)

At the briefing of 9 February, several participants emphasized the need for the breakdown of technical post by Regional Offices. The Consultant introducing the draft report promised that this will be done in the final version. Although for some reason, this has not been done, we would like to know what is the reason for not doing so? Is it due to lack of data?

The Near East Group would have preferred the breakdown of core technical posts by specific disciplines and not by broad sectors as shown in table 3.3. For example, how many posts attend to horticulture, how many to plant diseases etc. In addition, such data should have been shown by Headquarters as well as Regional Offices. The Near East Group regrets that the report of the Consultants does not provide breakdown by specialized technical disciplines.

In the Joint Meeting of PC and FC, some members pressed for a qualitative assessment but recognized the difficulty of the task. The Joint Meeting did not provide guidance on how this qualitative assessment should be conducted. The Near East Group feels that qualitative assessment, if attempted, should focus on one key question, namely: Is the current stock of FAO's technical staff at Headquarters and Decentralized Offices, and the composition of this stock by technical disciplines falling within the mandate of FAO, sufficient enough to meet the requirements of fulfilling the Strategic Objectives of FAO and FAO's effective contribution to the 2030 Agenda? In short, it should be Fit-for-Purpose Exercise.

Now we hear from our distinguished representative of the EU that they are asking for an extended, independent, qualitative assessment. We would like to request to them to explain to us what do they mean by qualitative assessment. Can they define it what it is? Because I do not know, what it is. Any assessment can be delegated to the Office of Evaluation, which performs its duties independently of the Management. If required the Office of Evaluation may seek assistance from the external expert. One issue should be carefully observed in such an assessment and that is intensive guidelines with Senior FAO Management both at HQ and DOs and selected recipients of FAO core competencies

With these comments the Near East Group is willing to agree with paragraphs 5 to 8 of the report of the Joint Meeting of FC and PC (CL 156/5) on the Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity.

Mme Evelyne TOGBE-OLORY (Bénin)

Le Bénin s'associe à la déclaration du Groupe des 77 et la Chine ainsi qu'à la déclaration du Groupe Afrique et nous souhaitons ajouter un seul commentaire.

Le Bénin tout d'abord félicite la FAO pour avoir augmenté sa capacité technique pendant la période couverte par ce rapport, tant au Siège que dans les bureaux décentralisés, et ce malgré un contexte budgétaire rigoureusement stable. Nous reconnaissons la flexibilité—et peut-être même les économies—que pourrait offrir l'enveloppe budgétaire dédiée aux ressources humaines hors personnel qui permettent de recruter les consultants.

Toutefois, nous nous interrogeons sur les proportions d'augmentation. Lorsque nous voyons que l'enveloppe de la rubrique "consultants" a augmenté en 2014 et 2017 de plus de 30 pour cent, tandis que le budget des postes de cadres réguliers a progressé d'une façon bien moindre, inférieure à 10 pour cent, nous nous interrogeons et voudrions être assurés que cela ne signifie pas que le personnel régulier passe une grande partie de son temps à suivre le travail des consultants, que ce soit le recrutement, l'encadrement, etc.

Dans ce contexte, nous encourageons toute mesure visant à augmenter la capacité technique du personnel FAO lui-même, ainsi que toute mesure, comme il est dit dans le rapport, favorisant une collaboration d'expertise technique entre les trois organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and Afghanistan on behalf of the Near East Group.

We welcome this important report and would like to thank the independent experts' team headed by Mr Anil Sood for their efforts.

As Ms Semedo has just said this may be a pioneer report for an Organization with a mandate such as FAO. We see many added values out of this exercise for the Organization, which shall help support the strategic goal of improving the Organization's effectiveness and delivery.

We believe that the assessment is in line and limited to the guidance given by the FAO Council and the Assessment Roadmap. We are glad to see that despite a 2.2 percent decrease in the jobs funded by the General Fund between 2012 and 2016, the assessment indicated that there was improvement in the Organization's key products and services that drive its normative work including those related to standard-settings instruments and more importantly in connection with the achievement of the Strategic Objectives of the Organization.

In our view, the definition of technical capacity is not limited only to the capacity to mobilize the knowledge and expertise to meet the Strategic Objectives of the Organization but also to respond to the evolving and dynamic needs and priorities of Members. This will require an evolving HR system to ensure that the organization is Fit-for-Purpose and that the technical capacities at the Organization are evolving with the needs of Members.

While we acknowledge the improvement in the technical capacities in the Decentralized Offices, we would like to highlight that some of these offices continue to require more attention both in terms of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of technical capacities.

One point that might need the attention is what the report referred to as "data challenges", which was also acknowledged by the management. We concur with the recommendation of developing an integrated perspective of the HR dimension of all human resources deployed to deliver its programmes with attention to Non-Staff Human Resources.

Another important recommendation that we support is to put an effective system to monitor the implementation of all products with great attention to Decentralized Offices.

And finally, and in line with the recommendation of joint meeting of PC and FC, we recommend future assessments include qualitative analysis, with involvement of the Office of Evaluation.

Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairuddin MOHD (Malaysia)

Thank you to Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee for delivering this report. Malaysia aligns this statement with the statement of G77 and China.

We appreciate the assessment done by the independent consultants and welcomed the findings of an increase in technical capacity of the Organization from 2012 to 2016, both at Headquarters and in Decentralized Offices. We note, the data challenges encountered throughout this assessment point to

several opportunities for improved regular monitoring. We echo the Joint Meeting's recommendation for FAO to incorporate qualitative analysis in its future assessment.

Malaysia wishes to highlight two points: Firstly, on the matter of delivery dimension, we concur that there is a strong need to effectively monitor the full range of FAO outputs, products, and services at global, regional and national levels. Due consideration for introduction of system to track the time spent by staff and non-staff on different programmes or activities, as suggested in the report is indeed practical. In fact there are perhaps other important information that most Member Countries would wish to refer to, in a continuous manner to oversee FAO operational activities. This could be combined in a standard 'Accountability Report' of the Organization, on an ever-ready basis.

Secondly, we wish to encourage FAO to explore the possibility of sharing administrative services and decentralized offices with other UN Rome-based Agencies (IFAD and WFP) as this approach is proven to be an efficient and effective way of reducing cost and improving efficiency.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nuestra declaración se suma a la de G77 más China y a la de GRULAC.

En primer lugar, la Delegación de Chile quisiera agradecer a la Secretaría así como a los consultores por haber generado esta evaluación independiente, cuyas bases y proceso se acoge a lo solicitado y aprobado por nosotros.

Destacamos en primer lugar, destacamos que los resultados de la evaluación externa muestran claramente que la capacidad técnica de la FAO ha aumentado desde el año 2012, tanto en la sede de Roma como en las oficinas descentralizadas, aspecto de particular relevancia para los países en desarrollo.

Valoramos los resultados obtenidos por la dirección general, que se vinculan a los esfuerzos por reducir la carga administrativa y aumentar los puestos profesionales, en un contexto de presupuesto nominal cero, y con un escenario financiero complejo, utilizando cada vez más las asociaciones con diversos actores que potencian y amplían la capacidad técnica de la FAO.

Reconocemos la flexibilidad que brinda la tasa de vacantes, lo que permite aumentar la capacidad técnica a través de la contratación de consultores profesionales, que otorgan nuevos conocimientos, flexibilidad y visiones distintas a la Organización.

Recalcamos el notable aumento en la ejecución de instrumentos normativos como acuerdos internacionales y códigos de conducta; entre ellos el Acuerdo sobre las Medidas del Estado Rector del Puerto (PSMA) y el Tratado Internacional de Recursos Fito-genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, instrumentos relevantes para nuestro país.

Vemos con gran satisfacción el considerable aumento de países beneficiarios de la Cooperación Sur-Sur. Sin duda, nuestros países cuentan con experiencias prácticas y exitosas en diversas materias, y la plataforma que ofrece la FAO para este tipo de cooperación, así como para la Cooperación Triangular, es de suma importancia.

Destacamos el liderazgo de la Dirección General en los avances mostrados por la organización tal como ha sido reconocido por la Red de Evaluación del Desempeño de las organizaciones Multilaterales (MOPAN), el Ministerio Federal de Cooperación y Desarrollo de Alemania y ratificado por el Examen de Desarrollo Multilateral del Depto. del Reino Unido para el Desarrollo Internacional.

Por último, en concordancia con los acuerdos y la recomendación de la Reunión Conjunta, reconocemos la importancia de institucionalizar estos ejercicios de evaluación. Entendemos que la Oficina de Evaluación de FAO puede garantizar procesos de calidad e independientes, ampliando el enfoque de esta evaluación al considerar una mayor desagregación de los datos cuantitativos, incluyendo el género, e incorporando aspectos cualitativos. Esto evitará gastos extraordinarios en consultores externos, los que irían en desmedro de recursos del presupuesto que deben ir destinados a las áreas técnicas prioritarias vinculadas al mandato de la FAO.

Con esta intervención, la Delegación de Chile acoge de forma satisfactoria los resultados de la evaluación independiente de las capacidades técnicas de la FAO, y espera que la Administración de la Organización incorpore las recomendaciones de este ejercicio

Mr Daiji KAWAGUCHI (Japan)

Japan would like to comment on the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity.

Regarding *the Report of an Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity* circulated on 24 March, Japan is pleased to find some improvements in the report, such as addition of analyses on the situation in Fisheries and Forestry Department in Chapter 3: *Technical Capacity – Human Resource Dimension*.

However, Japan believes that further analyses on the impacts of the abolition of a director post and creation of two D-level posts in each department would have made the assessment better.

Further, concerning Chapter 4: *Technical Capacity – Delivery Dimension*, if qualitative assessment, including assessments of outcomes of each technical department and internal and external interviews, had been made, the report could have generated higher quality output.

With these in mind, while appreciating that the findings of this assessment made a contribution to a certain extent, Japan considers that it is too early to conclude that there are no negative impacts on the FAO's technical capacity based on the findings of this report alone.

For these reasons, Japan requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations and agreements in the Joint Meeting of the 121st Session of the Programme Committee and the 166th Session of the Finance Committee, such as regular monitoring by the Secretariat of the technical capacity of the Organization, and future assessments including qualitative analysis and exposition of disaggregated data.

Sr. Claudio J.ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Argentina hace suya la declaración del Grupo de los 77 más China y la declaración leída por el Salvador en nombre del GRULAC.

La Delegación Argentina subraya el hecho de que se haya realizado esta primera evaluación como un cambio organizativo más de la FAO, en pos de la consecución de sus objetivos estratégicos. También subraya que la misma haya reflejado un crecimiento de la capacidad técnica de la Organización en el periodo de 2012 a 2016 tanto la Sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas, a través de la mejora en la ejecución de los principales productos y servicios que impulsan su labor normativa, y en el cumplimiento de las prácticas que apoyan los objetivos estratégicos en un contexto de un presupuesto nominal invariable desde 2012-2013.

Por otro lado, coincidimos en que sería conveniente en el futuro, que en la metodología de las evaluaciones a venir, se prevea un análisis cualitativo y no solo cuantitativo. Destacamos del informe de la Reunión Conjunta principalmente el punto octavo B y C, puntos en los cuales se establecieron cuáles eran las líneas que los Estados Miembros deseábamos para el futuro en el tema de las capacidades técnicas. Es decir, glosando en el punto inciso octavo B, los Estados Miembros recomendamos que en futuras evaluaciones se incluyera un análisis cualitativo y se expusieran datos desagregados, obviamente por región y por género, si bien no está escrito en el informe.

En el inciso octavo C, los Estados Miembros acordamos que se institucionalizara este proceso con la participación de la Oficina de Evaluación para velar por el seguimiento de la capacidad técnica, y presentar periódicamente a los miembros informes al respecto. Es decir, los Estados Miembros en la Reunión Conjunta dejamos claramente establecido que nuestra intención era la institucionalización de este proceso a través de la Oficina de Evaluación con la participación, si bien tampoco está escrito aquí, de los Estados Miembros. Fundamentalmente los estados que participamos en el Comité del Programa y en el Comité de Finanzas hablamos de un proceso complejo en donde participaría no solamente la Oficina de Evaluación, sino que habría una importante participación e interacción de los Estados. Esta habría sido por lo menos nuestra intención en la reunión conjunta.

Reiteramos que esta es la primera evaluación sobre capacidades técnicas de la FAO. Cuando se me convocó junto al Presidente del Comité del Programa, en mi carácter de Vicepresidente del Comité, resultó claro que partíamos de un desierto, de la nada absoluta. Por ende, Argentina reitera su felicitación al equipo consultor por lo realizado y a la gerencia de la FAO por sus respuestas. De la nada hemos pasado a tener un documento que al menos refleja en dónde estamos y en dónde se encuentra la Organización en materia de capacidades técnicas.

Reitero que nosotros, todos los Estados Miembros, esperamos y Argentina en particular, pasar a tener como sucede en la agricultura, un campo sembrado o un vergel, pero eso requiere tiempo, esfuerzo, y trabajo. A esta situación se aplicaría el – mode français, *ne paniques pas* – o el modo español, la ansiedad no es una buena consejera.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statement that has been made by Venezuela on behalf of the G77 and by Congo on behalf of Africa.

We would like to thank the consultants and the Secretariat for a well done job. Congo has already said most of what Africa wanted to say with respect to this report, but I just want to add one or two points.

The first point is that this is the first evaluation of its nature that has been done in FAO and maybe in many other organizations. And, as Ms Semedo said, it was bound to have problems because nobody knew what was to be done or how to do it. But thanks to the hard work of the consultants and the cooperation of the Secretariat, we have a report that the G77, GRULAC and Africa are very happy with.

This report clearly shows that the technical capacity of the Organization has increased over the period of the evaluation. At the same time, it also shows that most of the technical staff are highly qualified people with Master Degrees and PhDs.

The EU has mentioned the qualitative external independent evaluation to be produced by 2019. I do not know what it means and I want to join Afghanistan in questioning this. However, in the absence of a clear explanation from the EU, I can only conclude that they are questioning the independence of the consultants.

Now, in my mind, there are two ways of conducting an independent assessment; either the members do it themselves or they hire consultants. Now we have a team of consultants that we hired. What is wrong with these consultants that we are questioning their independence? In fact, some members have conducted assessments of FAO which were probably even more rigorous and came up with positive results of the Organization's work.

Therefore, let us conclude that maybe the EU is only happy with the independence of a consultant if that consultant comes from one of their own members or from their own region. Otherwise, I cannot understand why they would question this.

On the issue of qualitative assessment, I am actually happy that the consultants did not go into this aspect for the simple reason. It would have thrown you into a snake pit. We are not going to agree on that. In some fields, such as the judiciary, where they assess the quality of a judge, they look at the number of judgments and opinions that the person has written and how many times it has been quoted in years past.

For example, one of my favourite judges Mr Clarence Thomas at the United States Supreme Court has written over 200 opinions and is highly respected for that. He has developed skills in a certain area of interpretation of the Constitution. In the academic field, they look at the number of individual's publications. How many papers have you published? In an organization like FAO where people work in teams, how are you going to do the qualitative assessment? Are you going to say that people have to go to Ivy League universities or that people have to go to Russell Group universities?

I am not targeting these universities because of anything that the United Kingdom or United States delegations have said, but it is because those are the universities I admire the most. Are you going to make the assessment on that basis? If you have economists, they study more or less the same stuff whichever university they go to, so how are you going to make that qualitative assessment?

So, until we get an explanation, a proper explanation of what it is that we are asking for, we cannot support the request for another independent evaluation when we have one that we are happy with. We have a report before us. It has shown that FAO is fully equipped to do the assignment, the task that we want them to do. And for me that is enough.

We have to have a proper justification for having another one. We cannot have an Organization that is continuously engaging in independent evaluations of its work. We have one. If there is a need for another one over some time, then let us have it, but not just one year after the previous one. It is not possible.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

First of all, I would like to align myself with the statement made by Malta on behalf of the EU and its 28 Member States. I would also like to thank you for the recognition which the consultants and many speakers have given this afternoon to the Multilateral Development Review (MDR) of the Department for International Development's (DfID). I would like to highlight a couple of the points that the MDR, we call it the MDR for short, has made. But before I should do this, I should note that the MDR was itself a qualitative assessment. It was not a quantitative assessment.

One of the major points it made about FAO was the importance of FAO's technical capacity and how many developing countries rely on that technical capacity to support them. You cannot assess technical capacity just by enumerating the number of staff members or consultants, their qualifications or indeed by enumerating the number of products or how many people have read them. The real test is how FAO supports countries to respond to new and complex threats.

I am going to give you an example of a new and complex threat. That is the threat of the fall army worm. Last year it transferred from the Americas to Africa and it is now devastating maize crops across Africa.

The real challenge for FAO is how it responds and how it supports countries to address that challenge. That challenge highlights three things. It highlights the importance of technical capacity. It highlights the importance, as China has mentioned, of South-South Cooperation. FAO is a brilliant place to bring together all of the technical expertise from around the world that can support African countries address that challenge of the fall army worm. Thirdly, it underlines a key area which is FAO's comparative advantage.

Moving forward, we would like a qualitative assessment of FAO's technical capacity to show how FAO is responding to that sort of challenge and other challenges like that. We have heard many people speak this afternoon agreeing that a qualitative assessment should be the next step. There have been many suggestions as to how this might be done. And we very much hope that the Council can agree on a set of next steps about how to do that.

I would like to return to the MDR and another point that it made. I am afraid I am going to repeat a comment I made earlier this morning but it is relevant here as well. The MDR highlighted how important it is for FAO to respond to external audit recommendations. I know we have reflected on that already today but that is another key point for the MDR and one that we raised during the informal consultation on the technical assessment.

Mr Jon Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

Iceland and Norway would like to align themselves with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

I would like to ask you to pass the floor to the Observer from Malta.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I would like to address the comments by Afghanistan and Zimbabwe, starting with Zimbabwe, about the independence of the auditors. It has absolutely nothing to do with the nationality of the auditors and such a comment should not be dignified by a response.

With regards to the question posed by Afghanistan, first of all I wish to point out that we are not the only Member State requesting more qualitative assessments. While we do not claim to have the wisdom to define this in a short answer, we feel that it can be defined in a discussion on the Terms of Reference. And, with that as a starting point, the following examples of qualitative elements that can be considered. A qualitative assessment, for example, looks at links between numbers and qualifications of staff and tasks they have to perform. It also looks at ways that staff are organized and work together to meet FAO's objectives. In short, how well FAO's staff are used in order to be Fit-for-Purpose.

Sr. Reginaldo BALINGA ALENE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial está convencida de que ésta evaluación independiente de la capacidad técnica de la FAO es coherente con la necesidad expresada y los términos de referencia solicitados y acordados por los Estados Miembros si se tiene en cuenta que los mismos fueron consultados en los asuntos relativos a la contratación de consultores externos y en el proceso de evaluación.

Por otra parte, el proyecto del Informe fue presentado por los consultores durante un Seminario Informal que se celebró aquí en la FAO, en donde algunos Países Miembros manifestaron su inquietud. En ese sentido agradecemos al Director General de la FAO y a la Administración por la transparencia con la que han llevado el proceso de esta evaluación.

En definitiva, vistos los resultados de la evaluación se puede afirmar que indican un claro y fuerte aumento en las capacidades técnicas de la organización del año 2012 al 2016, tanto en la Sede como en las Oficinas Descentralizadas. A este respecto felicitamos una vez más al Director General de la FAO por haber logrado estos resultados con un presupuesto de crecimiento cero, habiéndose manifestado resultados positivos en la ejecución de las prestaciones de servicios de la Organización y un fortalecimiento de su capacidad técnica. Valoramos la tasa de puestos vacantes con respecto a la flexibilidad para la contratación de consultores, lo que ha permitido el mantenimiento de las capacidades técnicas en un contexto de restricción del presupuesto.

Por lo tanto, mi país, Guinea Ecuatorial se congratula del hecho que los resultados de esta evaluación independiente de la capacidad técnica de la FAO sean confirmados por tres análisis externos relacionados con el programa de la FAO para el periodo 2012 - 2016. Estos análisis han sido realizados por la Organización Multilateral de la Red de Evaluación de Rendimiento, el Ministerio Federal de Cooperación y Desarrollo de Alemania y el Departamento de Desarrollo Internacional de Reino Unido.

Por último, exhortamos a la FAO a seguir reforzando la capacidad técnica en las Oficinas Descentralizadas, tal como se recoge en algunas de las recomendaciones de la Conferencia Regional de la FAO para África.

Mr João Carlos DE SOUZA-GOMES (Brazil)

We fully endorse the statements made by the Chairs of G77 plus China, the African Group and the GRULAC. We would also like to support the pertinent questions raised by our distinguished colleagues, delegates from Afghanistan and Zimbabwe. I think they are very much pertinent and I think we would like to have some or many clarifications on these points. We would also like to thank for the presentation made by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and to congratulate Mr Anil Sood and Ms Semedo for their valuable contributions, comments and remarks.

It is clear that FAO's technical capacity and its efficiency increased sharply. We also fully agree with the suggestion for FAO to consider the assessment of technical capacity through a regular strategic workforce planning exercise linked to the biennial Programme of Work.

We listened very carefully to the proposal made by the Presidency of the EU. My delegation cannot agree with such a proposal. In our view, it will represent, first of all, an unnecessary duplication of the Independent Technical Evaluation that is reflected in the report and that recognized very clearly an increased overall performance in FAO and modernized management structure and efficiency savings. Secondly, it will increase costs. I do not think this is the proper moment to increase costs with another evaluation. And to go on with evaluation after evaluation, I do not think this is the best policy and the

best solution of the problems in our Organization. The efficiency of this Organization has been just confirmed by the report. That is why we fully support it.

M. Mongui MÉDI (Cameroun)

Le Congo a parlé pour l'Afrique et nous approuvons entièrement cette déclaration, faisant nôtre tout ce qu'il a dit pour le compte du Groupe régional.

J'ai écouté toutes les déclarations prononcées dans cette salle et n'ai pas l'habitude de commenter les résultats d'une évaluation; je pense qu'il est même malséant de le faire à partir du moment où ses termes de référence ont été adoptés. Il s'agit seulement pour nous de prendre acte des résultats fournis par l'équipe des trois évaluateurs et de les utiliser au mieux.

Maintenant, il est certain qu'on peut manifester sa satisfaction ou sa non-satisfaction par rapport aux résultats obtenus. D'après ce que j'ai entendu ici, l'Afrique s'est exprimée et s'est dite satisfaite tandis que l'Union européenne ne l'est pas tout à fait. Les vues sont partagées, qui est normal pour une évaluation comme celle-ci. Nous savons que les trois experts qui avaient été commis pour cette évaluation, MM. Cleaver, Golan et Sood, sont de grandes ressources dans ce domaine et nous connaissons leurs capacités techniques; et je pense qu'il est temps d'utiliser les résultats qu'ils ont produits.

Je voudrais cependant adresser une question personnelle à M. Sood. Beaucoup de choses ont été dites ici parce que, certainement, il n'y a pas eu de déclaration de l'assurance qualité de cette évaluation. Si aujourd'hui M. Sood, ou bien M. Kevin Cleaver, étiez recruté pour donner une déclaration d'assurance qualité de cette évaluation, que feriez-vous, que diriez-vous? Puisque c'est la première évaluation de cette nature, aujourd'hui pouvez-vous nous dire, selon vous, selon votre évaluation personnelle, si elle fait-référence dans la matière? Si l'on vous demandait de la refaire, la conduiriez-vous de la même manière?

Voilà quelques interrogations, peut-être pour notre satisfaction, mais peut-être pour vous aider également à faire une déclaration d'assurance qualité de cette évaluation. Je pense que nous sommes tous d'accord avec le traitement de ces questions.

Merci à Monsieur Mehboob qui a présidé la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier. Nous voyons, au paragraphe 8 du rapport, que la Réunion conjointe est allée au fond des choses et a donné des orientations précises. Comment, maintenant, aller de l'avant? C'est ce qui nous intéresse et de ce fait, je voudrais dire que peut-être avons-nous dépensé de l'argent pour recruter des consultants externes alors que le Bureau de l'évaluation pouvait faire ce travail. Je prends l'exemple en 2004 lorsqu'avait été lancée l'évaluation indépendante du FIDA, au lendemain de la création du Bureau indépendant de l'évaluation – j'étais présent – un consultant externe avait été chargé de préparer la note méthodologique. Quand cette note méthodologique est passée au Conseil, ce fut la catastrophe, car personne n'en a voulu. Il a fallu demander au Bureau de l'évaluation de préparer une autre note méthodologique, qui fut approuvée par la suite par le Conseil.

Cela veut donc dire qu'au sein du Bureau de l'évaluation, il y a des compétences qu'il faut faire valoir et je ne pense pas qu'il soit toujours nécessaire de faire appel à des agents externes. Nous tenons fermement, par rapport aux suggestions du paragraphe 8, à ce que des questions de cette nature, surtout pour des évaluations futures, soient gérées par le Bureau indépendant de l'évaluation de la FAO. Pourquoi pas? Ainsi l'on pourrait commettre quelqu'un pour faire une déclaration d'assurance qualité de l'évaluation, qui pourrait conforter tout le monde.

Sr. Oscar PIÑEYRO (Uruguay)

Mi intervención se enmarca en lo declarado por el Grupo de los 77 más China y por el GRULAC.

Realmente he pedido la palabra porque he tenido cierta sorpresa al ver que se hayan hecho críticas a la evaluación independiente, concretamente al hecho de que no se hayan tomado en cuenta todos los comentarios vertidos en una reunión de información informal a las Representaciones Permanentes. Eso es lo que yo he entendido.

No es posible para una evaluación independiente tomar en cuenta todas las opiniones expresadas en una reunión informativa informal. Realmente me preocuparía si ésta evaluación independiente sólo tomara en cuenta algunas de las opiniones que evidentemente contaran de manera previa con cierto consenso general. Yo participé en esa reunión informal, si es que a esto nos estamos refiriendo, y prácticamente no hubo ninguna posición expresada en esa reunión que contara con la aprobación o el acuerdo de todos los allí presentes.

Creo que Uruguay ha participado en todas las reuniones informales informativas. Pero si esto no fuese así y en otra reunión hubiera habido modificaciones importantes en una evaluación independiente, les soy sincero, estaría realmente preocupado.

En todo caso, como estas modificaciones fueron pocas con relación a la evaluación que se había presentado en dicha reunión informativa previa, el sentido general del documento no ha cambiado y sigue siendo, realmente, el mismo.

En cuanto al tema de una evaluación cualitativa me parece que estamos hablando de otro asunto. Lo que estamos analizando aquí es una evaluación cuantitativa originalmente encargada. Luego se pidieron, o incluso fueron los evaluadores independientes quienes sugirieron (según entendí en esa reunión informativa) incorporar algunos aspectos cualitativos. Pero una cosa es incorporar aspectos cualitativos en una evaluación independiente y otra es hacer una evaluación de tipo cualitativo. Normalmente las evaluaciones cualitativas las hacen los Miembros cuando dan sus opiniones, sobre la base de información o los antecedentes que tienen acerca los temas. Pero me parece que son realmente dos temas diferentes.

En cuanto a las orientaciones que se nos han brindado en términos de tener una idea de lo que sería esta evaluación cualitativa, realmente a mí me gustaría tener el tiempo suficiente como para discutirlo en el marco del GRULAC. Porque habría que ver si en esta formulación que se hace de modo general no se está incurriendo, justamente, en lo que la declaración de GRULAC advierte que no se debe entrar: la micro-gestión. El Consejo debería ver los temas del funcionamiento de la Organización desde un punto de vista general. Pero si se pide una evaluación de tipo cualitativo para ver cómo trabajan los funcionarios de la FAO y cómo interactúan entre sí a efectos de conseguir los objetivos. No quiero aquí repetir lo que ha dicho otra Delegación, porque puedo no ser fiel a lo que se ha expresado, pero la idea con la cual me he quedado es la siguiente: se estaría ingresando de pleno en la micro-gestión, y eso realmente es algo que, por lo pronto en opinión de esta Delegación, no sería adecuado ni siquiera para el propio trabajo del Consejo, dado la gran cantidad de temas, la gran cantidad de informes y de documentos que debemos preparar para cada reunión.

Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

As this is the first time I am speaking, let me seize this opportunity to show my appreciation for the way that the Chairperson has conducted this Council so far. And I also want to thank all Members for their commitment to this Organization.

The Nigerian Delegation agrees with the comments made by G77 plus China presented by Venezuela, the statement by the African Group presented by Congo, and that of the Near East Group presented by Afghanistan. And of course, GRULAC spoke in the same way.

Let me from the outset say that I have just five points which actually may be a summation of all of the deep, intelligent conversation that we have had so far on this subject.

Firstly, Nigeria welcomes the outcomes of the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of FAO and emphasizes its salient achievements in setting up a baseline and secondarily, establishing methodology for future assessment.

Secondly, we agree with the report of the independent consultants which is in line with the Joint Meeting Report, the Search Assessment should be internalized. I heard the word “*institutionalized*” but I think it is in the spirit of doing the assessment within FAO in the future.

Thirdly, as expected from such a rigorous assessment, gaps and areas for future elaboration have emerged. However, this does not or should not equate to, or should not be interpreted as a call for

another independent external assessment. Such a need should have been raised at the level of the Programme and Finance Committee.

Fourthly, the Office of Evaluation in FAO should be relied upon to support management to give a degree of independence arising from this dual reporting line and report regularly on these matters and report regularly to Members.

The Nigerian Delegation does not agree to any other assessment in the future. It could be counterproductive, will not be cost effective, neither would it be desirable.

Regarding a baseline that is being worked upon, the independent consultants have done a wonderful job starting from zero, and not even being able to define exactly what we wanted but we were able to tease it out and they have given us something quite solid to work upon.

Let me seize this opportunity to thank Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Joint Committee, Mr Sood, the Independent Consultant, the Director-General for having done such a wonderful job in four years to get us to where we are today, and finally the Secretariat. If there is going to be anything else and membership feels very strongly about it, I think we can do what was done earlier in the fourth assessment of FAO which was around 2007-08. There could be Membership Committees to look at what and where we want to go next.

I recall that the Independent Chairperson was a key Member of that Review Committee.

The meeting was suspended from 17.30 to 18.00 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 30 à 18 h 00

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.30 a las 18.00

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

I would first start by thanking the Regional Groups and the Permanent Representatives for the comments. I think we received very good comments on the report and more than that on the way forward. I think at the end of the day what we are looking for is how we are moving towards a better Organization.

I would like to start by recalling what the Council decision was. The Council decision was to urge FAO and the FAO Secretariat to undertake an Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization both at Headquarters and in the Decentralized Offices to be presented to the conference in 2017.

I was not here in Rome during this discussion as the Council session coincided with the dates of UNFCCC COP 21. This gave me the opportunity to read through the records because I wanted to have a sense what was expected from FAO to deliver. The phrase coming up throughout the discussion was “eroded capacity”. The capacity of the Organization has been eroded with the establishment of the Strategic Programme Teams to link the Strategic Framework. When we talk about eroded capacity I think we are referring to the quantitative. It is not qualitative. This is the first point.

Linked to that, the report showed to us that we did not erode technical capacity. On the opposite, we have increased the capacity and to me this is a cause for all of us to be congratulated. Our Organization has done well. We did not erode the technical capacity. To me this is a positive finding coming out of the report.

Second, we presented a roadmap. A roadmap was discussed in the Programme Committee and the consultation was linked by video conference. Again, the qualitative assessment was not referred to on that day. It is normal that now we consider that we need a more substantive analysis and we need qualitative information. But this is not to be seen as a weakness on this Report as it was not requested.

When we started the discussion of this assessment, all of us agreed that it was a complex exercise. It was the first one to be done in FAO. We could not refer to some other organization which had gone through the same exercise for some guidance. All of us were searching for how we should move forward with this exercise.

But, it was an exercise to be presented to the Member Countries but also the Secretariat was looking at this exercise as a way to have more information on the technical capacity and human resources to use for further analysis especially in the context of the transformative change in the Organization. How we can use this report? As it has been said, as a baseline for Management decisions and direction on how we can improve our human resources to be better fit-for-purpose as it has been said here this afternoon.

As I said, we agree with the Report. We agree that we have some gaps. One of the gaps is that we do not have disaggregated data. We need to have disaggregated data to respond to some of your queries, to have gender disaggregated data, to have more geographic information to be more consistent in our analysis. We agree that in the future those kinds of information will be required.

Again, it has been said by the Representative of the United Kingdom that the defeat evaluation is a qualitative evaluation. But if we see the two and we compare the two evaluations, they are not contradicting each other. It is not one saying that you have increased capacity and the other saying that you are delivering bad results in the field. I think they are for different purposes but they are not contradicting each other, as they are showing that the Organization is constantly improving its technical capacity.

At the end of the day it is exactly what the Representative of the United Kingdom said. It is how FAO can better deliver services to the Member Countries. For us, to better deliver services to the Member Countries in response to their needs, we have our FAO Results Framework. It has to be from inputs through outputs and outcome because it is not enough to only have a staff with PhD degree. It is how the staff is delivering and serving the Member Countries? More than that it is not only the FAO staff, as it has been said by China. It is how we are using South-South Cooperation? How are we using our partnership to deliver those results?

This all is a part of a quality assessment of the Organization. We all agree that the next step should be a qualitative analysis. But my question is whether we should do evaluations every day. We present to the Member Countries and usually you are satisfied with the evaluation. We discussed today the Climate Change Strategy. It came up from an evaluation where it gave the guidance to the Organization how to move forward. We have the SP3 evaluation.

We have an Office of Evaluation working, conducting this kind of assessment and evaluation. Evaluation is deeper than an assessment because, as it has been said, we listen to our partners. It is not only the Secretariat. We listen to our different partners. We do it every day.

Why, for what reason we need to go again through an independent assessment? It will be costly to the Organization. With all due respect to the Independent Consultants, we consider that we deliver the same quality of services and, as it has been said, our Office of Evaluation has a two lines of reporting. They report to Member Countries as well. Why do we need again to go through an independent evaluation?

We had an external independent assessment some years ago looking at the outcome level and we need again to go back, but as we said we agree on the need to have a qualitative assessment to be complimenting to this one. But we believe, as it has been expressed by the majority of the Members, our Office of Evaluation has the capacity to deliver this evaluation.

I believe that, as it has been said, we think that the evaluation is a positive one. The evaluation shows the gaps and the Management agreed that we have some gaps. We agree to have a continuous evaluation or assessment of our technical capacity as we move through each Programme of Work and Budget exercise. It has to be a continuous exercise done by the Organization. We need to have more consistent information and this exercise will be a baseline for the Organization.

To me, those are the main findings. As I said, we should be congratulated for the results that state that we did not erode the technical capacity of the Organization.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)

I am sure all of us, when we speak from Management, when we speak at the Council meetings are just much more comfortable in responding to questions rather than offering a more personal reflection. But

having said that, I hope you will bear with me a little bit on a personal view offered in a purely constructive sense.

I was sorry to miss most of the discussion in the Joint Meeting that afternoon because of the launch in Brussels of the Joint Report on the Food Crisis together with WFP and the Joint Research Center of the European Commission. But I was very happy to see the outcome later on that week what would come next with regard to the more qualitative report, or the ongoing analysis, let us say of the more qualitative aspects and what would come next; and thinking about how we would interact with Office of Evaluation (OED) on this.

In the discussion of what would be better in terms of an external review or more done together with the OED, certainly there are advantages and disadvantages to each. It looks to me, if I may again offer this in kind of a personal reflection, the kind of thing that would be more conducive to our ongoing work with OED.

I think, in case we are looking for more of a snapshot as deep as it can be rather than an ongoing evolution, it is in this more ongoing evolution. As Ms Semedo mentioned, the way that we respond to countries which we have found to be particularly valuable through the work of OED and this kind of constructive dialogue that goes on including the discussion today.

I remember, as a number of you here will too, the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) and in particular Chapter six. It was done by a group of really brilliant people who I have been in a lot of contact with since then. They have, I think, better minds for that type of work. But, in the end one of their conclusions was that FAO should withdraw or diminish work on production and move into other areas, value chain and other things, kind of post-production or pre-production because it was not really an issue.

This came out a little ahead of the food price crisis in 2008. So it looked like the wrong advice at that time. In another timeline or another circumstance it would have looked like the right thing but given the kind of evolving situation as a snapshot at that time it was not in the end terribly helpful.

I think the overall IEE was enormously helpful for us and the IPA process that came after that I think even more important. But it did show the difficulty of keeping up with fast changing developments in what countries are asking for, including, for example the armyworm. I know even on AMR – for me AMR was a new topic that without the interest of you as Members would not have kind of been on our radar a few years ago. It was not on our radar a few years ago.

So I think this in terms of the response to countries, the qualitative analysis of how we are organized and Fit-for-Purpose is an evolving and somewhat predictable and somewhat unpredictable situation that requires sustained long-term analysis.

The other point I would like to make is that we have made a lot of progress with regard to both the evaluation function and the audit function. Both OED and OIG, I have found really very helpful in moving away from adversarial reactions to evaluations. I do not think this is the best word, but moving away from a somewhat adversarial relationship, not that we were adversaries, but where it was not necessarily as constructive as it is today in the way that we approach things and interact as certain processes unfold.

Both the interaction with the Inspector General staff and with the Audit Committee and with the team of evaluators and the consultants that they bring in has been really enormously helpful for us as we have gone through a lot of the reforms and launching of the Strategic Framework and looking now at the Strategic Programmes, et cetera.

Back to what I said at the outset, in looking at the outcome of the Joint Meeting, that was how I was envisioning this and looking forward to it actually to see how we would do that. I think from again a personal view on how this would work, I think that would be the better option but I leave it as a constructive personal reflection.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director- General, Operations)

I have no comments to add at this stage to the very comprehensive comments from Ms Semedo and Mr Gustafson. I may intervene later on the question of partnership with the Rome-based Agencies.

Mr Anil SOOD (Independent Consultant, Independent Assessment of FAO's Technical Capacity)

I think a lot of ground has already been covered by the comments preceding my own so I will be very brief.

Starting with what the purpose of the assessment was and what we set out to do: I think the Deputy Director-General laid out the question we tried to answer, how has the technical capacity of the Organization evolved in this period of ongoing organizational changes, particularly the set-up of the Strategic Programme teams. I think as you have seen from the Report, when measured quantitatively the answer is clearly that there has not been an erosion of technical capacity. If anything taking a very integrative perspective of the Human Resources there has been in fact an increase in technical capacity.

The second point I wanted to make is simply to reiterate what a number of people have said earlier this afternoon. The real value of this exercise is that it is, in some ways, a pioneering exercise. It sets a benchmark. It sets a baseline. It clarifies some methodological aspects of how this question can be answered in the future and that is where the real value is. I am sure as things go forward with future assessments the ongoing assessments would be better as a result of what we have done here.

There is no question. There were many data challenges that the Organization faces and we faced as a result. Some of them were resolved even in the course of carrying out this assessment. Some others will take more time to resolve.

Consistent time series is needed on many of dimensions to answer the questions of the Members. Currently it is simply not available so for that reason regional disaggregation and things of that sort which would be nice to have are currently not available in a systematic and consistent way but from what I understand efforts are underway to try and address those challenges to offer that data to the Members in the future.

Turning to the next steps from our perspective as a team, it will be very reassuring to hear the very strong support in the room for “institutionalizing” and, as somebody else called it “internalizing”, this exercise and base it as we tried to do in this assessment on an integrated perspective.

As I said very briefly, FAO has a very complex Human Resources architecture with two sources of funds and several categories of staff and also non-staff and so it is important to keep it all in a very integrated sort of holistic framework. Again I hope this assessment has made a start in that direction.

As was mentioned by several people, there is no question that South-South Cooperation can add to the institution's capacity without putting pressure on resources and again it was nice to hear support for that.

Sharing services with the other Rome-based Agencies – IFAD and WFP, in our view offers tremendous efficiency opportunities, tremendous synergies and again it was reassuring to hear support for that as one of the steps to be looking at.

On this issue of qualitative analysis, Mr Chairperson with your permission, let me also add a personal view. I think the real value in that area would not come from yet another one-off assessment evaluation whatever it might be called but rather on focusing on what is in the current results measurement, Results Management Framework of the Organization.

If it is not capturing what you want by way of what are the desired outcomes, and what are the desired results on the ground, and how well Member Countries feel that their needs are being served. If it is not doing all of that, I think the start needs to be made at improving the Results Management Framework. And then working with the current system and having this be a continuous exercise where the Membership can monitor progress against desired outcomes, desired targets rather than embarking on another one-off activity.

Of course in doing all of this as has been pointed out, the Evaluation Function of the house would have a key role to play as it is already playing today.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

Office of Evaluation is called to provide inputs to this exercise, I would like to also give a bit of assurance of perspective on what we can do in this regard.

I will not go into the Report itself. That was presented before you because it is talking about the Human Resources inputs side and continuing monitoring the workforce planning and this is at the competence of our Human Resource colleagues.

But when I looked at the conclusions of your Programme and the Finance Joint Meeting, it calls for looking more into the qualitative side. I had wondered what it meant, but today's deliberation gave a clearer idea of what actually it meant. The meaning was whether we have certain people in the divisions in the technical units and in the Decentralized Offices able to deliver the service that the countries required from FAO, what they are expected to do, and whether FAO is equipped to provide that kind of service.

Actually this is the kind of assessment we do all the time in our evaluations although not with a very broad coverage. We are always asking the countries to evaluate how useful FAO was, how FAO is responding to the needs of the countries, how we can improve our delivery to the needs of the countries, et cetera.

I think this is a way that we can actually measure the quality because of the variability of the services that we provide. It is very difficult to compare apples and oranges with the same qualitative indicators but you can see whether people are appreciating apples or oranges and measure whether we are providing the right food on the table. We do this and we have methodologies and we do the user surveys.

We sometimes do these evaluations for the knowledge products through the cyber tracking or tracing of the usage of our products on the internet. We also experiment with market research methodology, which the private sector always uses to determine whether their product has been acceptable to the customers or not. So there are many different methodologies that we use.

What Professor Sood said was right, I think. If you want to use evaluations for the management purposes of the Governing Body, it should be built more into the RBA system. We can provide technical support and methodological tools to support the RBA system to provide information on the quality and utility and usage of our services and products for the Member States.

This is what I think we can offer and we can assure you that there are methodologies that actually look into this. We have to see how much this can be done in a practical and feasible manner within the context of the overall capacity.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Igarashi for that assurance to the Members.

Dear Members, do you have more questions? If not, I would like to thank you and say that this agenda item has been given due attention by the Members of the Council. I have noted rich debates accompanied by clarification on some complex issues. It is my understanding that there is general endorsement of the conclusions made by the Joint Committee on this matter. This is my understanding and what I could observe from deliberations.

The Excellencies have also came up with what could be the next steps, which among others include: qualitative analysis, exposition of disaggregated data etc. I note that the Joint Committee discussed issues regarding the next steps and it gave guidance that whatever comes next should be institutionalized, or speaking simple language, "internalized". Despite they are being called for the next steps to be taken by the Independent external consultant and at the same time I added that the next steps can be internalized on interim basis.

I heard though, I was listening very carefully, so here there is the mix. Issues of professionalism of the Office of Evaluation have been expressed. With these remarks I would like to make conclusions on this agenda item 5, hoping to meet your expectations in a view of deliberation and with our usual desire for compromise, flexibility and consensus.

1. The Council endorsed the report of the Joint Meeting, and:
 - a) in considering the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization, welcomed its main findings;
 - b) 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 the number of positions in the period under review;
 - c) noted the value of partnerships and South-South Cooperation in the overall technical capacity of the Organization;
 - d) appreciated that the increased technical capacity was aligned with FAO's Strategic Framework;
 - e) noted the report's conclusions were consistent with those of other, recent independent and external assessments of FAO, including by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, and Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development;
 - f) cautioned against introduction of costly and/or cumbersome tracking systems;
 - g) welcomed the suggestion for greater collaboration between FAO with IFAD and WFP on administrative areas, for cost-reduction and efficiency, and to leverage FAO's pre-eminence position as the repository of technical capacity;
 - h) 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 ensuing reporting to Members;
 - i) requested that future assessments include qualitative analysis, and exposition of disaggregated data;
 - j) agreed that future assessments be internalized and recommended involvement of the Office of Evaluation.

Item 15. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2017-18

Point 15. Calendrier 2017-2018 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales

Tema 15. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2017-18

(CL 156/LIM/1 Rev.2)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 15, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2017-18*. The document before Council is CL 156/LIM/1 Rev.2.

I now pass the floor to Mr Gagnon.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

As Members are aware, in order to avoid meetings overlapping, FAO draws up this calendar in close coordination with IFAD and WFP and through the web-based Common Calendar, which may be consulted by Members through the FAO Members Gateway on the FAO Home Page.

The *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2017-18* is before Council for information. Any changes made since the last Session are indicated with an asterisk.

With regard to the schedule of meetings for 2018, I wish to inform Members that the proposed dates for the 35th Session of the Latin America Regional Conference are now from 5 to 9 March 2018 and not from 26 to 29 March as indicated in the Calendar. Similarly, the dates of the 31st Session of the Europe Regional Conference are not yet confirmed.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We have seen some important festivals have been placed in this calendar, so we wonder if FAO can also add the Chinese Spring Festival, as this is a very important festival for many Asian countries. In order to avoid difficulties for some Delegations in being able to attend FAO meetings, could you please try to avoid holding some meetings during the Chinese Spring Festival?

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Mali)

Le Mali prend la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique pour intervenir sur le point 15 relatif au Calendrier 2017-2018 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales.

Je voudrais à cet effet, et au nom du Groupe Afrique, adresser mes sincères félicitations au Président et remercier le Secrétariat de la FAO pour la qualité des documents mis à notre disposition, en particulier pour l'élaboration du Calendrier des réunions des sessions des organes directeurs pour l'exercice biennal 2017 et 2018 des institutions ayant leur siège à Rome.

Le Groupe Afrique approuve le calendrier préparé en concertation, de manière à coordonner les dates des réunions des organes directeurs des trois institutions, comme cela a été dit, pour éviter les chevauchements des sessions des organes directeurs.

Cependant, le Groupe Afrique souhaiterait rappeler qu'au mois de mars dernier le Président des Fidji a informé de l'organisation de la COP23 par son pays, qui sera accueillie au siège du Secrétariat de la Convention-cadre des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques (CCNUCC), à Bonn, du 6 au 17 novembre 2017. Il se trouve que cet événement majeur se déroule à la même période que la 168^{ème} session du Comité financier et la 122^{ème} session du Comité du Programme sur les questions concernant le PAM et qui sont prévues du 6 au 10 novembre 2017.

Le Groupe Afrique invite le Secrétariat à bien vouloir apporter des améliorations au calendrier afin d'assurer une bonne participation à l'événement majeur que représente la COP.

Le Groupe Afrique prend note des modifications apportées au calendrier depuis la dernière session, qui sont au nombre de trois pour 2017 et quatre pour 2018, et approuve les dates des réunions pour 2017.

Mr John TUMINARO (United States of America)

The United States has noticed that the Informal North American Regional Conference has not been included on the calendar, so we respectfully request that the Informal North American Regional Conference be added to the official calendar with the dates to occur sometime during the week of 16 to 20 April 2018.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Firstly, regarding the observation made by China on the inclusion of the Chinese Spring Festival, I wanted to point out that the current calendar includes an indicative list of festivities. It is there as a guide. I am not sure I have the correct dates of the Chinese Spring Festival, but I am happy to see it does not present any conflicts so far both in 2017 and 2018. This could be added, as a measure of guidance.

Secondly, on the observation made by Mali, it is true that COP23 overlaps for a portion with the meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees. However, allow me to point out that these meetings have a limited composition with twelve Members for both the Programme and Finance Committees with a one day meeting of the 24 Members. Of course, this has been noted and we will see how the dates can be rearranged with this element in mind

United States, thank you for your comment. In the past, the informal Regional Conference for North America was included, so as soon as we have the precise dates, it will be included in the calendar.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

I apologize for taking the floor again. In 2017, the Chinese Spring Festival took place at the same time as Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) and in 2018 during the Chinese Spring Festival there will be a meeting at IFAD. I do not know if it is appropriate to talk about

an IFAD meeting here. We are not insistent and not requesting that the calendar should be changed now, but in the future we would like to ask for it to be taken into consideration.

CHAIRPERSON

It is noted, but what it will be shown in this calendar is what has been raised by United States of America. Any other issues raised are for future consideration and an explanation has been given.

We have concluded on this agenda item that: the Council took note of the amendments to the FAO Calendar of Governing Bodies for 2017-18.

Item 11. Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2017-20

Point 11. Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil pour 2017-2020

Tema 11. Programa de trabajo plurianual del Consejo para 2017-2020

(CL 156/LIM/4)

CHAIRPERSON

The next item on the agenda is item 11, *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2017-20*. Please ensure that you have document CL 156/LIM/4 before you.

As Members are aware, this planning tool is a standing item on the Council's agenda. Due to the rolling nature of the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPoW), it should be considered a "*living document*" and, as such, is subject to constant improvement and fine-tuning. As a result of the consultations on the MYPoW takes place at the regular informal meetings I hold with the Regional Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

The floor is now open for delegates who may wish to propose improvements to the text you have before you.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I just would like to raise one issue. In the MYPoW some reference should be made to SDGs. There is only one reference made as per paragraph 22, item (g), page 5. But the link between these SDGs and the FAO Strategic Objectives is important. To accommodate that, we suggest the following two changes:

Item (c) of paragraph 5 could be changed to read "*Council guidance on world food and agriculture issues and affiliation with the SDGs receive Conference approval*".

Item (b) of paragraph 7 could be amended to read "*Assessment of major issues pertaining to the world food and agriculture situation, including alignment with the SDGs, as necessary*".

CHAIRPERSON

There being no other delegation wishing to speak, let me make conclusions on Item 11, *Council Meeting for Programme of Work 2017-20*.

The Council reviewed and they approved the Multi-Year Programme of Work 2017-20 and taking into account the evolving nature of the document, agreed to include the following amendments:

(a) Paragraph 5(c) to read "*Council guidance on world food and agriculture issues and their affiliation with the SDGs received Conference approval*."

(b) Paragraph 7(b) to read "*Assessment of major issues pertaining to the world food and the agriculture situation including alignment with SDGs, as necessary*."

Thank you.

I now call on the Secretary-General to inform us on improvements made to our working methods.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to inform Council that the FAO Members Gateway has been enhanced with new features which consists of two online forms. The first is an online form for the submission of nominations for the Council Committees, previously annexed to the Council document which should facilitate the

submission of nomination and curricula vitae of candidates and ensure that all of the nations are presented in the same layout and format.

The second online form available on the restricted area of the FAO Members Gateway is the request for speaking time form for the Conference. The online form replaces the previous hard copy attached to the letter of invitation and may be returned to the Secretariat by email only.

Furthermore, I wish to inform Council that the paper smart approach with a print on demand facility available at the document desk introduced by the Secretariat since the previous session of Council has resulted in the reduction of approximately 10,000 printed copies of Council documents for this Session with only a total of 354 printed copies requested at the document desk and approximately 1,000 copies printed of the larger documents.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there any Member who wishes to make a comment?

Ladies and gentlemen, that brings us to the end of this afternoon's meeting. I thank you for your patience. I thank you for your patience and flexibility as well as striking for consensus.

The Council will resume its work tomorrow morning at 9:30 sharp. I wish you all a good night.

The meeting rose at 18:58 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 58

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.58

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2017 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| FIFTH PLENARY MEETING CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 26 April 2017 |

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.46 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 46
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.46
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- Item 14. International Years and Days**
Point 14. Point 14 Années et journées internationales
Tema 14. Años y días internacionales
- Item 14.1 International Year of Camelids*
Point 14.1 Année internationale des camélidés
Tema 14.1 Año Internacional de los Camélidos
(CL 156/7 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen. I call the Fifth Meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council to order.

The first item on the agenda this morning is Item 14 *International Years and Days*, as amended at the start of our session when adopting the Agenda. The item now consists of two sub-items: sub-item 14.1, *International Year of Camelids* and sub-item 14.2, *Proposal to declare the annual observance of World Pulses Day*

We will start with sub-item 14.1, *International Year of Camelids*. The relevant document is CL 156/7 Rev.1.

I invite Mr Berhe Tekola, Director of the Animal Production and Health Division, to introduce this sub-item.

Mr Berhe Gebreegziabher TEKOLA (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

We have three working documents which have been endorsed and proposed on the International Year of Camelids. One is document CL 156/7 Rev.1; the second one is document COAG 2016/17, and then the Report of the 155th Session of Council, where there is a paragraph on this.

Regarding the background information, a request was made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the establishment of the International Year of Camelids to be discussed at the 25th Session of the Committee for Agriculture (COAG). This resulted from the recognition of the importance of camelids for food security, poverty reduction and livelihoods, especially in arid lands.

The COAG at its 25th Session supported the principles of establishing an International Year of Camelids (C 2017/21, paragraph 52). Then the 155th Session of the Council supported the principles of establishing an International Year of Camelids, while noting that further information was required and the proposal would be provided to the 156th Session of the Council in April 2017 for consideration (Report of the 155th Session of Council, paragraph 12c).

Camelids are the main source of subsistence for millions of families who live in the most hostile environment in about 90 countries on the planet. They are the main source of protein for indigenous communities in different regions of the world. They also provide fibre, organic fertilizer, traction and transport, and are indispensable for nomadic, pastoral livelihoods. Above all, they are quite resistant to any kind of climate.

South American camelid species, like llama, alpaca, vicuñas and guanacos, are unique species of indigenous mammals from the continent and an important element in the cultural identity of the ancestral indigenous communities. These are few of their comparative advantages in terms of economy and livelihood.

The aim of the International Year of Camelids is to educate people and governments on the importance of recognizing the value and the economic and social importance of camelids in the lives of communities that are highly susceptible and vulnerable to extreme poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. Therefore, the Council is invited to examine the proposal to establish 2024 as the International Year of Camelids and provide guidance as it sees fit in accordance with FAO Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years (C 2013/LIM/15).

Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)

La República de Argentina, en su calidad de vicepresidencia del GRULAC, solicita el uso de la palabra para la presidencia del GRULAC, República de El Salvador.

Sra. María Abelina TORRES DE MEILLIEZ (Observador de El Salvador)

Realizamos esta intervención en nombre del GRULAC.

En reconocimiento a la importancia de los camélidos para la seguridad alimentaria, la reducción de la pobreza y los medios de vida de millones de personas de 90 países, tanto el Comité de Agricultura (COAG) como el Consejo de la FAO en el último período de sesiones en diciembre respaldaron el principio de establecer un Año Internacional de los Camélidos.

Una acción conjunta de protección a los camélidos, impulsada por este Año Internacional, ayudará a poblaciones y sectores que viven de ellos, que son a la vez los más vulnerables a enfrentar los desafíos de la implementación de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, desde una perspectiva de sostenibilidad ambiental y responsabilidad social.

Con la designación de un Año Internacional de los Camélidos se armonizarán varios de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) vinculados al trabajo de la FAO. Son los ODS 1, 2, 5, 12, 13 y 15.

Destacamos el ODS 1 y el ODS 2. El primero, porque toda acción que se desarrolle en las zonas rurales donde habitan camélidos dará paso a un crecimiento inclusivo y equitativo.

Y el ODS 2, porque el desarrollo de los camélidos y sus productos son fuentes de empleo e impactan en la disminución de la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición.

El documento CL 156/7 Rev. 1 presenta una síntesis de las oportunidades y beneficios que podrían obtenerse de la declaración del Año Internacional de los Camélidos, como contribución al cumplimiento de los ODS al igual que los Objetivos de la FAO, e incluye el proyecto de Resolución para el endoso del Consejo y remisión a la Conferencia.

El GRULAC apoya la sugerencia de Bolivia de seleccionar el año 2024, de conformidad con la política establecida por la FAO sobre los años internacionales.

Con el referido Año Internacional, se delinearán acciones concretas en los planos local, nacional, regional e internacional, que estarán incluidos en un Plan Maestro, mismo que tendrá una amplia participación, como la academia y centros de investigación, el sector privado y comunidades locales, el acompañamiento de la FAO así como las instancias gubernamentales.

El Plan maestro tendrá carácter inclusivo, participativo y de asociación con el objetivo de realizar nuevas acciones, contribuir a la sostenibilidad y sustentabilidad de la crianza de camélidos, mediante la generación de tecnologías apropiadas para mejorar la producción y productividad, así como fortalecer las actividades existentes, junto con la preparación de un calendario de actividades.

La financiación continuará con la política de contribuciones voluntarias establecida por la FAO.

El establecimiento de un fondo fiduciario para reunir los aportes de países interesados y comprometidos con el año internacional es clave. Bolivia financiará la parte inicial, y liderará la búsqueda de recursos de otras fuentes.

Se insta a desarrollar acciones de cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular para la captación de recursos.

Vemos con agrado la posible participación de otros organismos del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas, como el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD) y el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA).

El GRULAC desea compartir una parte de la Declaración Especial No. 10 sobre el Año Internacional de los Camélidos, suscrita por los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de América Latina y el Caribe, reunidos en Punta Cana, República Dominicana, en ocasión de la V Cumbre de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC), celebrada en enero último.

Esas autoridades expresaron su apoyo al Año Internacional de los Camélidos, afirmando que la iniciativa, entre comillas “constituirá una noble estrategia de sensibilización de la comunidad

internacional, para reconocer y valorar la importancia económica y cultural de los camélidos en la vida de los pueblos indígenas mayormente propensos y vulnerables a la extrema pobreza, inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición, incidiendo en el logro de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, y reconociendo el carácter integrado e indivisible de la Agenda, los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible y sus metas”.

Para finalizar, el GRULAC reitera la significativa importancia de la celebración del Año Internacional de los Camélidos y su vinculación con la Agenda 2030.

Sr. Edison Paul VALLEJO MADRID (Ecuador)

La Delegación de la República de Ecuador solicita la palabra para la Delegación del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, que desea intervenir sobre este tema.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me first give the floor to the United Kingdom.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to request the floor for Malta who will speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Montenegro, as well as San Marino align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its 28 Member States take note of the proposal submitted by the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the United Nations system to establish 2018 as the International Year of Camelids.

We agree that camelids are an important resource for millions of families who live in some of the most hostile ecosystems on the planet. Their contribution to livelihoods, food security and poverty reduction, especially for pastoral populations living in arid lands, could hardly be overstated.

We would welcome more information on the expected objectives and concrete actions, as well as on the financing of activities from voluntary contributions, in order to have a better basis for fully evaluating the merits of this proposal.

We would also like to draw attention to the UN ECOSOC criteria for the proclamation of international years, as endorsed by the UN General Assembly and recalled in the FAO Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years adopted by the FAO Conference in 2013.

In particular, the FAO Policy provides that an International Year *"should address a priority concern to all, or the majority of countries"*; that *"there should be an interval of at least two years between two International Years"*; and that *"the Conference will not call for the proclamation of more than one International Year at a time"*.

In this respect, we recall that the 2017 FAO Conference will already consider the proposal for the establishment of an International Year for Plant Health in 2020 and the proposal for the establishment of an International Year on Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan appreciates the statement made by El Salvador on behalf of GRULAC. We wish to further add the following. Camelids come in all forms, from the llama of the Indian highlands in South America, to the desert camel of Somalia and Sahara and the camels of semi-arid zones of the Indian subcontinent, and the bactrian camel of China and Central Asia.

The world population of camels is estimated to be close to 30 million. In Afghanistan, the population of camel is about 200 000 and a large portion of this is of the bactrian two-hump camel. The Holy Quran treats the camel with respect. Verse 64 of Chapter 6 says, and I quote, *"And O my people, this is the*

she-camel of God, a sign to you. Leave her that she may eat in God's land, and do not touch her with evil lest a near torment should befall you." End quote.

In all parts of the world, the camel is considered to be a useful animal in the service of mankind. Camel lives on eating corn and plants that other animals will not touch, its hump is a mass of fat that provides it with all the nutrients required, it can survive without drinking water for three weeks and its thick fur can resist very hot and very cold temperatures. With a heavy load, it can walk with ease on the sands of the Sahara and the Gobi Deserts and the snow-covered mountains of the Hindu Kush.

In short, this is an animal that is well adapted to climate. And, of course, it provides milk, wool and meat for the indigenous people and the pastoralists. In Afghanistan, the dried milk of camels, known as *quroot*, is in great demand for a rice dish called Kichiri Quroot. It fetches as high a price as the best Parmesan cheese of this beautiful country, Italy.

In closing my statement, I wish to reiterate that Afghanistan would give its full support to the International Year of Camelids and we wish to back up the statement that will be made by Bolivia. Afghanistan will also support the creation of a trust fund to promote the International Year of Camelids. In the creation of the International Year of Camelids, of course the criteria of ECOSOC will be applied.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

Egypt supports the proclamation of an International Year for Camelids in 2024.

In many developing countries and in particular in the Near East Region, camelids play a key role in improving food security and reducing poverty especially for the most vulnerable and the poorest segments of the population.

Organizing an International Year of Camelids can help attract attention to the special role of Camelids in fighting poverty, enhancing employment in the rural sector and achieving the SDGs.

In conclusion, we support the proposal of Bolivia and call for the Council to endorse it and to study means of supporting its proclamation.

Mr Shengyao TANG (China)

First of all, we thank the Bolivian Delegation for its statement on this proposal. China's Delegation agrees to establish the International Year of Camelids. I think nobody denies that camelids not only currently but historically have played a very important role in agriculture production. We all know that there is a cereal crowd in China. Through this cereal crowd, China, Europe and Africa have been interacting with each other with their agricultural products and other economic products.

At that time, there were no planes or trains or cars or any infrastructure in place. These activities that we have carried out over the history, they could be carried out because of the camels. Without camelids, such trade activities would be very much reduced or would be absolutely absent in some regions. Therefore, because of the social development, we have improved our infrastructure, our transport means have greatly improved. However, we should not deny the importance of camelids in agricultural production, trade and food.

The camelids cannot only provide milk, meat for the human societies but also are very important drought animals. In tackling climate change, camelids also play an extremely important role. We should also point out that camelids in reducing poverty and improving the incomes of farmers, camelids play a very important role.

Therefore, no matter how advanced the modern transport is, we should never forget the important role of camelids in human societies, especially in our agricultural production. Given this, the Chinese Delegation agrees to endorse this report and supports to establish the International Year of Camelids in 2024.

Sr. Luis SANCHEZ-GOMEZ CUQUERELLA (Observador del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia)

Realizo esta declaración en nombre del Gobierno del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, en seguimiento a lo acordado en la última reunión del Comité de Agricultura y el 155.º período de sesiones del Consejo de la FAO, como ha mencionado el representante de Etiopía, dada la importancia de los camélidos para

la seguridad alimentaria, la reducción de la pobreza y el mejoramiento de los medios de vida de millones de personas en 90 países.

Ambas instancias de la FAO respaldaron el principio de establecer un Año Internacional de los Camélidos. Bolivia desea agradecer a la Secretaría la preparación del documento CL 156/7 Rev.1, que recoge el conjunto de oportunidades y beneficios que podrían obtenerse con la declaración del Año Internacional de los Camélidos como contribución al cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y los objetivos de la FAO, e incluye el proyecto de resolución para el Año Internacional de los Camélidos para el endoso del Consejo y su remisión a la Conferencia.

Bolivia agradece también al GRULAC por su apoyo, y a otros países como Etiopía, Afganistán, Egipto y otros que están apoyando seriamente esa propuesta. Le agradecemos su confianza y su aliento.

El impulso a la cría y fomento de los camélidos coadyuvará a que esa especie animal siga jugando una función clave en la agricultura. Promoverá la consecución de los ODS, así como medidas a favor de las tres dimensiones del desarrollo sostenible: en lo económico, lo social y ambiental.

El Año Internacional de los Camélidos impactará positivamente al menos en 6 de los 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, especialmente los referidos a la lucha contra la pobreza extrema y poner fin al hambre y a lograr la seguridad alimentaria.

También el ODS 5, que aborda el tema de género y jóvenes, ambos sectores con alta participación en las labores pastoriles y en el aprovechamiento de la fibra natural de los camélidos. Los camélidos permiten producir alimentos de forma sostenible, dejando una menor huella ambiental y apostando al ODS 12. También al ODS 15, porque apoya la lucha contra la desertificación de suelos, y ayudaría a frenar la pérdida de la diversidad biológica.

El fomento de los camélidos puede generar una actividad económica más sostenible y más respetuosa con el medio ambiente, pues aportan menos emisiones de carbono (ODS13).

Este Año Internacional de los Camélidos representa una oportunidad para responder al pedido de los miembros del COAG para que la FAO intensifique su labor sobre los sistemas alimentarios sostenibles en relación con el Marco decenal de las Naciones Unidas de programas sobre modalidades de consumo y producción sostenibles.

Bolivia, respetuosa con la práctica habitual y la política establecida por la FAO sobre los años internacionales, acoge con agrado la selección del año 2024 para la celebración del Año Internacional de los Camélidos.

Bolivia, como ha mencionado ya el representante del GRULAC, se encuentra delineando una primera propuesta del Plan Maestro, según la cual prevé la organización de un Comité boliviano de coordinación a los fines de promover la coordinación de posibles alianzas y redes de cooperación. Posteriormente se crearían Comité regionales de coordinación entre las diferentes regiones de nuestro mundo que tienen o presentan camélidos en sus países.

Cómo ya se ha mencionado, Bolivia, en la reunión del COAG y posteriormente, comprometió tener actividades y presupuesto para mencionar en esta reunión. Por esa razón fue que aplazamos la reunión del 155º periodo de sesiones del Consejo y pedimos plantearla en esta reunión del 156º periodo de sesiones.

En un principio, ante el COAG, habíamos hablado del año 2018 pero que quede claro que esa fue la propuesta en COAG. Después para el 151.º periodo de sesiones del Consejo, Bolivia entendía plantear el año 2021 y así lo mencionó nuestro Presidente, oficialmente en una ocasión dijo: “Bolivia está preparada para realizar el Año Internacional de Camélidos el año 2021”. De hecho comenzamos a preparar las actividades para ese Consejo, el 155.º periodo de sesiones, con esa fecha, 2021.

No obstante, Bolivia con el consejo de otros países, acoge incluso con agrado la propuesta que hace nuestro Consejo de realizar el Año Internacional de los Camélidos en 2024. Por eso las actividades y el propuesto han tenido una ampliación en este momento, con respecto a lo que se había planteado en un principio.

Bolivia incluso va a realizar el año 2018 el Congreso Internacional de Camélidos que forma parte de actividades previas que ahora estamos planteando. Desde el 2018 hasta 2023 estaríamos organizando actividades previas. Se dedica un presupuesto importante a ello y Bolivia está dispuesta a aportar la mayor parte para garantizar que, independientemente de la rapidez con que consigamos otros aportes y creamos el fondo fiduciario, puedan haber actividades previas al año que estén ya preparando ese año, y que Bolivia garantice los recursos para que se realice.

Posteriormente, creemos que el fondo fiduciario y los aportes voluntarios no van a ser tan difíciles de conseguir. Prevemos que el monto que está planteando Bolivia para todos los actos y actividades preparatorias, actividades del año internacional y algunas actividades posteriores a ese año internacional, sería de 3 millones de USD.

Pensamos que Bolivia aportaría un total de 800.000 USD. 600.000 USD en las actividades previas, para garantizar que no falten recursos en esa actividad previa al año internacional, y 50.000 USD en las actividades posteriores, para asegurar al Consejo que eso se va a realizar.

Durante el Año Internacional calculamos que el costo puede ser de 2 millones y 200.000 USD, de los cuales Bolivia continuaría aportar otros 100.000 mínimamente.

En función a como se haya ido logrando durante la preparación del año, los aportes a ese fondo fiduciario, aportes voluntarios y otros aportes que consigamos de autoridades públicas y donantes privados, incluido también las organizaciones sociales de diferentes países que desean participar efusivamente en este año internacional.

Serán especialmente promovidas las modalidades de Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular. Asimismo las fuentes donantes interesados y las instituciones financieras de desarrollo regional e internacional interesadas serán bienvenidas.

Para finalizar, tenido en cuenta el llamado de la Agenda 2030 de que “nadie sea dejado atrás”, solicitamos el endoso del Año Internacional de los Camélidos por parte del Consejo y su remisión a la Conferencia.

Con respecto a la referencia que se ha hecho de que no puede la Conferencia tratar más de un tema, respetamos también eso y reconocemos como modalidad de la FAO, pero al mismo tiempo queremos hacer recuerdo de que en el año 2013 la Conferencia aprobó dos Años Internacionales: el Año Internacional de los Suelos y el Año Internacional de las Legumbres.

Por lo tanto, también a pesar de las normativas de FAO, somos todos suficientemente abiertos para acoger en cada momento el año más adecuado.

Mantenemos por supuesto la propuesta de 2024 como hemos dicho pero no nos contradecemos, quiero que tengamos en cuenta todos que el 2030 tampoco está ya lejos y la consecución de todos los objetivos que hemos planteado para el año 2030 posiblemente ameriten en más de una ocasión que esta normativa, esta costumbre de la FAO se pueda adaptar a esa necesidad, a esa urgencia de realizar actividades.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Bolivia, for that commitment and understanding that this will take place in 2024.

Is there any Member who wants to speak after Bolivia has clearly stated what they will be offering? I note that there is a strong support for this proposal, so I will make conclusions for Item 14.1, *International Year of Camelids*.

Item one, the Council examined the proposal to establish an International Year of Camelids and endorsed the draft resolution “International Year of Camelids” in 2024 *set out in the Appendix*, to be submitted to the 40th Session of the FAO Conference for adoption.

Item 14.2 Proposal to declare the annual observance of World Pulses Day**Point 14.2 Proposition visant à proclamer une Journée mondiale des légumineuses qui****Tema 14.2 Propuesta para establecer la celebración anual del Día Mundial de las Legumbres**
(CL 156/LIM/6)**CHAIRPERSON**

We now move on to sub-item 14.2, *Proposal to declare the annual observance of World Pulses Day*. The relevant document is CL 156/LIM/6.

I call on Ms Marcela Villarreal, Director of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division, to introduce this sub-item.

Ms Marcela Villarreal (Director, Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division)

The International Year of Pulses celebrated during 2016 met all of its objectives and we can say that it was a very successful international year. The closure of that Year took place in Burkina Faso and at that time there was a proposal to declare a World Pulses Day on 10 February. The objective of the World Day of Pulses is to continue raising awareness on the contribution of pulses to food security, nutrition, human health, soil health, climate change, adaptation and mitigation.

As we all know, and it was made very clear throughout the activities of the Year, pulses are very high in proteins and also contain numerous essential amino acids as well as vitamins, minerals and fibre. In addition, because of their very important nitrogen-fixing properties, they are considered to be very useful for sustainable soil management. They also have very low water and carbon footprints and therefore contribute to positive environmental impacts.

In order to build on the successful activities of the Year and continue promoting the importance of pulses as well as increasing the consumption and production, the International Day would be proclaimed on 10 February. So the guidance of the Council is sought regarding the establishment of the World Pulses Day to be observed on 10 February.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

Thank you. I would like to request the floor for Malta, who will make a statement on behalf of the EU and the 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU Montenegro, as well as San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We acknowledge that pulses play an important role in contributing to food security and nutrition as part of a sustainable agriculture and food system. Pulses have high nutritional qualities, as acknowledged in the case of the Mediterranean Diet - which since 2010 is considered by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Their consumption is beneficial to human health as part of a diverse and healthy diet.

Furthermore, the production of pulses provides livelihood for a significant section of the rural population, including those farming on marginal lands. This contributes to the improvement of food security and nutrition in those areas.

We also wish to highlight the environmental benefits of pulses. These benefits include their low water footprint, fertiliser use reduction, mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, preservation of biodiversity and their contribution to improving soil fertility. Pulses also play a role in climate change adaptation, in particular through the use of climate-resilient varieties.

We welcome the role the FAO has played in coordinating activities for the International Year of Pulses (IYP). We encourage governments to pay due attention to the pulses sector in their agricultural development policies. In addition, we would encourage FAO to provide assistance and policy advice to countries accordingly.

In this respect, we regret to note the absence of a legacy document of the IYP, requested by the International Steering Committee of IYP. We appreciate the proposal for a World Pulses Day, as it would provide continuity of the IYP activities.

Considering the importance of pulses and based on the successful conclusion of the international year, we have no objection to the World Pulses Day as proposed by Burkina Faso, provided it does not set a precedent and its activities are financed from voluntary contributions (extrabudgetary resources).

M. Dominique AWONO ESSAMA (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun souhaite que vous passiez la parole au Burkina Faso qui souhaite s'exprimer sur ce sujet au nom du Groupe Afrique.

Mme Josephine OUEDRAOGO GUISSOU (Observateur du Burkina Faso)

Je voudrais remercier le Conseil pour l'examen de ce point très important et, au risque de paraphraser la Directrice de la Division des partenariats, des activités du plaidoyer et du renforcement des capacités, vous savez que la cérémonie de clôture de l'Année internationale des légumineuses s'est tenue à Ouagadougou, au Burkina Faso, les 10 et 11 février 2016.

Cet événement, qui était réalisé à l'échelle globale, a rassemblé plus de 300 acteurs politiques et techniques et a connu la participation de la communauté internationale à travers des représentants des pays membres, d'organisations internationales et régionales, d'organisations non gouvernementales, d'organisations de la société civile et du secteur privé, et surtout, une forte mobilisation de groupements de producteurs agricoles, avec une très large participation des femmes rurales productrices de légumineuses.

La rencontre a donné lieu à la Déclaration de Ouagadougou, qui a été soutenue par tous les acteurs ayant participé à la cérémonie de clôture, et une large part a été réservée à un processus de contribution des producteurs et des organisations de la société civile.

La Déclaration de Ouagadougou a inscrit la proposition faite par le Burkina Faso de la célébration annuelle d'une Journée internationale des légumineuses, dont le principal objectif est de poursuivre la sensibilisation de l'opinion publique concernant la contribution des légumineuses à la sécurité alimentaire, la nutrition ainsi qu'à l'adaptation aux changements climatiques.

Je pense que les arguments qui ont prévalu à la proclamation d'une Année internationale des légumineuses, tellement importante parce qu'elle contribue à encourager les États à mener des activités intenses aux niveaux non seulement national mais aussi local, pour encourager la production de légumineuses, leur transformation et donc leur utilisation dans l'alimentation des enfants en milieu scolaire et des familles.

La sensibilisation se poursuivra à travers une Journée mondiale des légumineuses qui permettra de construire une plateforme de capitalisation des résultats de l'Année internationale des légumineuses 2016, proclamée par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies. Je crois que la mise en place effective de cette Journée mondiale forcera, comme l'a demandé la déléguée de l'Union européenne, à documenter le suivi de la mise en œuvre des résultats de l'Année internationale des légumineuses dans chaque pays. En conséquence, le Burkina Faso, au nom du Groupe Afrique, sollicite le Conseil pour qu'il examine la proposition visant à célébrer la Journée mondiale des légumineuses le 10 février et à dicter toutes les instructions qu'il jugera opportunes à cet effet. Nous demandons au Conseil de soumettre le projet de résolution à l'attention de la Conférence de la FAO pour approbation à sa 40^{ème} session.

Ms Yuri KUMAGAI (Japan)

Japan strongly recognizes the importance of pulses and the need to raise public awareness of the benefits of pulses.

If we may add, we would very much appreciate if the draft Conference resolution on the World Pulses Day includes some reference to financial arrangements for the implementation of this proposal that all additional expenses would be met through voluntary contributions to be in line with the principles laid down in the FAO policy on proclamation and implementation of international years.

Mr Eric ROBINSON (Canada)

I guess I have a bit of a conflict of interest. I had pulses for dinner last night and, in fact, had the leftovers for breakfast this morning. So I am speaking from the heart!

I think we would all agree that the International Year of Pulses was a tremendous success, and that the production and the consumption of pulses worldwide increased significantly well beyond the targets that we had set for the Year. It also put the spotlight on the importance of pulses in sustainable agriculture, particularly with respect to climate change, human health, ecosystem functionality and soil biology. These messages reached a very wide audience because of the UN engagement, considerably higher than our initial expectations.

The International Year was also an excellent example of what can be achieved when the FAO works in partnership with civil society and private sector. We think that more needs to be done. As one of the activities of the Year, a ten-year research strategy for pulse crops was prepared, involving over 100 researchers and it concluded that productivity and resilience should be improved and pulses further integrated into food systems. The UN Resolution that established the International Year affirmed the need to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses and to further sustainable agriculture.

Canada believes that that need is still there and that more needs to be done, and that is why we fully support the Ouagadougou Declaration, including its recommendation to proclaim 10 February as the International Day of Pulses.

Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)

Nuestra Delegación desea apoyar este Día Internacional de las Legumbres dado que Creemos que el es un año internacional fue muy exitoso y en ese sentido agradecemos el rol que ha tenido la FAO y su Secretariado.

Todos hemos aprendido mucho durante ese año y nos parece que este día sería importante, por lo que las legumbres significan también en la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición, en su bajo impacto en el cambio climático y también porque hay una dimensión social comunitaria en este tema.

En este sentido apoyamos este día, que se haga un día internacional en este caso en un día en febrero y también creemos que es muy importante que tuviéramos ese registro, ese documento de lo mucho que la FAO hizo, que sus Estados Miembros hicimos y lo que nuestras asociaciones también hicieron.

Ese registro nos va a ayudar también, no sola para el año internacional, si no para lo que podamos hacer de aquí en más, en cuanto a la visibilidad de lo que aprendimos y de lo que juntos podemos hacer y podemos seguir haciendo en un tema que, como bien decía al principio, tiene diferentes dimensiones. De modo tal que nuestra Delegación apoya esta iniciativa de Burkina Faso en nombre del Grupo africano y reitera el agradecimiento al Secretariado de la FAO por el hermoso trabajo que ha hecho en el tema de las legumbres.

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Mali)

Vu l'importance des légumineuses, riches en protéines et en fibres, elles constituent une alternative intéressante. On les appelle au Mali la viande du pauvre. C'est pourquoi le Mali soutient fortement la proposition du Burkina Faso, au nom du Groupe Afrique, de déclarer le 10 février Journée internationale des légumineuses.

Mr João Carlos DE SOUZA-GOMES (Brazil)

My delegation strongly supports the proposal of Burkina Faso to declare the annual observance of the World Pulses Day endorsed by the African Group. And we fully agree with the comments made by the distinguished Delegates of Argentina and Ghana in this respect.

We would also like to highlight the presentation of this proposal. Pulses are the cheapest source of protein, are fast growing and have less environmental impacts. They are important food crops for the food security of large proportion of populations, particularly in Latin America, Africa and Asia, where pulses are part of traditional diets and often grown by family farmers. The consumption of pulses should

be promoted in both developing and developed countries. There is enough room to increase production, consumption and trade of pulses while raising income generation for smallholders and family farmers. If the poor needs pulses to overcome hunger, others could have them to address different forms of malnutrition, including overweight and obesity. In this way, facilitating access to markets is key to take most of the social, environmental and economic benefits of pulses.

Our duty is to make pulses better known worldwide. Hence the importance of its proposal of the World Pulses Day to continue the legacy of the International Year. As part of the International Year Steering Committee, Brazil appreciates the work done by FAO on this matter and particularly the work done by the Secretariat. Therefore, I would like to reiterate that we endorsed entirely the proposal of Burkina Faso.

Ms Alaa Mazher BOKHARI (Pakistan)

I will be very brief without repeating what my respectable colleagues have already said. Pakistan, as the co-Chair of the International Year of Pulses, was pleased to note that there was a wide range of successful activities. We support the call to continue these activities and the declaration of a World Pulses Day.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Australia would like to support the call for an International Day of Pulses.

As a member of the Steering Committee for the International Year of Pulses, Australia can attest to the success of the International Year. We can also speak to the need for further attention on the contribution pulses can make to addressing global food security, nutrition, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation. As a valuable contributor to sustainable agriculture, pulses can have an important role in crop rotation systems, improving soil health and disease management in cereal crops. These are but a few of the many attributes they have.

Australia considers that the proposal for an International Day of Pulses is a good way to help continue the success and momentum of the International Year.

Mr Nii QUAYE KUMAH (Ghana)

I want to thank Mr Chairperson for your steady hand in steering the affairs of this Council. We know it is a tough job and we also acknowledge that you have done a great job so far. We want to thank Burkina Faso and the Africa Group for highlighting the importance of this proposal. We also appreciate the Secretariat and the previous speakers for their support.

When the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly declared the International Year of Pulses in 2016, it sought to heighten public awareness of nutritional benefits of pulses, as part of sustainable food production aimed at food security and nutrition. We believe this was greatly achieved with the various activities undertaken globally.

We further believe that the gains made during the celebrations need to be sustained, especially in line with achieving SDG 2. Indeed, the 155th Session of the Council endorsed the conclusions and the recommendations contained at the Report of the 25th Session of COAG noting the importance of building the momentum created by the International Year of Pulses in 2016 further work and work on promotion of pulses beyond 2016. This proposal for the declaration of the World Pulses Day on 10 February is in line with the endorsement by the Council and it has our full support.

Ms Marcela Villarreal (Director, Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division)

I must say that I did not have pulses for breakfast this morning, but I did have pulses for dinner last night. Very, very good!

I would like to just thank all of the Members for their appreciation of the work done for the International Year of Pulses. I also agree that it was a success and I agree that the success is due to having found a very efficient way of working together through a very strong governance mechanism for the International Year, which brought together all of the regions of the member countries, the private sector,

producer organizations, research organizations and everybody giving the guidance necessary for the international years.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the co-Chairs as well as all the Steering Committee Members for this very high success. In terms of the benefits of pulses, many of you have mentioned them, and I think we have not exhausted the list of benefits. We could go on and on. Personally, I think that in the closure ceremony, one aspect which is very important for FAO came up very clearly. They are a fundamental source of livelihood for rural women. And it was very clearly shown by the examples of Burkina Faso.

I also did not mention but this is an issue that has come out in different discussions, pulses are “*la viande du pauvre*”. Are they really the meat of the poor? Or as Brazil said, it is the cheapest source of protein. Well, it is true to a certain extent. On the other hand, it is true that it should become more and more the food of the rich as they have fundamental properties in avoiding or some kind of protection against cancer, cardiovascular disease, and also diabetes, which are basically the non-communicable diseases as the societies become richer. So it is across the spectrum that they have really important benefits.

Now, I would like to have a word on terms of funding. It is an issue that comes out. It is clearly written in the FAO policy - funding for international years and now extension international days, come from extra budgetary sources. This worked very, very well in the whole International Year, where we brought in funding exclusively from extra budgetary sources. In terms of several of your requests at the impact document of the year, the impact document will be presented to the Conference. It is already scheduled.

The document is already in preparation and asks for the legacy document I am happy to say that we do have a legacy document. It will be discussed at an extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee scheduled on 11 May. And as we are discussing that the legacy of the year, it will not only be the International Day, but we have a number of activities programmed throughout the year. Several member countries have requested the Director-General to extend the year.

That was not possible because of the policy itself. Although according to your requests during the 155th Session of the Council, and your request at this Session, we have a number of activities that are within the FAO regular activities in order to highlight the role of pulses, and a number of other activities that I will not be presenting here. I will present that next Friday.

We hope we will discuss it with the Steering Committee at the next meeting. Last point on the family farming raised by Brazil, I think that with pulses, we have a brilliant example of how we can bring together the Years of Family Farming, Soils and then Pulses. We integrate that view and by integrating that view, I think we will have maximum impact.

Thank you very much to all, for the tremendous support throughout the year and now hopefully also in the International Day.

CHAIRPERSON

I see there is no objection to the observance of the World Pulses Day, so my conclusions for sub-item 14.2 are as follows:

The Council examined the proposal to declare the annual observance of World Pulses Day on 10 February and endorsed the draft resolution, set out in *Appendix*, to be submitted to the 40th Session of the FAO Conference for adoption. Thank you.

Item 10 Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference (including Provisional Timetable)**Point 10 Organisation de la quarantième session de la Conférence (y compris le calendrier provisoire)****Tema 10 Disposiciones para el 40.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia (incluido el programa provisional)***(CL 156/8 Rev.1)***CHAIRPERSON**

We proceed with item 10, *Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference (including Provisional Timetable)*. The document before Council is CL 156/8 Rev.1.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council at its 155th Session in December 2016 agreed that:

- the theme of the General Debate of the Conference be “Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security”;
- the Honourable Emmanuel F. Piñol, Secretary of Agriculture of the Philippines be nominated as Chairperson of the Conference;
- the Chairperson of Commission I be a representative of a country from the G77 and China Group, and the Chairperson of Commission II be from a country not within the G77 and China Group.

Today Council is invited to:

- Adopt the tentative timetable of the 40th Session of the Conference; and
- Propose candidates for Officers of the Conference as follows: Chairperson of the Conference; Chairperson of Commission I; Chairperson of Commission II; three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference; seven elected members of the General Committee; and nine members of the Credentials Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

I suggest we begin by considering the draft Provisional Timetable proposed for the Conference.

Does Council wish to approve the Provisional Timetable for the 40th Session of Conference contained in Appendix A of document CL 156/8 Rev.1?

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

The theme of the Conference is “*Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security*”. I would like to indicate that having looked very closely at the proposed Agenda, I was wondering where the specific concerns of the SIDS would be addressed in this context?

Trinidad and Tobago raises this particular issue not only on behalf of the 15 members of the CARICOM sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean, but also on behalf of all Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

We endorse and welcome the support that the Organization has provided to the SIDS. However, we draw your attention to the fact that FAO was invited to facilitate the development of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS, as part of the Samoa Pathway 2014. The Organization has been in a very advanced process of preparing the Global Action Programme.

This Programme has been based on a series of high-level interactions and consultative workshops over the last two years. It is a subject of e-consultations and very intensive work with Permanent Representatives that have taken place in New York, Rome and other parts of Europe.

There was a discussion with regional stakeholders in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, and more activities are planned in the future. We are also aware that the Organization has set up a Trust Fund to support this Global Action Programme and that the Government of Italy has pledged USD one million.

We also note that within the timeframe provided for the Conference in early July, a high-level side event on SIDS and their challenges is proposed.

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to emphasize the importance of raising the attention to the challenges that SIDS are facing. Recognizing the theme of this Conference and the fact that the gap which is in advanced preparation can be transformational in terms of improving food security and nutrition in all SIDS member countries, where the problems are stark and serious. We believe that over time more resources and relevant programmes would need to be placed. Therefore, we are inviting for the consideration of more innovative approaches and extra resources that may be required.

Trinidad and Tobago proposes that the issue of SIDS should graduate from a side event, which might compete with many other activities that take place out of the normal hours of debates during the Conference. In order to emphasize the challenges of SIDS within the Session which frame the work of the Organization. We are saying that the issue should graduate from or be complemented by a substantive item on the Agenda of the 40th Session of Conference.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

Korea would like to propose that the development and operational plan of the World Fisheries University pilot program, which has been shown to be pursued and operated by the Korean and FAO Secretariat, be an independent Agenda Item for the 40th Session of the Conference.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

First of all, we do acknowledge the importance of the climate change affects to the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). I believe that the statement made by Trinidad and Tobago in this respect merits our consideration.

I would like to propose that these concerns be addressed under Item 9, *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*, which will be discussed at the Plenary given that the topic and the Conference itself is focused on climate change aspects. I am sure that interventions under Item 9 will address the issue of climate change as it affects on SIDS.

I also would like to make a comment with regard to the side event on gender that we decided to hold during the Conference. I do not see it in the schedule of the Conference. I know we are considering a proposal for that side event to take place on Wednesday evening, 5 July. I think it would be more convenient given that this special event is not a side event that will be included in the schedule of the Conference. My delegation wishes to propose for consideration of the Council to move the side event from an evening session to a lunch break session, perhaps on the same day - Wednesday 5 July, so participants will be more motivated to take part in the discussions.

Moreover, it would be wise if this special event be held in the same hall as the discussions under the Item 9 are taking place, so that we would not waste time in moving between rooms. My suggestion is that the special event on gender be included in the schedule for the Conference that we are considering.

Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)

Like others, including Trinidad and Tobago we would like to draw your attention to the ongoing work on food security and nutrition in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Under the SAMOA Pathway, FAO was invited to facilitate the development of a global action plan on food security and nutrition. The action plan aims to implement and align regional, global, national and community-level strategies and plans within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

The Southwest Pacific sub-region includes many SIDS as you know. On behalf of the region, Australia would like to draw your attention to the preparations of SIDS Member States and other partners to endorse this action programme in the margins of the 40th Session of the Conference as Trinidad and Tobago referred to earlier.

SIDS are a distinct group of countries and territories in which global challenges take on a unique form as they do in the case of climate change and nutrition. Such challenges need to be addressed in specific ways to achieve results and help SIDS meet their sustainable development agenda targets. The SAMOA

Pathway can play an important part, as of course FAO can more generally. We look forward to continued support of FAO in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in SIDS.

Mr Eric ROBINSON (Canada)

Canada would just like to support the comments made by our colleague from Brazil, that the special event on gender should be held during the lunch break and not in the evening, ideally in the same room. So we can save time on moving people. In case that we cannot have the event on gender in the same room, we would encourage the Secretariat to consider extending the lunch break by 30 minutes. It will allow the delegates to move to the special event, so that it is given the full attention that it deserves.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I would like to support the comments made by Brazil.

Ms. Daniela ROTONDARO (San Marino)

We would like to support the comments made by Brazil and the options proposed by Canada.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Chile quiere apoyar a Canadá y a Brasil.

Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)

En el mismo sentido que la distinguida Delegación de Chile, apoyamos la propuesta de la colega de la Delegación de Brasil en el tema de género por la necesidad de visibilizarlo y de garantizar la participación en el mismo. También apoyamos la declaración de la Delegación de Trinidad y Tobago en nombre de los países del CARICOM (Comunidad del Caribe) para que esta cuestión sea también atendida debidamente durante la Conferencia.

Mr Noel PADRE (Philippines)

We would like to support the proposal made by Brazil with regard to the special event on gender and the options put forth by Canada in this regard.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom)

I would like to request the floor for Malta who will make a statement on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

The EU and its 28 Member States supports the proposal made by Brazil.

Sra. Maria de los Ángeles GÓMES AGUILAR (México)

La delegación de México aprueba la propuesta de Brasil para llevar a cabo este evento especial de género en cualquier forma posible, pero siempre que se lleve a cabo durante el evento.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We have heard the support from many countries in regards to the proposals for this document, as well as a special event on gender issues. I also recall that we had the same proposals for the last session of the Council and we had discussions under your leadership on the specific format.

So to this end, I have a question for the Secretariat: could you please tell us how legitimate it is to include a special event on gender issues in this document considering that this event is not a part of the Conference agenda that was confirmed at the last session of the Council.

I do understand what Brazil has said that it is a special event, not a parallel event. However, the status of it is not simple in this system. I would like to repeat my question. So, how correct would it be to include this event in the list of events since this is not part of the official Conference agenda as it was approved at the Council.

Mme Adjiri Emilienne AGOSSA (Bénin)

Le Bénin souhaite également soutenir la proposition qui consiste à faire de l'événement sur la parité hommes-femmes une réussite en prenant les dispositions nécessaires pour permettre à tous les intéressés de participer comme il se doit à cet événement.

Mme Sonia Cristina MARTINS (Observateur de Cabo Verde)

Tout d'abord, nous voulons vous féliciter pour la façon dont vous conduisez les travaux de cette session du Conseil. Ensuite, nous soutenons la proposition faite par Trinité-et-Tobago en tant que pays insulaire en développement. Nous assurons notre disponibilité et voulons aussi lancer un appel à la FAO pour appuyer tous les États insulaires pour que ce thème soit inclus dans le calendrier des travaux de la Conférence de la FAO, prévue au mois de juillet prochain.

CHAIRPERSON

While the Secretariat is trying to figure out, let me give you my understanding here.

Regarding the issue on SIDS which was proposed by Trinidad and Tobago, I fully understand you and I fully understand the issue because this has always been at our Council sessions. I can say Australia and New Zealand have been all out to bring up this special cases which are taking place in the Pacific and in particular, how they are impacted, very badly impacted by climate change. So this is my understanding.

This is very important and we have had it in several forums. And here we are going to have agenda item 9, that is the *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*, and there is this theme of climate change, agriculture and food security. I hope when we get the reply from the Secretariat, we will see how it can be accommodated there.

I also have a good understanding of Brazil's proposal. This is an issue which was discussed at the last session of the Council and it was brought to my attention and I was requested to make informal consultations with the regional groups and we have done it. We have continued to have consultations and even we have chosen to have its format, how to be undertaken. And really we will continue to have another meeting on 6 June.

What is being put by Brazil is not trying to cut short the process that we have started, but it is more looking into the timetable, let us have this event at lunch break on Wednesday. It was proposed, if possible, in case time does not allow. In case there is a need for extension, than you can extend further because there will not be any other meetings.

A way out can be found if 20 or 30 minutes can be found for extension. I am not ruling anything out, but it is upon you Members to agree, to decide after listening to the Secretariat, but that is my understanding. Regarding the Republic of Korea, I will put it to the Legal Counsel to respond.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I wish to make some observations on the proposal of the representative of the Republic of Korea to have an item on the Provisional Agenda of the Conference on the question of the pilot phase for the establishment of a Fisheries University.

The Council is being now, in accordance with the Basic Texts and, more specifically, the General Rules of the Organization, called upon to make proposals for the Provisional Agenda of the Conference. It is a function that the Council has exercised for many years and it is fully within the authority of the Council to propose any items to be added to the Provisional Agenda.

I wanted to present the views of the FAO Secretariat on this matter and on the opportunity of having an item on this topic on the provisional agenda at this stage.

As you know, this question of the Fisheries University raised much debate at the last session of the Committee on Fisheries. The Organization has expressed some concerns at this initiative, also in light of its capacity to implement effectively this project, and in light of its mandate, which does not foresee these types of activities. Eventually the Director-General accepted to consider to initiate a trial period.

This pilot phase has not yet started, and is due to start hopefully shortly. The process that will be followed for the assessment of this initiative was recorded in a memorandum of understanding which recognized that there would be a trial period now, and there would be a report on the outcome of this pilot phase at the next session of the Conference in 2019 only. There would be no involvement of any Governing Body now; this was not foreseen.

We are now in a situation where the arrangements for the trial period have not yet been concluded and have not yet been signed. The pilot phase will start after the signature of the memorandum of understanding. We would expect to be able, at the Secretariat level, to make an assessment of this experience prior to any reporting to the Governing Bodies of FAO and to the Conference.

So we would consider that a review of the matter by the Conference in July, within two months, would be not only premature, but it would also be incompatible with the spirit of this phase and of this trial period, because we believe that this trial period should be allowed to follow its course. In due course, we will report to the Conference. An intergovernmental process of review at this stage would be premature and not in line with agreements reached.

These are the views of the Secretariat on this matter. Of course, it is open to the Council to take the decision that it deems fit, but it is very important to have the position of the FAO Secretariat clearly on record.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

I fully acknowledge the comment of the Legal Counsel. However, the reason why we proposed this item as independent for the 40th Session is mainly because, as you know, the Republic of Korea proposed the establishment of a World Fisheries University under FAO to realize sustainable fisheries and food security in the global talent in the fisheries sector.

That has been acknowledged after having a serious consultation with the FAO Secretariat. Korea announced that this revised proposal at the 155th Session of the Council to operate the pilot programme for two years starting from 2017 and gained approval for the establishment of the World Fisheries University based on the outcome of the pilot programme in 2019 during the 41st Conference.

The Members hailed Korea's revised proposal during the 32nd COFI and recommended Korea and the Secretariat to cooperate on the fisheries pilot programme. Korea reported it to the 155th Session of the Council.

Therefore, it is more appropriate to reflect the pilot programme as an independent agenda item for the 40th Session. The comment made by the Legal Counsel about the staging and assessment and the mandate should be given to first, we fully acknowledge that. However, we just simply report and share the information, the progress and then reflection during the pilot programme process on the World Fisheries University. There was nothing more than that.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on what has been put forward to the Council by Korea and on what you heard from the Legal Counsel?

As far as I remember during the 155th Session of the Council, Korea presented the status. That was only for information, and the Council did not make a decision on that. Despite that, we are having a discussion regarding the Agenda of the Conference. This decision never came up.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

I take it you are asking for the Council to speak so it is not only for the Secretariat and you, Chair, to rule on this. I have to say from the beginning, you might remember, we have always been and we are supporter of that.

In the end we will have this university in place in whatever format fits the Organization, but I also say and I repeat it here, I think that it is for Members to follow what is already into action then, between the Republic of Korea and FAO in order to take it as an example and at the same time have a general discussion, how does Council and we Members want FAO to work with academia. And this is

complicated and cannot be separated from this, which I hope will be an experiment and will lead to some basic information: what are the opportunities, what are the challenges to take when FAO wants to work with academia.

It is not as simple as this. And I think it is premature to start to flag a project that is just starting in a Conference, just to be honest, if you like my view from the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

As I said, listen to what the Secretariat has to respond to, and it is up to the Council Members to decide to give guidance and I will conclude on what you agreed. My conclusions are a summary of what we agreed to. I will not dictate anything. So I was trying to explain how it started. It went through the Governing Bodies and, at the 155th Session of the Council it was agreed under *Any Other Matters* that the Republic of Korea could give the status and they gave the status. And we never introduced it.

There was no discussion regarding this issue to be on the agenda of the Conference and knowing that we had agreed to this pilot project and this will go again through the normal Governing Bodies and later to be reported to the Conference in 2019. That is what I was trying to explain. So, based on my explanation, then you can make your judgment. Thank you for offering that explanation. And I remember, in the previous discussion, you wanted to say that this is a very complicated matter, because someone noted the World Fisheries University, but we shall open up.

So, Members, please we have to decide on this proposal that has been put by the Republic of Korea. Brazil, you have the floor, please.

Mr Antonio Otavio SA RICARTE (Brazil)

On this topic, you know that I share the opinion expressed by my colleague from Iceland that this initiative by Korea offers us an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between the Organization and academia, and we were very supportive of the understanding that the Republic of Korea and the Secretariat would start a pilot experiment that would lead to reflection on this topic at the 41st FAO Conference.

We already have this item on the agenda of the Conference which gives us enough time to develop this reflection within the Council and its advisory bodies. This opportunity that Korea has offered us to create within the Organization a framework under which the relationship between the Organization and academia will better function certainly will be very fruitful and we need to ponder on it carefully to prepare the deliberations at the 41st Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

So what I have from the Council is that it will not be an appropriate time for Korea to present this ongoing process, which has not even started is what I have heard, to the Conference. That is my understanding. So if I do not see anybody speaking, then that is what I have seen, then I will take your silence to mean that it is premature to have this issue on the agenda of the Conference.

We move on the issue to Trinidad and Tobago.

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

I want to provide some comments to Trinidad and Tobago relating to the place of the SIDS (Small Island Developing States) in the agenda of the Conference. We believe that SIDS is included in this agenda. Not specifically any point regarding SIDS but the theme of the Conference is climate change, agriculture and food security.

We will be sure that in presenting the theme to have a special mention on the challenge of the theme linked to the SIDS, more specifically on the vulnerabilities, how climate change impacts the SIDS and the challenge of food security in the SIDS, which we know brings obesity and disease and other specificities to the SIDS. We have also other opportunities under item 14, *Progress report on implementation of the ICN2*. We believe, as I mentioned, nutrition is one of the challenges in the SIDS, and also in item 24, *Medium Term Plan*.

Also in the report of the Regional Conference, I am sure SIDS will be mentioned because it was part of the discussion on Africa, Latin America and Caribbean regions. We are also organizing a side event with the SIDS linked to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

In the Pathway, the chapter on the action plan on food security is under the leadership of FAO. We have already prepared and presented the action plan. We had an online discussion with Member States and we expect to endorse the global action plan during a side event taking place during the Conference.

We have invited the President of Palau to be our keynote speaker. We expect to have him and other ministers. We count on you to convince your peers and SIDS Member States, especially in your region, to join us in the side event which will be very important in the endorsement of this very important action plan.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, I think it is now well understood and we hope that the delegation which will be coming to the Conference will be introducing this when it comes to item 9 on the Conference agenda. Thank you for your understanding. Now we come to the timetable regarding the agenda.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you for the question raised by Russia, I believe indeed that this subject was discussed at length at the last session of Council. We explained then that the timetable deals with agenda items. The Council determined at that time that gender would be the subject of a special event during the Conference.

We heard the proposal of Brazil this morning as captured by the Independent Chairperson of the Council. So there is no problem with having the special event at lunch time on Wednesday for a full two hours. If Members prefer to have it in the Plenary hall, that can be accommodated. I do not think there is any further issue here to be discussed by the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

The Provisional Timetable for the 40th Session of the Conference is approved and will be published on the Conference web page.

I now pass the floor to Mr Gagnon to inform us of the nominations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I want to thank Members for the collective effort that was made to come up with the nominations. Because of the new calendar of Governing Body meetings, proposals for nominations are requested 60 days prior to the Conference. Thank you for your support in that regard.

I will now read the names that we have received so far. There is only one or two missing and we will make sure that lists are completed before we adopt the report on Friday.

For the office of Vice-Chairperson of the Conference we have received the following nominations:

His Excellency Aziz Akhannouch, Minister for Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests of Morocco;

Mr Thomas Duffy, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to FAO.

We are missing the third nomination and we will provide the name on Friday.

For Chairperson of Commission I, we received a nomination by Oman and the name remains to be confirmed.

For Chairperson of Commission II we have His Excellency Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen of the Netherlands.

We have the seven Members of the General Committee and I will read them in alphabetical order: Australia, Egypt, Malaysia, Peru, San Marino, Uganda, and the United States of America.

For the nine Members of the Credentials Committee we have: Austria, Canada, Cuba, Guinea, Indonesia, Jordan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, and San Marino.

CHAIRPERSON

I think there are no objections on the nominations that have been made. Then I move on to my conclusions on item 10, *Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference*.

1. The Council agreed to submit the Provisional Timetable set out in CL 156/8 Rev.1 to the Conference for approval.
2. The Council agreed to propose the deadline of 12.00 hours on Tuesday 4 July 2017 for receipt of nominations for Council membership (for the periods July 2017 to June 2020 and July 2018 to June 2021).
- 3 In accordance with Rule XXIV.5 (b) of the GRO, the Council noted that consultations had taken place among delegations and that there was consensus on nominating The Honourable Emmanuel F. Piñol, Secretary for Agriculture of the Philippines, as Chairperson of the Conference.
4. The Council agreed to submit to the Conference the following nominations for the office of Vice-Chairperson of the Conference: His Excellency Aziz Akhannouch, Minister for Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests of Morocco; Mr Thomas Duffy, Chargé d'Affaires, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to FAO. The third nomination to be included later.
5. The Council agreed to submit to the Conference the following nominations for the Chairpersons of Commissions I and II.

Chairperson of Commission I will be from Oman, the name to be submitted later.

Chairperson of Commission II: the Netherlands, His Excellency Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen.

6. In accordance with Rule XXIV.5(b) GRO, the Council agreed to put the following nominations before the Conference: Australia, Egypt, Malaysia, Peru, San Marino, Uganda, and the United States of America.
7. In accordance with Rule XXIV.5(b) GRO, the Council agreed to put the following nominations before the Conference: Austria, Canada, Cuba, Guinea, Indonesia, Jordan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, and San Marino.

Thank you. Item 10 is concluded.

I would like to announce that I have been informed by the Secretariat that a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies has requested to address this session of Council.

Should the Council be in agreement, this statement will be made at the end of this morning meeting under Item 17, *Any other matters*.

Does that meet your agreement?

Thank you. I see no objection to this request, so the Staff Bodies will be addressing the Council this morning under Item 17, *Any other matters*.

**Item 12 Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 155th Session of the Council
(5-9 December 2016)**

**Point 12 Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent cinquante-cinquième session
(5-9 décembre 2016)**

Tema 12 Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 155.º período de sesiones (5-9 de diciembre de 2016)

(CL 156/LIM/3)

CHAIRPERSON

We now turn our attention to item 12, *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 155th Session of the Council*. The relevant document is CL 156/LIM/3.

As foreseen in the Multi-year Programme of Work, the Council is invited to note information on the implementation of decisions taken at its 155th Session in December 2016 and includes updates on decisions taken at the 154th Session of Council (May-June 2016) and the 153rd Session in November 2015.

I would like to make a presentation with regard to decision 13. As you may recall, the Council at its 155th Session held in Rome in December 2016, and after much debate at the CCLM and the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, examined the issue of the procedures for the appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies.

The Council noted that, under decisions of the Conference and provisions of some treaties establishing bodies under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution, the Secretaries are appointed by the Director-General with the approval of the bodies concerned.

The Council acknowledged the need to balance the functional autonomy of Article XIV bodies with the responsibilities borne by the Organization for such bodies, and stressed the urgency of filling vacant positions of Secretaries of two Article XIV bodies, namely the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (The Treaty).

The Council agreed on the following process to be followed:

With immediate effect, the Independent Chairperson of the Council and the FAO Secretariat would consult with the concerned Article XIV bodies with a view to developing a proposal on procedures for the appointment of Secretaries of concerned Article XIV bodies acceptable to the Bodies and to be submitted to the FAO Council by the end of 2018.

Also with immediate effect, on an exceptional basis and without setting any precedent, the Director-General would issue Vacancy Announcements for the appointment of the two Secretaries of the IOTC and The Treaty.

This would follow standard procedures for the appointment of FAO Senior Staff, with inclusion of two representatives of Members, to be decided by the Bodies, in interview panels and subsequent referral by the Director-General of one candidate to the Bodies for approval at their next session.

The Secretaries appointed under this latter procedure would be nominated for two years, subject to confirmation by the concerned body of the appointment at the end of that period.

I wish to inform the Council that both the FAO Secretariat and myself took steps to implement these decisions.

On 25 January 2017 I wrote a letter to the Chairpersons of the IOTC and The Treaty informing them in much detail of the decisions of the Council.

On 28 February 2017 I wrote another detailed letter to the Chairperson of The Treaty. In this letter, I reminded the Chairperson of the Governing Body of The Treaty of the issue of the long term procedure for the appointment of the Secretary. I proposed to the Chairperson of the Governing Body of The Treaty that the long term procedure could be based on the interim, *ad hoc*, exceptional procedure and invited him to discuss the matter with the membership.

On Thursday 2 March 2017, I attended, together with the Legal Counsel, a meeting of the Bureau of the Governing Body of The Treaty in Oslo. In the course of this meeting we provided information on the *ad hoc* procedure. On 29 March 2017, I met with the Chairpersons of the IOTC and discussed the matter, in particular on the way forward. As a follow-up to our meeting, I intend to meet with IOTC Members in late May 2017 and elaborate on the long term procedure.

I wish to take advantage of this presentation, to say that the FAO Secretariat has made major progress on the implementation of the *ad hoc* procedure.

In both cases, Vacancy Announcements were issued immediately after the last session of the Council which were open for a period of six weeks. The selection process for the two positions took place as planned.

As regards the IOTC, a panel carried out twelve interviews and proposed a candidate to the Director-General. The Director-General has selected some two weeks ago a candidate who will be proposed to the forthcoming session of the IOTC, due to be held from 22 to 27 May 2017, for confirmation.

Similarly, following a selection and interview process, a short-list of qualified candidates was recently submitted to the Director-General for the position of Secretary of the Governing Body of The Treaty.

As it was decided by Council, two representatives of each of the respective Governing Bodies participated in the interview panel

In conclusion, I am pleased to report to Council Members that substantial progress has been achieved in the implementation of the decisions of the Council at its last session in December 2016, in particular the immediate actions requested by the Council.

The floor is now open to delegations who wish to speak on the status report set out in the Council document under consideration.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I wanted to congratulate you and the Secretariat, and also to thank you personally, for your diligent efforts to carry out the decision by this Council with regard to Article XIV bodies.

I am glad that the bureau of the plant treaty accepted the terms of the decision of the Council in the meeting that we had with you, because I was there as vice-president in Oslo. We endorsed the procedure that would lead to the eventual appointment of a new secretary for the Treaty.

It was also the conclusion of our discussions with you that the Secretariat would propose a mechanism for the appointment of secretary to the plant treaty for the future for consideration by the Governing Body next October/November in its meeting in Kigali. So we are looking forward to receive well in advance a document that would base the discussions to be held in the governing body meeting in Kigali. We are also looking forward to learning what will be the nomination proposed by the Director-General for confirmation at that meeting.

So we can only congratulate ourselves as Council members, as well as state parties to the plant treaty, for the very diligent and efficient way in which this question was dealt with and hope for its best outcome and hope that this problem will not present itself in the future.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NDONG NCHAMA (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial hace esta intervención conjuntamente y en nombre de los países del Grupo Africano, los cuales manifiestan su satisfacción por la información que figura en el documento que se nos acaba de presentar.

Felicitamos la FAO por haber cumplido 17 de las 26 decisiones adoptadas en 155.º período de Sesiones del Consejo de la FAO celebrado del 5 al 9 de diciembre de 2016, lo que representa un porcentaje elevado de decisiones cumplidas especialmente si se tiene en cuenta que 8 de las 26 están en la fase de ejecución, y que algunas de ellas llegarán a su conclusión en los próximos años, sin olvidar que algunas presentan ciertas controversias y otras son nuevas iniciativas (tales como la propuesta sobre el procedimiento para el nombramiento de los Secretarios de los Órganos Rectores según el Artículo 14, la celebración de reuniones anuales de los Órganos Rectores de las tres Agencias de Naciones Unidas

con sede en Roma, así como la presentación todos los años de un informe sobre la colaboración entre dichas agencias).

Todo esto hace que reconozcamos que algunas de estas decisiones no son fáciles de concluir. Por último, un Grupo Africano quiere solicitar a la FAO la realización de un tema transversal relacionado con la presentación por parte de la FAO de una evaluación acerca su labor en la cuestión de género, la cual debe someterse a la consideración de la Conferencia de la FAO para el año 2019. Dicho esto, el Grupo Africano toma nota de la información presentada en ese documento por las razones antes descritas.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. My conclusions on this agenda item are as follows:

1. The Council took note of the status of implementation of decisions taken at its 155th Session (from 5 to 9 December 2016), 154th Session (from 30 May to 3 June 2016) and the 153rd Session (from 30 November to 4 December 2015).
2. The Council took note of the update provided by the Independent Chairperson of the Council regarding the procedure of selection of secretaries of the Article XIV bodies.

Item 17 Any Other Matters

Point 17 Questions diverses

Tema 17 Asuntos varios

CHAIRPERSON

We can now move on to the last item on the agenda, *Any other matters*.

As announced on Monday, the Republic of Korea will take the floor on the World Fisheries University, followed by a statement to the Council on behalf of the Staff Representative Bodies.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

I am glad to have this opportunity to address you on the development of the World Fishery University pilot programme and its operational plan.

As you remember, Korea proposed the establishment of the World Fishery University under the FAO to realize the sustainable fisheries and food security by nurturing the global talents in the fisheries sector.

After having a series of consultations with the FAO Secretariat, Korea announced the revised proposal at the 155th Session of the Council to operate the pilot programme for two years starting from 2017, and gained the approval for the establishment of the World Fisheries University based on the outcome of the pilot programme to be presented in 2019 at the 41st Session of the Conference.

The Members hailed Korea's revised proposal during the 32nd Session of COFI and recommended Korea and the Secretariat to cooperate on the pilot programme. Korea reported it to the 155th Session of the Council.

Korea and FAO had a number of meetings since August 2016 to conclude the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the World Fisheries University pilot programme. After accepting the request of FAO and securing USD 1.37 million as the 2017 budget for the programme operation and the personnel expenses for FAO staff, Korea asked FAO to conclude the MoU.

On 20 April FAO Secretariat gave the final version of the MoU and the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries signed the document and sent it to the FAO Secretariat.

The Ministry of Fisheries believed that it would be able to conclude the MoU in order to proceed with the programme. After concluding the MoU, the Ministry of Fisheries and FAO Secretariat will have an in-depth discussion regarding the pilot programme.

I would like to give you some detailed explanation on the pilot programme. It is a 18-months programme that provides education to the 30 students from developing countries for three semesters. The programme consists of the three major aquaculture technologies, fishery resources management and

social science. The Korean Government will cover all costs not only for the students, but also for the FAO staff, so it will not have any kind of impact on the FAO regular budget.

Furthermore, to support the activities of FAO, Korea will provide the privilege and immunity according to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities for the Specialized Agencies.

The most important issue regarding the pilot programme is related to the student requirements. As you are aware, it takes at least two months for the student requirements and another two months for students to prepare their participation in the programme, and of course for Korea to prepare all facilities, including support to those students. If we fail to conclude the MoU and hold the steering committee before the first week of May, it will be very difficult for Korea to recruit the students and start the programme in September as planned and recommended.

This would take a significant toll on numerous countries. It would be good to come up with measures to avoid this kind of situation. Therefore, Korea would like to ask the FAO Secretariat to sign the MoU, to hold the steering committee as soon as possible, taking into consideration the urgency in recruiting students

Korea would like to share the draft version of the guidelines for applicants and the plans for the World Fisheries University pilot programme with the Members and start the recruitment of students in May.

Korea wishes for a smooth operation of the World Fisheries University pilot programme and would like to ask for two things for the Council.

First, I would like to ask the Council to call on the FAO Secretariat for an immediate conclusion of the MoU and to proceed with the pilot programme without any hitches. Second, Korea would share the draft guidelines for the applicants and information regarding the World Fisheries University pilot programme with Member States as soon as possible. So I would ask that all Members share this information with the students in your countries to make sure that talented students can apply to this programme during May or June.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the FAO Secretariat for its support for the establishment of the World Fisheries University and to all the FAO Members for their keen interest and support for Korea's proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for this information.

Item 13 Provisional Agenda for the 157th Session of the Council (10 July 2017)

Point 13 Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent cinquante-septième session du Conseil (10 juillet 2017)

Tema 13 Programa provisional del 157.º período de sesiones del Consejo (10 de julio de 2017) (CL 156/INF/2)

CHAIRPERSON

Before we listen to the statement of the Staff Bodies, I wish to take you back to an omission which I want to correct. We now take up item 13, *Provisional Agenda for the 157th Session of the Council*, which will take place on 10 July 2017, contained in document CL 156/INF/2.

It is a one-day Council session and, as you know, it will mainly focus on the election of the Chairpersons and Members of the Council Committees.

I would like to remind you that, during the last one-day Council session, after the elections, Members were complaining bitterly that there was no gender balance among the elected members. So I am reminding you that this is in your hands, it is you who caused gender imbalance. This time, please take this into consideration when you submit your nominations.

I do not see anybody who wants to speak on this agenda item. Let me conclude on this item by saying that the Council endorsed the Provisional Agenda of its 157th Session which will take place on 10 July 2017.

Item 17 Any Other Matters (continued)**Point 17 Questions diverses (suite)****Tema 17 Asuntos varios (continuación)****CHAIRPERSON**

I now invite Ms Elena Rotondo, General Secretary *ad interim* of the Union of General Service Staff on behalf of the FAO Staff Representative Bodies to deliver the statement.

Ms Elena ROTONDO (General Secretary a.i., Union of General Service Staff)

Let us, first of all, thank the Director-General for authorizing the Staff Representative Bodies (SRBs) to address you today. It is an honour for us to be able to regularly speak before the Council and share with you the views and concerns of the staff we represent. And it is only fitting that it be so, for communication, dialogue and cooperation among the main stakeholders are essential to a healthy and well-functioning Organization.

Challenging times lay ahead of us both for our immediate beneficiaries and vis-à-vis the global arena and the United Nations system. At a time when the world may once again face famine and continued civil strife, the role of the United Nations is ever more important, yet its sustainability and funding are put into question by many.

In 2007, an Independent External Evaluation of FAO highlighted that “*the many talented staff with a deep commitment to the mission of the Organization, are stifled by fragmented structures and rigidly centralized management systems*”. After 10 years of persistent reform, rigidity has been superseded by extremely flexible working environments. And although decentralization has been among our highest internal priorities, its implementation has presented many difficulties both operationally and in programme delivery.

It is true to say that while we moved to a more geographically decentralized structure, decision-making processes have become increasingly centralized. Delegation of authority in domains such as Human Resources have all but disappeared and the “flexible” approach to human resources management has created significant problems in the terms of morale and motivation.

While the employees of FAO continue to carry out their work with diligence and professionalism, volumes of work increase as positions are not been filled. The use of non-staff human resources has become explicitly acceptable even in long-term programming and the inevitable loss of institutional knowledge is beginning to show its marks.

Senior Administration recently invited the SRBs to comment on the Independent Assessment of FAO’s Technical Capacity. This was a welcome opportunity for us to participate in the analysis of current gaps and challenges and it was only possible thanks to the attention of our Members and to that of the Director-General to FAO’s capacity to deliver its normative and technical products, as well as continue supporting the countries we represent in the fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

We were astonished to find that FAO’s Core Technical Capacity was measured among other by using data on non-staff human resources. The Representatives of staff have time and time again denounced the long-term use of temporary contracts as a means to exploit employees without providing job security, social security schemes and even as much as paid leave. We now have a confirmation that more than a third of the people employed temporarily by FAO have been with us for more than ten years. We do not believe this is be either a sustainable model or an achievement and would like to see those employees selected against regular positions.

On a different note, in the original paper, had data on gender which was provided to show a gender balance in FAO. However, this was achieved by including General Service staff in the analysis. A serious review of gender balance in higher level positions is needed in FAO if wants to show it is practicing what it preaches. Data was also missing as to whether the appropriate area and level of expertise were in fact deployed in the right geographic and thematic position. We may very well have a high rate of PhDs but are we maximizing the individual’s capacity and skillsets?

We wonder, also in view of the Organization's Mobility Policy. Mobility could be an opportunity for greater flexibility and technical advancement in terms of experience gained by staff. However, at present, mobility in FAO is not "position or function" based but "incumbent" based. This means that staff are being moved from HQ to decentralized offices without an organic view of their technical capacity and what they would bring to the new duty station.

As the number of posts diminishes and those in some non-technical areas remain vacant at rates of 25 to 30 percent, employees are increasingly under pressure to deliver more with less. We therefore join in with the Director-General and urge you to seriously review the current flat budget approach.

Concerning the relationship between Management and the SRBs, we must report that some serious problems persist. Unfortunately, our role and inputs continue to be inadequately recognized as previously reported. Administration may take unilateral action, bypassing the SRBs and thus infringing the statutory requirements for consultation and negotiation, as provided in Article VIII of the Staff Relations. Therefore, while we maintain cordial relationships in form, little has changed in substance. If anything, the situation has worsened, and the contacts between Management and the SRBs are becoming less and less frequent.

Suffice it to say that the Staff-Management Consultative Committee (SMCC) has only met three times this year, twice without a specific agenda.

At the last Council, you may recall that the SRBs highlighted the issue of 140 professional posts which have been filled in an inadequate manner. The SRBs have also been concerned with the selection processes of the General Services (GS) staff at Headquarters. The Union of GS Staff (UGSS) conducted a survey on the selection processes which was disseminated to all GS staff.

The response rate was over 60 percent. A new model for recruitment of GS staff was presented to you as innovative and ground-breaking. However, the overall satisfaction rate of staff was 0.63 percent while a whopping 86 percent felt dissatisfied with the current GS selection process. Ninety-three percent of GS staff surveyed would like vacancy announcements to be published again, especially since the issuance of vacancies announcements is foreseen in Staff Regulations and Rules for all staff, regardless of category.

Staff also expressed concern over transparency, where 81 percent of respondents felt that the new process was less transparent than the previous one. Lastly, Administration defined the new process as swifter and more efficient, but does not include data on the number of months, even years, that pass between the Divisional request for a vacancy and the filling of positions. Planning for Human Resources is piecemeal and information is not available even to line managers, nor to SRBs.

UGSS presented its findings to members in October 2016 and formally submitted its Review paper to FAO's General Service Selection Processes to Administration in March 2017. We would gladly make available to members if you so wish. To date, there have been no discussions despite reports on Finance Committee document 166/9 Rev.1 insinuating that the review had been conducted in consultation with the SRBs. We expressed concern and asked for clarifications as to why the ToRs did not include staff as stakeholders of the process. This meant that the experts conducting the review did not interview SRBs, nor the staff at large.

This seems to be a worrying trend with official documents published for Governing Bodies providing information on consultation with staff that is not factual. For example, in FC document 166/7, it was reported that: "Internal consultations with Staff Representative Bodies led to the changes from the previous practice of good job growth that was imbued with lack of transparency and was skewed in favour of candidates."

The SRBs never agreed with the changes to the relevant Manual Section, because deleting the only means for career development and progression without substituting it with any other means of promotion is not in our interest, especially when selection processes seem to be less merit-based than ever. Indeed, we have repeatedly requested to discuss career progression within the SMCC, while the SRBs are left to organize training and information seminars to staff on issues that should be at the top of the HR agenda:

In 2016 UGSS had to organize training courses on competency based interviews among other, while the Association of Professionals in FAO (AP-in-FAO) is organizing several events on career development in 2017. The Office of Human Resources was invited to participate, as a means of collaboration. To date, Management has not even acknowledged these invitations.

With respect to the mandatory age of separation (MAS), and specifically to the possibility of raising it to 65 years for staff serving before 1 January 2014 and wishing to remain in service beyond the age of 60 or 62, there has been a deafening silence despite the repeated requests made by the SRBs, starting as far back as February 2016.

In its 164th session, held in November 2016, the Finance Committee “encouraged the new Secretariat to consider the expeditious implementation of the new mandatory age of separation for staff recruited prior to 1 January 2014”. This call was endorsed by the Council in its 155th session, in approving the report of the 164th session of the Finance Committee. Management, however, has paid no heed to the request and has not included MAS for discussion on the agenda of the forthcoming Conference, in July 2017.

Therefore, it seems obvious that FAO will not be implementing the new MAS by 1 January 2018, as recommended by the ICSC and the General Assembly; while in fact, the United Nations Secretariat has already implemented it. Are we really ‘one UN’?

Management took yet another unilateral decision regarding the release time it grants to the SRBs for participation in our Federation meetings. Without prior consultation, it announced that henceforth it would grant rather limited release time for external Staff Representation duties. The decision, which reversed a policy established in 2007, was not discussed with us, and our objections, based on past practice and hard facts, were met with unsubstantial, unfounded statements by OHR.

The reduction of the release means that the ability of the SRBs to participate fully and in a productive manner in the meetings on the issues affecting the Staff will be severely curtailed. Nevertheless, Management refuses to sit down and discuss the matter, preferring to limit ‘dialogue’ to a mere exchange of e-mails.

We also feel that there has been insufficient consultation on the last round of changes to the compensation package of professional staff as a result of the comprehensive review carried out by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC).

Management recently decided to completely eliminate reimbursement of some potentially very significant expenses related to the education of professional staff’s children. The measure will affect all staff especially those subject to mobility, which we consider unfair given the current trend towards greater decentralization. It seems unreasonable to resolutely promote mobility, on the one hand, and increase the financial hardship that staff selected for mobility face, on the other. Once again, the SRBs requested Management to reconsider their decision and engage in a full, in-depth discussion of the matter, but again Management has so far refused to do so.

Finally, one of the most pressing issues that all the Rome-based agencies are having to deal with since December 2016 is the intention of FAO Administration to change the composition of the Joint Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage, which was a key committee in the review of technical aspects of After Service Medical Coverage (ASMC), among other things.

The draft changes foresee the elimination of all Staff Representative Bodies from the Committee in favour of “elected staff”. It also eliminated participation from the other stakeholders, namely WFP and IFAD staff associations, as well as former staff members represented by FFOA.

At each occasion presented, we, the Staff Representatives, would wish nothing more than to come here and deliver a speech on the excellent relationship between Management and Staff. However, the conditions under which the SRBs are trying to fulfil their statutory role are far from satisfactory.

Despite this, we continue to reach out to Management in the hope that a more balanced, productive relationship may be attained. But as the months and even the years go by, our hopes that the situation will improve are growing feebler.

In this respect, we would like to end by highlighting that employee satisfaction is essential to achieving organizational goals. Institutions with the highest employee satisfaction rates are also those that are most successful. Disillusioned and dissatisfied staff will eventually produce lower quality work.

FAO staff continue to perform their job with the same dedication, but it is becoming increasingly difficult. It is not merely a question of budget level, it is also a question of attitude towards the Organization's most valuable asset: its staff.

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

My conclusions for item 17 are as follows.

Item 17.1, *Appointment of the Deputy Director-General (Operations)*.

1. The Director-General informed the Council of his intention to appoint a new Deputy Director-General for Operations, Mr Laurent Thomas.
2. The Council confirmed the appointment of Mr Laurent Thomas to the position of FAO Deputy Director-General (Operations).

Item 17.2, *Update on the Proposal to Establish a World Fisheries University*.

3. The Council took note of the information provided by the Republic of Korea regarding the proposal to establish a World Fisheries University.

Item 17.3, *Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies*.

4. Ms Elena Rotondo, General Secretary *ad interim* of the Union of General Service Staff made a statement on behalf of the FAO Staff Representative Bodies.

We have concluded item 17, *Any other matters*.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

Regarding item 17, *Any other matters*, where I explained about the World Fisheries pilot programme, I believe that this is directly related to the interest and benefit of stakeholders, the Member States. Therefore, based on my explanation, I would like to ask you to open the floor Members to talk about the issue.

CHAIRPERSON

I have already concluded item 17, but I open for the Members who want to comment on what the Republic of Korea presented to you. The floor is open.

Mr Mesah TARIGAN (Indonesia)

Indonesia welcomes the development of the draft final agreement on the content of the MoU between the Republic of Korea and the FAO Secretariat. My delegation has listened carefully to the information shared by the delegation of the Republic of Korea and would like to share the following points.

My delegation would like to express our support for the World Fisheries University pilot programme. It is planned to be launched together by the Republic of Korea and FAO in September this year.

We believe that the immediate benefit of this pilot programme will be to connect the best human resources in the field of fisheries, who will create a network amongst themselves. This network will no doubt have immediate and long-term positive impacts on the global fisheries governance.

Education is the main pillar in capacity building; it is the most important cross-cutting investment for present and future generations. As the pilot programme of the World Fisheries University would contribute to capacity building of the experts in FAO member countries, we believe that this pilot programme will immediately stimulate exchange of information and strengthen the existing knowledge management in this race, both at regional and global levels.

My delegation therefore is of the view that there is merit in expediting the signing process of the MoU between the Republic of Korea and the FAO Secretariat and holding of the steering committee before the first week of May this year. At this juncture, my delegation would also like to express our readiness to contribute to the pilot programme of the World Fisheries University through Indonesia's marine and fisheries centres of excellence. We look forward to the launching of the pilot programme.

Mr Badreldin ELSHIEKH MOHAMED ELHASSAN (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

This is an extremely important matter for us in Sudan. I think it will be a model that can be replicated by other organizations, because it deals with the relationship between FAO and member countries. I would like to urge FAO to achieve a common understanding for this matter because time is of the essence. We hope that it will be taken seriously and will be given the necessary time so that our brothers in the Republic of Korea will be able to go on with implementing that matter. So we would like to express our strong support for the University in this respect.

Mr Akeel HATOOR (Qatar) (Original language Arabic)

Qatar welcomes the memorandum of understanding to be signed between FAO and the Republic of Korea and we have listened very carefully to what has been said by our colleague from that country.

We think this project will be extremely important for fisheries and will open new avenues for investments in this sector. It will also enhance research. In this respect, in general, we would like to support this.

CHAIRPERSON

With regard to the pilot programme, this is in support of what we have already agreed to. I hear the support from Members. Does the Secretariat have any response to this?

LEGAL COUNSEL

I wanted to make a couple of observations on this matter. We, in fact, did not expect a discussion of substance on this matter, but only that it be referred for information to the Council and for no action. A substantive debate on this matter was not foreseen.

As I explained under the previous topic of the agenda, bringing an intergovernmental process of review over a matter that needs to be addressed at a technical level is only likely to disrupt this process.

There was a teleconference between the Director-General and the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea in the course of which two specific points were discussed, and I want to clarify them as I think that these points were not addressed properly in this meeting; were not reflected in the statement made. My understanding is also that there were very clear commitments assumed in the course of that discussion.

The first point had to do with an agreement that we have been negotiating with the Republic of Korea. A number of concerns have been accommodated and, despite a number of difficulties, this agreement has reached its final stages, also regarding the status of the organization in the country. And we believe that we could be near a satisfactory arrangement.

The second point was discussed extensively in the course of the teleconference and it was already brought to the attention of the Committee on Fisheries at its last session in July.

And it has to do with a long standing issue of the liaison and partnerships office of FAO in Korea. The Director-General has raised this matter that he wished to be addressed. We believe that a presence of the Organization in the country through a Fisheries University would involve also a commitment on the part of the government regarding this matter.

This matter of the FAO office in the country has been on the table even prior to any proposal regarding this University. We would have expected that this issue be addressed and we have a specific commitment on the part of the Minister for Fisheries to take up this matter and settle this issue. This is an important point that is outstanding.

We did not intend to develop this point before the Council but, since it seems that we are having a discussion of substance, we believe that it is appropriate to bring these elements to the consideration of the Members. Of course, we would have preferred that we should have a presentation of information on this matter, and it be addressed later on essentially on its merits and on the technical aspects of the proposal.

Mr Wonchul JOO (Republic of Korea)

I want to just respond to the comments made by the Legal Counsel who mentioned that this is a technical issue. However, there would be very substantive issues that should be addressed. Therefore we brought it here for attention.

We ask the Council to consider that, since the MoU and steering committee have not yet been implemented, we therefore request your consideration to encourage not only Korea but also the Secretariat for immediate action to conclude the MoU and establish a steering committee.

That is very recommendable and a regional approach, I believe.

The Legal Counsel mentioned that there is some kind of commitment made by the FAO Director-General and the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries. We definitely are sure that the MoU should be completed to start negotiations because we need a legal mandate to talk about anything about the liaison office whatsoever.

Therefore, we kindly ask that the FAO Secretariat comment on the steering committee which you proposed in the mandate to this Council. The MoU and the steering committee must be concrete as I said where we can discuss those liaison office issues at the same time.

Therefore, I want to just kindly ask the Council to reconsider one more time to request that the FAO Secretariat immediately conclude the MoU and the Steering Committee and share the information for the rapid participation of the students for this programme.

CHAIRPERSON

I think this was provided for information and it is noted.

We have come to the end of agenda item 17.

That brings us to the end of this morning's meeting. Before we close, I will pass the floor to the Secretary-General for some announcements.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind Members of two Side Events which will take place after the closure of this plenary meeting. The first side event on *Opportunities and Challenges towards achieving SDG1 and SDG2: experiences from China, Kenya and Chile* will take place from now to approximately 14:00 in the Sheikh Zayed Centre, and a light lunch will be offered prior to the start of the side event.

The second side event, *Climate-smart agriculture: Country experiences and lessons for Nationally Determined Contributions implementation* will take place immediately thereafter in the Iran Room starting at 14:00 until 15:00. Refreshments will be provided prior to the start of the event.

Furthermore, I would also like to remind delegates of the two side events which will take place tomorrow, Thursday 27 April: the first side event, *Regional Food Insecurity and Nutrition Overviews* will take place in the Iran Room from 12:30 to 13:30, and the second event, *Support to small-scale inland fisheries: Dissemination of post-harvest techniques in the North-West of Angola* will take place from 13:30 to 14:30 also in the Iran Room.

CHAIRPERSON

The first meeting of the Drafting Committee will take place this afternoon starting at 16:00 in the Iraq Room. The second meeting of the Drafting Committee will take place tomorrow afternoon at a time to be announced.

We shall meet again on Friday morning at 09.30 sharp for agenda item 16, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information.

With this our work for today has been concluded.

The meeting rose at 12:49 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 49

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.49

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2017 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| SIXTH PLENARY MEETING SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 28 April 2017 |

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.43 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 43
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 9.43
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 16 **Developments in *Fora* of Importance for the Mandate of FAO**
Point 16 **Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO**
Tema 16 **Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO**
(CL 156/INF/4)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the sixth Meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council to order.

We now take up item 16, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information only. The relevant document is CL 156/INF/4.

The Council will be given presentations on issues taking place in other international *fora* which are of relevance to FAO's mandate. I should like to ask the Secretary-General to read the list of presentations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council will be given presentations on:

- United Nations Biodiversity Conference
- Recent decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, on the SDG Indicator Framework
- The Group of Twenty
- United Nations Forum on Forests: Strategic Plan for Forests, 2017-30, and the first Quadrennial Programme of Work 2017-20 for operationalizing the strategic plan
- International Year of Pulses
- Political Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

CHAIRPERSON

Following the completion of all the presentations, I will open the floor for questions.

The first topic on "*United Nations Biodiversity Conference*" will be presented by Mr René Castro Salazar, Assistant Director-General of Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department.

Mr René CASTRO SALAZAR (Assistant Director-General, Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department)

Last year we attended meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity. That was a very unique situation. The FAO Delegation was led personally by Ms Semedo and we had the unique result that, more than 20 years after the Rio Earth Summit, for the first time we discussed seriously issues about diversity in the world and biodiversity for use in agriculture.

We also discussed issues for conservation and sustainable use, so let me briefly go through what happened in COP 13 in Cancún, Mexico. It was probably one of the most successful CBD meetings ever.

It was a high-level segment. The 13th COP and, at the same time, the 8th meeting of the Parties on Biosafety, the Cartagena Protocol, and the meeting of the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing.

In the Cancún Declaration, it was very relevant for FAO because they call for mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for well-being. It calls for integration of biological diversity and ecosystems into policies, measures, plans and programmes. It encourages closer cooperation and synergies, with FAO specifically. It calls for the implementation of relevant FAO instruments, for example, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 13) calls upon FAO to support development and implementation of biodiversity, mainstreaming measures and tools. It invites FAO to provide guidance on sustainability in food and agriculture with regard to biodiversity. It welcomes FAO's biodiversity mainstreaming platform to develop coherent mainstreaming approaches.

Let me stop here for a minute. What is this platform? It pulls together actors that do not talk to each other often; ministers for agriculture, fisheries and forestry with the ministers for the environment. How will we work better together? How will we implement the Sustainable Development Goals better? The platform will be hosted by FAO and you will see details about it during the Conference.

The next steps: biodiversity mainstreaming to be considered in 2018 in all major FAO meetings and activities by COFI, COFO and COAG. There will be a multi-stakeholder consultation and United Nations collaboration on biodiversity mainstreaming through the SDGs.

FAO will host the meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group for the first time. The six different treaties and conventions will have their meeting in Rome. The FAO Conference will consider the proposal of the biodiversity mainstreaming platform that is, as we speak, under development.

Finally, this very unique success is essentially developing the mandate of the member countries. We will also be working in the nexus between climate biodiversity and desertification and the other Rio conventions.

CHAIRPERSON

Our next speaker is Mr Pietro Gennari, Chief Statistician, who will make a presentation on “*Recent decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (SDGs), on the SDG Indicator Framework*”.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician)

I am pleased to provide you with a brief report on the outcomes of two key meetings held last month that would have an important impact on the processes and mechanisms for monitoring the SDGs.

The first meeting is the 48th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission which was held in New York from 7 to 10 March 2017. The Commission is the apex entity of the Global Statistical System, bringing together the chief statisticians of Member States and international organizations to agree on international statistical standards and discuss their implementation.

The main topic on the agenda was the endorsement of the Indicator Framework for the 2030 Agenda. On this topic, the Statistical Commission agreed with the Revised Global Indicator Framework comprising 232 unique indicators which included refinements on some indicators, agreed with the proposed plan for annual refinements of the indicators and for two comprehensive reviews to be presented to the Commission in 2020 and 2025, and urged the IAEG on SDG indicators to accelerate the methodological development of the Tier III indicators, and supported the proposed Tier III work plans.

The Commission further recommended custodian agencies to increase their capacity building and technical assistance efforts in support, especially of developing countries, to ensure that they are able to generate the data necessary to inform the Global Indicator Framework. They requested the IAEG-SDG to develop guidelines on global SDG reporting, which should clarify the data flows between national and international statistical agencies and the modalities for validation of international estimates.

The guidelines should follow some key principles according to which custodian agencies should use whenever possible national official data, provide the national statistical offices with a list of national agencies reporting data to international organizations, share with the national statistical offices data collection calendars and consult with concerned national statistical offices to produce and validate modelled estimates before the publication.

Finally, the Commission agreed on a draft resolution pertaining to data indicators for the 2030 Agenda and recommended its adoption by ECOSOC and the United Nations General Assembly.

The other key meeting was the 5th Session of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators which was held in Ottawa from 28 to 31 March 2017. Allow me to recall that the IAEG-SDG is a working group established by the United Nations Statistical Commission with a specific mandate to develop and refine the Global Indicator Framework and monitor its implementation. The IAEG-SDG is composed of 27 countries representing respective regions plus the Chair of the Statistical Commission.

Some of the key decisions of the 5th IAEG-SDG meeting included the approval of 4 out of 11 proposals for the upgrade of Tier III indicators, thus enabling global reporting on this indicator to begin. Two out of the four indicators that were approved for upgrading are under FAO custodianship, in particular the indicator of food price anomalies and the indicator on women's access to land.

The IAEG-SDG also encouraged custodian agencies to accelerate the methodological work on Tier III indicators, informed on the timeline for Tier III upgrading whereby from now on the IAEG-SDG will consider upgrade proposals only every autumn session, once a year. They presented more strict criteria for upgrading Tier III indicators; for example, to provide information on the involvement of national statistical offices in the peer review of the methodology and evidence that pilot testing is conducted in selected countries from all regions.

Based on the latest upgrades, this table shows the current situation of the SDG indicators under FAO custodianship categorized by goals and colour coded according to the tier classifications. Tier I is green, Tier II is yellow and Tier III is red. At the moment, FAO has nine indicators that are classified as Tier III.

The IAEG-SDG also tightened the criteria for upgrading Tier II Indicators from Tier II to Tier I, making it conditional on the coverage of at least 50 percent of the number of countries and the total population of each region. They established a group that will submit a first draft of the guidelines on global SDG reporting at the next meeting of the IAEG-SDG in October.

As an input to this process, the Chief Statistician of FAO in the capacity of co-Chair of the Committee of Coordination of Statistical Activities, which convenes 45 international organizations, submitted a document which proposed principles and practices of global data reporting for the 2030 Agenda which was well received.

They informed that by May 2017, one-third of the member countries will be replaced by new countries. The new members will be selected through the Statistical Inter-Governmental Bodies of the United Nations Regional Commissions. Similar rotation will occur every two years.

All these developments have important implications for FAO's work on the SDG Indicators. Our immediate priorities will now be to: accelerate the methodological work on Tier III indicators with the aim of upgrading all the remaining indicators at the next IAEG session in October; intensify statistical capacity development support across the 21 SDG indicators under FAO custodianship (more detailed information on a series of concrete initiatives undertaken by FAO was provided at the Council side event on Monday); advise countries on aligning their national indicators to the Global Indicator Framework and assist them in carrying out data gap analysis; provide the IAEG-SDG with a list of agencies reporting data to FAO and share FAO's data collection calendar and finally, continue to lead the provision of inputs to the drafting of the guidelines on global SDG reporting through the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities.

Thank you for your attention and for your active collaboration on this important endeavour.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the next speaker, Mr Boubaker BenBelhassen, Director of the Trade and Markets Division, who will deliver a presentation on "*The Group of Twenty (G20)*".

Mr Boubaker BENBELHASSEN (Director, Trade and Markets Division)

I will start by saying I am very happy to present to you the work of the Group of 20 (G20), and also on FAO's engagement in that respect.

With a brief introduction, the G20 was established in 1999. It is an informal group in fact. It was established following the Asian financial crisis, you will recall. The primary aim was to coordinate economic policy.

The Group includes the wealthiest countries in the world and also a number of emerging economies. They have a major role to play in global food and agriculture systems. The figures here speak for themselves. For instance, they house two-thirds of the world's population. They account for 85 percent of the global GDP, gross domestic product, 60 percent of agriculture land in the world, 80 percent of the

production of global cereals, about 50 percent of the world food production and about 55 percent of total exports of food.

From here it is clear that the G20 domestic policies in agriculture, trade and investment can impact on global food markets and food security and nutrition. As an example, the action taken by G20 countries, for instance, to increase agriculture productivity can have spill over effects on other countries.

The question; how can the G20 as a group contribute to the efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition? Here I think there are three main roles or points that are considered as comparative advantages for the G20. These are by providing international leadership and encouraging international cooperation. Second, by supporting initiatives that have collective benefits, what we call global public goods. They have a number of initiatives already out there which are operational, and also by extending knowledge and experience to non-member countries.

These are important roles in which we see the G20 can take leadership in terms of the international effort towards freeing the world from hunger and malnutrition. Now just a few words regarding FAO engagement with the Group.

Basically as an international organization, we participate through the provision of technical inputs and expertise. We prepare thematic reports and proposals for action. There are two tracks under the DWG (Development Working Group) in which we participate: the agriculture track, which is basically about food security and agriculture but more geared toward the G20 domestic agriculture sectors, and the development track which is led by the Development Working Group and looks more towards the development of international cooperation in terms of what can be done for non-member countries or especially the least developed or developing countries.

Our efforts with the Group are usually related to how to promote global food security, better nutrition and sustainable agriculture. As a result of these efforts, a number of initiatives have already been established by the G20.

In FAO, we are happy to house three of them. The Agriculture Marketing Information System (AMIS) is designed to improve food market transparency and to coordinate action, and especially in terms of policy intervention.

The Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) was designed primarily to promote agriculture innovation in the tropics.

The Food Loss and Waste (FLW) Technical Platform deals more with the measurement and reduction of food loss and waste. This was launched in December 2015, in fact on the occasion of the session of the Council in that period.

As I said before, the work or involvement of the G20 in the area of food security and agriculture started in 2011 with the presidency of France for the Group and that mainly followed what was referred to as the Global Food Price Crisis 2007-08, both in terms of high prices but also excessive price volatility.

Just to give you an idea mainly on the work for the last three presidencies. 2015 Turkey: the main overall theme for Turkey was sustainable food systems. The attention was given more to the issue of food loss and waste. They opened with low-income development countries in terms of how they can be assisted to develop their domestic agriculture sectors and then also how the G20 can support the implementation of the SDGs.

In terms of concrete outcomes, the Implementation Plan of the G20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework was developed and approved. This framework in fact was prepared under the Australian presidency in 2014, but the Implementation Plan was prepared and adopted under the Turkish presidency.

The G20 Action Plan on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems also includes a number of recommendations that could be taken by the G20 countries and, as mentioned, the technical platform on the measurement and reduction of food loss and waste.

Here I just put in the footnotes that usually FAO will cooperate with other relevant organizations, mainly IFAD, WFP and OECD, and agrees to prepare thematic reports at the request of the presidency.

China 2016: of course following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda that was an important issue for discussion. ICT (information and communications technology) in agriculture as the overall theme was sustainability and innovation, and industrialization in Africa and the LDCs.

In terms of outcomes, there was a G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda. There was also a mandate to continue work on ICT in agriculture. It was started under the Chinese presidency but did not finish so it was carried over for the next presidency and this is continuing in fact.

Another achievement was to agree that there would be regular meetings of the G20 agriculture ministers. In fact the first one was in 2011 with the French presidency and the second one was in 2015 under the Turkish presidency, then China.

This year it was Germany. The overall theme was towards food and water security. The overarching objective was to look at water issues plus a number of critical issues; for example, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the SDGs, AMR and ICT trade and investment, but the theme that probably received more attention, or was a priority for the German presidency, was water in agriculture.

Other topics that were discussed or issues were the partnership with Africa in terms mainly of rural youth employment and digital skills for girls. There is a high-level conference called One World, No Hunger which actually started yesterday and is taking place today.

In terms of outcome, there is an Action Plan on various critical issues in agriculture, which commits the G20 Members to take action on these various issues. There is also a mandate to continue work on ICT in agriculture and there will be an agriculture deputies' meeting on 14 and 15 May in which they will follow on the discussion. Probably there is a possibility to agree on a concrete outcome. FAO will be there.

There are G20 initiatives for rural youth employment and for e-skills for girls. These are the main results under the German presidency.

I also want to say that, for 2018, we look forward to working with the Government of Argentina. Under the G20, they will take over the presidency in December. I would also like to thank the G20 Members for the trust and confidence placed in FAO, and also we would be happy to continue to work with them to reach our common goals and objectives.

CHAIRPERSON

I now call upon Ms Eva Müller, Director of the Forestry Policy and Resources Division, who will speak on *“United Nations Forum on Forests: Strategic Plan for Forests, 2017-30, and the first Quadrennial Programme of Work 2017-20 for operationalizing the Strategic Plan”*.

Ms Eva MÜLLER (Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division)

I have the great pleasure to inform you on the outcomes of the special session of the United Nations Forum on Forests that took place in January 2017. The forum adopted the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests (UNSPF).

The mandate for the development of the plan comes from ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33 on the International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015. The Strategic Plan is a negotiated agreement by member countries of the UNFF and it serves as a reference for the forest-related work of the United Nations system and for fostering enhanced coherence, collaboration and synergies among United Nations bodies and partners towards a common vision and mission, as well as a framework to enhance the coherence of, and guide and focus the work of, the international arrangement on forests and its components.

The core elements of the UNSPF are its vision and mission and the global forest goals and targets. The vision is a world where all types of forests and trees outside forests are sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development and provide economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for present and future generations.

The mission is to promote sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including strengthening cooperation, coordination, coherence, synergies and political commitment and actions at all levels.

There are 6 global forest goals and 26 associated targets in the plan. These are all in line with the global objectives on forests, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and other relevant global commitments. The time horizon is 2030 unless specified differently in one of the above agreements.

Now the six goals are to reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including the protection, restoration of forestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change; enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.

They will increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests; mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships; promote governance frameworks to implement sustainable forest management, including through the UN Forest Instrument and enhance the contributions of forests to the 2030 Agenda.

The goals also aim at enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the United Nations system and across member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders. The first four goals have existed before more or less as they are with some additions, and the last two are new.

Let me just highlight some notable targets. The first and probably the most important is that forest area is to be increased by 3 percent worldwide by 2030 and this is quite ambitious and goes beyond the ambitions of the SDGs; extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people is eradicated; the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests is significantly increased; forest-related financing from all sources at all levels is also significantly increased; forest-related issues and the forest sector are fully integrated into decision-making processes of land use planning and development; and cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation to promote sustainable forest management and halt deforestation and forest degradation is significantly enhanced. The Member States on a voluntary basis determine their own contributions towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and Targets.

Now what is the relevance of the Strategic Plan for FAO? As you know, FAO is a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and it is the Chair. As a member, FAO is requested to integrate Global Forest Goals and Targets into its forest-related plans and programmes, and to support the forum and its members in advancing the Global Forest Goals and Targets.

As the Chair of the Partnership, FAO coordinates the Partnership's contribution and support to the implementation of the Strategic Plan. FAO looks forward to receiving further guidance from Member Nations to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan on Forests and its four-year Programme of Work.

CHAIRPERSON

Our next speaker is Ms Marcela Villarreal, Director of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division, who will make a presentation on "*International Year of Pulses 2016*".

Ms Marcela VILLARREAL (Director, Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division)

It is a pleasure to address you on the International Year of Pulses.

Nutritious seeds for a sustainable future was the mantra of the year. The objectives, as many of you know well, were basically to raise awareness of the important role of pulses for sustainable food production, healthy diets, contribution to food security and nutrition; increase both the production and the consumption of pulses and also encourage connections throughout the whole of the food chain.

The key messages of the year were around the nutritional value of pulses, which we know is extremely high; around their affordability and, as well as being affordable, a source of protein; they are also

contributing to the diets of richer societies as they become more affluent and actually the diseases that sometimes accompany more affluent societies like, for example, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and therefore a strong message on the importance of pulses for human health. Also for the environment, pulses foster sustainable agriculture and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and, very importantly, pulses promote biodiversity. These were the five main messages that were transmitted throughout the year.

The action plan covered activities of both outreach and also quite importantly normative activities and dialogue which brought together the different actors across the spectrum both at regional and global levels to give indications for policy at the different levels. There were special ambassadors for the different regions who contributed from quite different angles to both the outreach and the normative issues around pulses.

We think that, throughout the year, we were tremendously successful. And as the Council members indeed said last Wednesday, all the targets were surpassed. The objectives were met beyond expectations. We are very happy about the joint work that we did together with our Members and the different stakeholders to make this happen.

More than a million website page views, hundreds of events worldwide at national, regional and global levels, and materials were produced to suit different kinds of audiences and different views and different perspectives. Quite importantly, I would say, there were numerous recipes that were gathered on the website from different parts of the world and tens of thousands of views of these pages and actual downloads.

Actually, recipes are part of fun of the year. We brought in chefs. We brought in people from different areas of the world to share their recipes with us. And, yes, it was part of fun, but also you can see the impact you are having because when people actually download a recipe, it shows an intention that they want to increase or at least diversify their consumption of pulses.

Now the year was closed last 10-11 February in Burkina Faso with the presence of the President of the Republic and the First Lady who gave their high patronage to this event. There was a declaration to recognize World Pulse Day on 10 February. As you all know, this proposal was welcomed by you, the Council, and will be presented to Conference. We hope to get the same level of participation from the different stakeholders so that we can continue to take all of the messages of the International Year throughout every year on 10 February.

What I would like to touch base with you on today is the legacy of the Year. Many member countries requested our Director-General to have a continuation of the Year. There was a feeling that it was tremendously successful and there was an appetite to be able to continue it. Now legally we could not continue it because the declaration of a year comes from the governing bodies and goes through the General Assembly of the United Nations. So in order to continue it and have two years instead of one, it would have had to go through the governing body process.

However, we are able to continue many of the activities of the Year and, of course, have the mandate of COAG and also of Council to continue and also many opportunities ahead of us. One big opportunity ahead of us is the Decade of Nutrition, which has established a number of networks and we have agreed to have a Pulses Action Network within the whole Decade of Nutrition. So here we have ten years ahead of us in which we will be able to continue the promotion of pulses at this level.

A number of normative products are also proposed which include, for example, the compilation of agricultural practices, including pulses crops in sub-Saharan Africa. This is going to be in support very specifically of increasing production and utilization of pulses by smallholder farms in Africa. A publication on under-utilized pulse species that will include information on agronomy, nutrition and trade of these underutilized pulse species.

We also would like to have a revision of FAO's pulses statistics in order to improve the classification and that will allow us to follow much better the specific consumption of pulses at the household level and at all levels throughout the food chain. Finally, we expect that the legacy of the Year is going to rest very strongly on the partnerships that we will be able to develop. For example, with the private sector,

we have already a number of partnerships on pulses. One of them is with Colfiorito here in Italy. It is one of the major producers of pulses and is actually producing pulses in the region that was most affected by the recent earthquakes in Umbria.

That is the kind of partnerships that are already ongoing and we will extend those to other private sector, obviously also producer organizations and civil society. Very importantly, we are going to enhance, through South-South Cooperation, knowledge of pulses and knowledge of specific techniques around pulses between farmers in our Farmer-to-Farmer South-South Cooperation actions.

CHAIRPERSON

Our last speaker is Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, Climate and Natural Resources, who will make a presentation on *“Political Forum of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development”*.

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

I am very pleased to report on the outcomes of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development on behalf of the region.

The Forum was created at the 36th session of ECLAC in 2016 with the aim of contributing to the follow up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to report to the High-Level Political Forum in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and national ownership of the agenda.

They examine regional progress and provide policy recommendations. The same mechanism has been established for all the regions and several meetings will take place in May in order to report to the High-Level Political Forum in July. FAO is not only highly involved in the forum of the countries of Latin America but also involved in those processes, particularly with regard to SDG 2, as you know one of the goals under review this year by the HLPF.

This engagement is very timely as regional development forum has a growing relevance in the global follow up and review of the Sustainable Development agenda. It looks to improve the active participation of all the countries of Latin America and show the importance of this kind of forum. The Latin American Forum is taking place under the Mexican presidency and we will close today, so take this information as provisional. We do not have so far the outcomes and recommendations of the meeting.

The United Nations has been actively providing support and evidence on the progress made in the region. In the discussions held, countries underlined the crucial role of the United Nations' support for the achievement of the Agenda. However, they look for more coordination of the United Nations' actors at country level and expect a greater role of the United Nations country team as their entry point. I believe calling for more coordination of the United Nations agencies is a global call even here in Rome. Other featured discussions have focused on the need to overcome inequalities in the region as a path to achieve the whole set of SDGs.

FAO is providing regional support through its regional initiatives that are the main delivery mechanism at the regional level, but we are also engaging with the countries in strengthening their inter-sector dialogue to incorporate the SDGs in the national development planning, supporting policy processes and providing statistical capacity, as Pietro has already shown, as custodian of 21 indicators how we are really supporting the countries and the region to increase their capacity to collect data and present the monitoring process. As I referred, we are supporting the national reviews to be presented to the High-Level Political Forum.

As I said, the meeting will close today and we will be happy to present in the next meeting of the Council the outcomes and the recommendations of the meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

The floor is open to speakers who wish to ask questions.

Sra. Martha BÁRCENA COQUI (México)

México agradece muy cumplidamente el informe del Secretariado, en particular del Doctor René Castro, sobre la COP13 del Convenio de Diversidad Biológica, y desea destacar la activa participación de la FAO en los debates y contribuciones que hizo para el éxito de la misma, en particular con la valiosa representación de su Directora General Alternativa, la Sra. María Helena Semedo.

Como se informó, México propuso el tema “La Integración de la Conservación y el Uso Sustentable de la Biodiversidad para el Bienestar” para debate del Segmento de Alto Nivel de la COP13 del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica (CDB), con énfasis en cuatro sectores: agricultura, pesca, bosques y turismo.

En esta lógica se invitaron a participar por primera vez a los Ministros de estas carteras a debatir con los Ministros del Medio ambiente.

De esta manera, los Ministros o los representantes de los 196 países miembros del CDB suscribieron la Declaración de Cancún que hace recomendaciones en los cuatro sectores que señalé antes, tres de los cuales están en el ámbito de competencia directa de la FAO: agricultura, pesca y bosques.

México cree firmemente en la transversalidad del tema de la biodiversidad como sustento de la vida misma en el planeta. Es así que buscamos ir más allá de silos compartimentalizados que corresponden a una visión del pasado, para construir puentes entre las diferentes comunidades y sectores directamente implicados con la biodiversidad para su conservación y uso sustentable.

Por ello tengo el gusto de informar a este Consejo que México, Brasil, Colombia, Noruega, Suiza, Camerún, Cabo Verde, Egipto e Indonesia, con el apoyo de Francia, hemos establecido el día de ayer el “Grupo de Amigos de la Biodiversidad y de los Ecosistemas en la FAO”, con el propósito de promover la integración de la conservación y el uso sustentable de la biodiversidad, para el logro de los objetivos sociales, económicos y ambientales, de manera integrada y transformacional, de acuerdo con los principios de la Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas y sus 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sustentable.

En este sentido, el Grupo de Amigos de la Biodiversidad y de los Ecosistemas desea expresar su reconocimiento y apoyo a la iniciativa que tomó el Director General José Graziano da Silva en el último Consejo de diciembre pasado, para crear una “Plataforma sobre Biodiversidad en la FAO” que como dijo el Doctor Castro está en proceso de laboración.

Al mismo tiempo, el Grupo se congratula y se compromete a trabajar constructivamente con el nuevo departamento sobre Clima, Biodiversidad, Suelos y Agua. Estamos convencidos de que todos juntos contribuiremos a la mayor integración de la biodiversidad en la agenda, los trabajos y proyectos de la FAO en los sectores de la agricultura, la pesca y los bosques.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Chair, first of all, we highly appreciate these briefings on outside fora of importance to FAO.

I have just two questions to raise; one with respect to the indicator SDGs. We are grateful to the Chief Statistician for informing us about the IAEG-SDG indicator work. My question is where does the Cape Town Global Plan of Action fit into the schema that he so well explained?

My second question is on G20. The Summit of G20 I think takes place in Hamburg in July this year. Is FAO invited to the Summit? Secondly, has FAO been requested to prepare any paper on work as a guest?

Mr Willem OLTJOF (European Union)

I would like to thank the FAO for organizing these briefings. They are usually among the most interesting parts of Council and this one is not an exception. I have two questions; one on the statistics side and one on the forest side.

On statistics, and thanks again for the very clear explanations, but you mentioned that there are nine tier three indicators for which the aim is that by the end of this year they are upgraded to tier two. My question is what does it take to upgrade them to tier two? In other words, do you think that the

conditions within FAO are fulfilled that you can indeed get all nine up to tier two which we all hope? And if not, what conditions need to be strengthened on that?

My second question is on the forestry side. The strategic plan for forests is, of course, a very important one for the work of FAO. You mentioned that the plan needs to be integrated in the work of FAO and you looked forward to guidance from the Membership on this.

The question then is, of course, how will we integrate that? What process will we follow in the integration of that plan in FAO's work, also taking into account that in this Council we have been talking about the Medium-Term Plan of FAO and its budget for the next two years? So what process do you foresee? How long is this time span in order to incorporate the plan?

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Comme disait le délégué de l'Union européenne, c'est cette partie très intéressante du Conseil qui nous donne une idée des grands enjeux qui se mettent en place.

Je voudrais féliciter aussi tous les intervenants pour les informations combien utiles qu'ils nous ont fournies et qui nous permettent d'envisager l'avenir. J'ai une série de questions, que je vais aborder thème par thème.

Je vais commencer par M. Castro, qui nous a parlé de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur la biodiversité et qui a retenu toute mon attention, car nous savons que la biodiversité n'a pas de frontières, pas de pays, qu'elle est mondiale. M. Castro nous a parlé de l'élaboration d'une plateforme, parce que qu'il est toujours très difficile de mettre tout le monde d'accord. Nous-mêmes, au Congo, connaissons la question pour avoir organisé le sommet mondial de trois bassins forestiers, à savoir le bassin du Congo, le bassin d'Amazonie et le bassin du Mékong, et nous avons rencontré beaucoup de difficultés pour mettre en place une plateforme qui permette aux pays membres de ces bassins de s'entendre. La question donc que je voulais poser: «À quel moment cette plateforme en élaboration sera-t-elle disponible? Et à quel moment allez-vous consulter les pays pour donner des avis concernant cette plateforme?»

La deuxième question s'adresse au Statisticien en chef, que j'ai également écouté avec beaucoup d'attention et à qui l'Union européenne a déjà posé une question. Quant à la mienne elle porte sur la périodicité des évaluations. Vous savez que la mise en œuvre des ODD est très compliquée, mais je me félicite de ce que vous ayez mentionné la question du renforcement des capacités techniques des pays, notamment des pays en développement, point crucial pour mener ce genre d'opération. Donc voici la question qu'il me revient de poser: «Quelle est la périodicité des évaluations qui seront faites pour rendre compte de l'exécution, de la mise en œuvre, de la réalisation des ODD?»

La troisième question est pour M. BenBelhassen qui a parlé du travail du G20. Vous avez mentionné une série d'activités, mais celle qui me tient à cœur concerne l'intégration des petits producteurs aux marchés. C'est en effet important, car si l'on veut stimuler l'économie rurale, il faut effectivement aider les petits producteurs à accéder aux marchés. Bien sûr, il y a une série d'autres activités à mettre en œuvre pour aider à la production, mais à quel moment prendrez-vous en compte l'intégration des petits producteurs aux marchés, comme l'avait recommandé le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale à sa dernière session?

La quatrième question concerne l'Afrique. Vous avez élaboré sur une série d'activités pour aider, notamment les jeunes Africains à avoir des emplois décents, les jeunes filles à intégrer le marché du travail, mais vous savez que la question de la productivité en Afrique se base sur deux axes: d'abord les intrants, et ensuite la pénibilité du travail agricole. Quelles sont les actions que vous entendez mettre en œuvre pour accélérer sur ces deux grandes questions, la pénibilité du travail agricole et la question des intrants agricoles?

La cinquième question concerne le Plan stratégique sur les forêts. Vous avez parlé de deux grands objectifs à atteindre, notamment au niveau mondial, à savoir augmenter de trois pour cent la superficie des forêts et lutter contre le déboisement. Je voulais savoir comment entendez-vous accélérer, au niveau des pays en développement, pour atteindre ces deux objectifs ?

La sixième question, et il ne s'agit pas vraiment d'une question, va à Mme Marcela Villarreal. Après avoir entendu avec beaucoup d'attention avant-hier et aujourd'hui d'intéressants discours sur les réalisations de l'Année internationale des légumineuses, un aliment parmi mes préférés et que j'ai mangé ce matin-même, j'aimerais simplement vous encourager à continuer pour que soient mises en œuvre les mesures que vous avez présentées.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Aprovecho esta ocasión para hacer esta declaración también en nombre de otros países de mi región, como Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Venezuela, República Dominicana, El Salvador, para agradecer a la FAO por el apoyo que ha brindado durante la V Cumbre de Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC), y sobre todo en la elaboración del Plan SAN-CELAC (Plan para la Seguridad Alimentaria, la Nutrición y Erradicación del Hambre de la CELAC).

En este sentido, consideramos pertinente que este tema, que para nosotros es de suma importancia y relevancia, sea incluido también como un tema, probablemente en el próximo Consejo, dado la importancia que para nosotros representa en la vida del cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Agenda 2030 y en la eliminación del hambre.

Igualmente, solicitamos que esta instancia quede reflejada en las actas de este informe.

Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

I want to thank the presenters for the depth of information that they have shared. This has given us a broad spectrum of what FAO is doing globally and in the Countries.

I have two areas I want to address. One has to do with the pulses: It has been proven now that pulses are more important both to the developing and the developed world in terms of the benefits that they give.

However, still some Countries regard pulses as a poor man's food. FAO is now in a very good position to re-educate us all and put this up as a strong point for Nations to appreciate what nature has given us and how beneficial it is in terms of environment improvement, climate change moderation and followed by cereals, in terms of fertilizer reduction in price and usage.

My second concern is on forestry, which will relate very strongly to the issue of youth unemployment and standard of living of several Countries in Africa. We have the Great Green Wall which has been developed. We would appreciate receiving an insight as to how far and at what level this programme is coming up.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

Again I am speaking on behalf of the fifteen Member Countries of the CARICOM sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean small island states. Let me say how grateful we are for the information presented here this morning because it provides additional background to inform what we must do in our respective countries.

I have no particular concerns or questions to raise. I have merely an observation or two. They are related to the fact that just as the plan arises does not necessarily coincide with that of Governments and Ministries, the plan arises of Governments do not necessarily coincide with FAO or the United Nations system.

We are in a dynamic relationship and therefore the information that would have been generated this morning whether or not they have informed the Medium-Term Plan Framework, this is information that now have to assist us in what we do now in our respective countries.

I make particular reference to the fact that as we begin to use the SDGs as a Strategic Framework for framing the development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, we will utilize the information that is generated here this morning and therefore use a similar strategic approach to incorporate the concerns and considerations with respect to biodiversity, with respect to what has been generated at the United Nations Forum on Forests, because it is in all national interests so to do.

As I have made the point earlier, particularly in all small spaces all things connect. We have to make the connection. We have to have the vision and we have to have the commitment to integrate them at the

level of small countries which belong. We are grateful for the additional information. We assure you that we are going to take it to inform how we plan and how we act.

We forewarned that even though it may not be in your Medium-Term Plan specifically, we would be coming to FAO for guidance on these issues.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

Like others, we appreciate the high quality of the presentations which are very important and very educating.

My comment is on the G20 Summit which will take place in Hamburg in July 2017. We welcome the importance that Germany is giving to the two issues of food security and nutrition in the context of the G20 presidency.

As you know, the G20 Summit will be taking place at a very critical time and in the mindset of many political changes that might be affecting the work of the United Nations Organizations in food security and also social organizations which are dealing with humanitarian crises, especially as we are facing now four cases of famines.

My question is given the key role of FAO in this context what would be the key message that the FAO will convey to the Summit?

Sra. María Fernanda Silva (Argentina)

Queremos mencionar, en el mismo sentido que lo ha nombrado la Delegación de Nicaragua, nuestro agradecimiento a la FAO por su apoyo en nuestro Plan SAN-CELAC, el plan que busca cumplir cinco años antes de la meta internacional con el ODS 2, y que reúne a los 33 países que conformamos la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC). Es un plan ambicioso, muy bien estructurado con cuatro pilares, con un aporte muy importante de nuestros parlamentarios, también unidos a la iniciativa de “América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre”, un plan que ha sido ejemplo para otras regiones.

Agradecemos muy especialmente la presencia del Director General, José Graziano da Silva en nuestra Cumbre en República Dominicana este año. El comienzo de este año, el 25 de enero de 2017, él hizo uso de la palabra ante los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de nuestra Comunidad. Le agradecemos su presencia y le agradecemos que haya dicho al mundo que la nuestra, si cumple este objetivo ambicioso, será la primera región en desarrollo que va a erradicar por completo el hambre. De modo tal que nuestro agradecimiento a la FAO por su invaluable colaboración y la elaboración de este proyecto ambicioso que nos une a todos los latinoamericanos y caribeños, a los 33 países que conforman nuestra comunidad CELAC. Estamos convencidos y convencidas de que lo vamos a lograr, y en ese logro, a la FAO le va a caber un capítulo importante. De modo tal que hacemos este reconocimiento y este agradecimiento les agradeceríamos también que esto contara en el acta.

Mr Yubo Xu (China)

We too would like to thank all the speakers for their statements.

China considers a forum like this, with these sorts of presentations, as a very important for giving us an idea of the latest developments in food and agriculture throughout the world. Following what other speakers have said, we too would like to thank them for all this work.

China does have a suggestion on this point. We are wondering whether we could establish a list of priorities for these forums. For instance, in the future we could have a list of say ten forums which are directly linked to the mandate of the FAO. Of course, we would not be able to include all the information from all the forums that have taken place. We have not been able to cover all the other forums in Asia and Africa and in the other regions but we think it might be very useful for us to be able to increase the influence of the FAO by having information on the Organization of forums which are directly linked to the mandate of the FAO.

Mme Joséphine OUEDRAOGO GUISSOU (Observateur du Burkina Faso)

Le Burkina Faso prend la parole pour réitérer à la FAO et au Secrétariat de l'Année internationale des légumineuses tous ses remerciements. Au regard de l'importance capitale de cette culture, le Burkina Faso salue le bilan établi et renouvelle son engagement à promouvoir la filière, afin de la stimuler et d'en faire un secteur socio-économique prioritaire, d'agriculture durable, de lutte contre la malnutrition, de réduction de la pauvreté, de renforcement de la résilience et d'autonomisation des femmes. Le Burkina Faso salue ici l'engagement pris par la FAO à continuer les actions déjà entreprises et, au nom des autorités du Burkina Faso, nous réitérons nos remerciements.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite the speakers to respond to the issues raised and I start by passing the floor to Mr Castro.

Mr René CASTRO SALAZAR (Assistant Director-General, Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department)

Yes, it would be extremely difficult to pull together especially the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture to work in the apparent conflicting issues of concern in the field of biodiversity and the sustainable use of it, but there is no other alternative.

When the conventions were launched in 1992, we did not have enough knowledge. But now we have and we know that there is no other possibility. For example, we envision the exchange of experiences, the connection between the crops and the wild and how we reduce the impact between the two sectors and the competition.

We have been talking more with the Ministers of Environment and Agriculture and of course, with those of Fisheries and Forestry. We think there is a growing acceptance that the only path is cooperation and collaboration. There is no room for waste or for loss of time and energy. We expect that to happen.

Finally, we think that the platform facilitated, for example, development of coherent and consistent mainstreaming approaches and strategies. We think we can support countries in the development of cross-sectoral packages for action and also we can identify policy gaps and governance challenges related to diversity in all relevant sectors. We are confident that we will be able to do that.

Hopefully, FAO Conference in July will receive all the reports about the plan, the notes and the reaction of the stakeholders and by next year we will be able to have it working.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician)

I would like to answer to the three questions that were addressed to me. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the delegates for these questions as they will help me to clarify some of the key points that I was not able to cover during my presentation.

First of all, with regard to the Global Action Plan, it has been endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission and it is foreseen to be presented at the High Level Forum this year and to be adopted also by the ECOSOC.

The Global Action Plan consists of six strategic areas of interventions. Custodian agencies have a role to play especially in translating this Global Action Plan and the Implementation Plan that is based on a sectoral approach for these six strategic areas. We will collaborate with countries that are part of the high level group for developing the Implementation Plan of the Global Action Plan.

As for the second question; what does it take to upgrade the Tier three Indicators that are under FAO custodianship? We are, as I mentioned, actively working to develop proposed methodologies. We have organized a series of expert meetings.

Of course, these methodologies need to go through an international review which will involve the national statistical offices of all Member States. Of course, we hope that these methodologies, that will be proposed, will be accepted in order to help us move forward in moving these indicators from Tier three to Tier two, and to start so the capacity development work and data collection on these indicators.

Key elements for ensuring this upgrade are represented by the fact that these methodologies are internationally agreed and there is a process for receiving feedback from all countries. These methodologies are pilot tested in some countries in order to ensure their feasibility.

As for the third question, and specifically on the capacity development work, a timeline for this and the link with the assessment of the data gaps at country level, we have to recognize that there are indicators at different levels of developments. First of all for the indicators that are already considered as Tier one and Tier two, statistical capacity development initiatives have already started.

We are working both at the global level in developing guidelines, e-learning tools, training of trainers to support countries in the implementation of these indicators that have a methodology that is already internationally accepted, and also with activities to support specifically data collection at country level. As I mentioned, we had a side event during the Council Session on Monday where we presented some of these initiatives. Representatives and delegates are most welcome to request more information on this, if they desire

Of course we have also indicators that are not at that level of development. Our aim, as I said earlier, is to complete the methodological work to have these indicators upgraded before the end of the year so we can start the capacity development work in 2018 and start even the data collection in 2018.

Mr Boubaker BENBELHASSEN (Director, Trade and Markets Division)

I think there were three questions addressed in the context of the G20.

The first one was from Afghanistan on the Hamburg Summit. Actually, it is a Summit of heads of State. The invitation goes to the whole United Nations system. It is the Secretary-General who represents FAO and other UN organizations. As for FAO, we are invited to the Ministerial Meeting in relation to agriculture and FAO Director-General represents the Organization there.

In regards to the question whether FAO had requested to prepare a report on water scarcity. Yes, that was the case. In fact, we were requested by the presidency of Germany this summer given that the overarching theme was water in agriculture. They wanted a report in which we included a number of recommendations and that report was used to develop the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action. We will be happy to make that report available if the Members are interested to see it.

On the question raised by Congo on the issue of integration of small holder farmers to markets. Yes, this issue was tackled under the Mexican presidency in 2012. The issue of small holder productivity in which market integration was an important aspect. But also beyond the G20 collaboration, in FAO as the question sounded what action or what activities we have taken as FAO.

I would like to clarify, the G20 work mainly is geared towards the commitment made by the G20 Members. In FAO, we take on board some specific activities for implementation in which we are called upon specifically, for example, to host the Agriculture Market Information System or the Food Loss and Waste Platform. In these cases we take action on that. The rest is more of a commitment for the G20 countries.

But for FAO on the small holder market integration, it is an important question. Of course that is mainly tackled within now what we call the value chain approach. We do not only look at the production side but the whole chain from the production up to the market consumption. We have a number of projects. We have a number of activities to facilitate that process.

On Africa, again Germany has prioritized the issue of Africa unemployment. In fact, the discussion is still ongoing. The working group is in the development. They are still discussing specific initiatives they will identify as a point for action in order to address the issues related to unemployment in Africa. More specifically to the sector of agriculture.

The last question was raised by Egypt. As I said earlier, FAO provides a lot of technical support within the priorities that were identified by the presidency, so we do not push for any specific items. It is more to provide technical expertise and knowledge. Nevertheless, in this case we worked hard with the German presidency and we would like to thank them for taking on board the issue of four famines. As I

mentioned before, there is a conference taking place these two day - today and yesterday. A high level meeting will be today from 10 to 12 in which there is a session on the four famines.

FAO will be speaking and the Rome-based Agencies will be delivering a joint statement that will be delivered by the IFAD President. It will be calling the attention of the G20 members on the seriousness of the issue. We hope that the outcomes will be reflected in the Leaders' Summit.

Ms Eva MÜLLER (Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division)

There were three questions related to Forestry.

The first one from the European Union on how FAO will integrate the goals and targets of the United Nations Strategic Plan on forests into its own work? Now as I said in my presentation, the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan are very much aligned with the goals and targets of the SDGs, Paris Agreement and biodiversity targets.

As you know, the work of FAO under the strategic programme in the next Medium-Term Plan is also very much aligned with the SDGs. Climate change is a high priority of the Organization. As we have heard from Mr Castro, our work on biodiversity is also going to be strengthened.

What I am saying is there are no discrepancies between the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan and the work FAO will be carrying out under the new Medium-Term Plan.

Having said this, we will bring the Strategic Plan to the attention of the Regional Forestry Commissions of FAO that will be meeting in the second half of 2017. They will be discussing the implications of the plan for the regions and will make recommendations to FAO on how to strengthen its work in support of the plan. The same also with the Committee on Forestry that meets next year where this issue will be brought to the attention of the Member Countries who will then provide further recommendations on how FAO can strengthen its work.

On the second question, how can we achieve the ambitious target of increasing forest count by 3 percent of combatting deforestation? In developing countries, let me say that it is the countries themselves who have made these commitments through the Strategic Plan as well as through the SDGs. Now these targets are global. They are targets at the global level and it does not mean that every single country needs to achieve them or needs to increase its forest cover by 3 percent. Each country would determine its own contributions and will report to United Nations Forum on Forests on these.

Now in more general terms, how an increase in forest cover or halting deforestation can be achieved. We all know that the main driver of deforestation is agriculture and in this context, I would like to refer you to the 2016 Report on the State of the World's Forests which addressed the issue of land use challenges and opportunities of agriculture and forestry and actually highlighted the fact that more than twenty countries in the last twenty-five years have been able to achieve or improve food security and at the same time, maintain or increase their forest cover. So those are very encouraging samples.

Now the last question was on the Great Green Wall, how this programme is coming along. The Great Green Wall is a programme by countries in the Sahel Region led by the African Union and it is not a programme that aims to establish a green wall of trees across the Sahel. It is much more comprehensive than that. It is more about sustainable landscape management and restoration of degraded landscapes.

There seems to be a very strong political commitment by countries to this plan and FAO is currently providing support through a programme funded by the European Union called Action against desertification and we are also currently in very close contact with the countries of the Great Green Wall to strengthen the implementation through the development of projects that are expected to be funded by the Green Climate Fund.

Ms Marcela VILLARREAL (Director, Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division)

Je voudrais d'abord remercier les délégations du Congo et du Burkina Faso qui nous ont encouragés à continuer le travail.

Continues in English

And regarding the comment by Nigeria, I could not agree more that we do need the continuous education and all of the benefits that the pulses bring, which are indeed many, and we continue to learn about them. This year for example, I learned about *mucuna*, which is an African bean which has been proven to be quite effective in the treatment of Parkinson's.

Regarding the water footprint, we know that the production of one kilo of pulses takes around 4,000 litres of water and the production of one kilo of beef takes around 15,000 litres of water. Whereas the quality of the protein, of the pulses when combined with cereals are more or less the same as the quality of protein as the one provided by beef.

So by promoting pulses, I am going to make much easier the work here on my friend and neighbour, René Castro because they do have very important effects on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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

I do not have any particular question addressed to my presentation but I would like to commend Nicaragua and Argentina for their request to have a debate on the CELAC Action Plan for Food Security, Latin America without hunger.

FAO has been very much supporting this plan. We have a regional initiative regarding eradication of hunger in Latin America. We believe it is very much linked to SDG 2. And it is of the discussion, representation in the Council, it is up to us to find what will be the moment and what will be included in the Agenda. But yes, we believe that it is very important to have a discussion and a presentation on this very important plan and with the expectation that Latin America will be the first region to eradicate hunger.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, this concludes item 16 of the agenda which was presented to Council for information only. The list of presentations has been included in the draft Report, and the power point presentations we have just seen will be uploaded to the FAO Members' Gateway.

Debriefing on Field Visits to Morocco and the Sudan (27 February to 8 March 2017) by Senior Officials of Rome-based Permanent Representations

Compte rendu sur les visites de terrain effectuées au Maroc et au Soudan (27 février-8 mars 2017) par des hauts fonctionnaires de bureaux de représentants permanents sis à Rome

Informe oral acerca de las visitas sobre el terreno realizadas por altos funcionarios de las Representaciones Permanentes en Roma a Marruecos y el Sudán (27 de febrero a 8 de marzo de 2017)

CHAIRPERSON

I now welcome to the podium Ms Daleya Uddin, Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to FAO and Mr Lupino Lazaro, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to FAO, who participated in the field visit to Morocco and Sudan from 27 February to 8 March 2017, and who will now debrief the Council on their visit through a video presentation.

Mr Lupino LAZARO (Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to FAO)

On behalf of the participants from the Permanent Representations of Germany, Kuwait, Peru, the Philippines, the United States of America, and Zambia, to the recent field visit to Morocco and Sudan, I am pleased to present some of the group's findings and recommendations for future field visits and substantive work at FAO field offices. Our full report containing additional information will be available on FAO Members' Gateway.

The visit to the two countries is extremely useful to observe the vastly different dynamics and challenges of implementing projects on the ground. However, since there is limited time to devote to field visits, and distances are a huge challenge, identifying neighbouring countries or ones with direct transport links would maximize time on the ground.

During the years when FAO Conference takes place or at the times when FAO Governing Body meetings are shifted up, the Secretariat should consider moving the first yearly field visit date up to early February, to enable participants to attend crucial meetings and to prepare the visit report.

Nominating and appointing the right FAO Representative in the country is critical to act as a reliable catalyser of efforts, ministries, and donors.

Due to the effect of climate change, and the fact that some areas of the country fluctuate between droughts and floods, particular attention should be given to prevention and resilience. Triangular and South-South Cooperation, as well as a deeper interaction with the private sector, should remain high on the agenda. Participatory work with beneficiaries is key for project success.

Raising awareness of the need to preserve natural resources to avoid desertification, water erosion, and land degradation is crucial. Strengthening the collaboration between UN Agencies, including through regular meetings, should be pursued to better learn each other's work and identify areas of cooperation.

In conclusion, the field visit was highly productive, thanks to the preparation by FAO staff at all levels. Despite the logistical challenges, the balance between capital-based and field-based discussion in both countries provided the participants with a representative sample of the complexity of implementing FAO initiatives in these countries. FAO is clearly playing a major role in improving the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations on the ground. The challenge will be to make these efforts sustainable and to replicate and integrate FAO's portfolio of small-scale technical projects in each country's strategic planning to tap resources such as the Green Climate Fund and to attract more participation of the private sector and concerned stakeholders.

The visit was very well-organized, and the participants would like to extend utmost appreciation to the FAO Representatives in Rabat and Khartoum and their respective teams, the FAO HQ Office of Support to Decentralised Offices, and to the officials, institutions, farmers and villagers and other actors we engaged with in Morocco and Sudan.

Ms Daleya UDDIN (Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to FAO)

On behalf of the participants from the Permanent Representations, I would like to present a video with some highlights from our visit. Briefly, I would like to highlight that not only there was equitable gender distribution in our group, but the timing also coincided with International Women's Day. FAO staff in the field did an amazing job showcasing the gender dimensions of FAO's work throughout our visit. As a result, you will see that well represented in the video.

Video Presentation

Présentation video

Videopresentación

Mr Damien KELLY (Observer for Ireland)

I would like to thank our speakers and participants for the presentation which gives great colour to our interpretation of the field trip. A question; what insight do the participants get into the funding of the Regional Offices, or do they get any insight into that?

I suppose you know, if there was any kind of insight into the balance of funding for Regional Offices from the FAO budget and from voluntary contributions locally? How do Regional Offices struggle to survive and depend on local voluntary contributions to keep operations in place and staff and continuity in the work that they do? I just wonder if you got any insight into that and thanks again for the really colourful presentation.

Mr Jón Erlingur JÓNASSON (Iceland)

In the same vein as Ireland, I just want to commend the group for the colourful presentation and encourage future groups, with the assistance of the Secretariat. It really gave us more than simply you met the people - you met the country. You did not have documents in a room and I think especially the inputs where you managed to really record some parts of the presentations were more than colourful. They were also really good to have.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for this presentation of a video which has aesthetic moments. We would like to know the dedication to the field. What kind of staple foods they have eaten? And can the food be produced locally?

Mr Lupino LAZARO (Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to FAO)

We are grateful for the comments, especially the comments about the colourful presentation. We tried to be as creative and unconventional as possible so that we would be able to convey the messages hopefully in a more effective manner to the Council. As our colleague from Iceland said, it is better than just circulating documents.

The full report will be posted soon on the Members Gateway and we would encourage you to take a look at it.

Now we received at least two queries, first on the funding of the Regional Field Offices, and we did have some discussions on it. Similar to what we have been discussing at the Headquarters, there is still more funding needed both from the regular and the extra budgetary funds.

With reference to the question from China, it seems that there is a big variety of local food. When we went to the cereals markets, there was plenty of cereals - from rice to corn, lentils and peas. It is a good variety and Morocco would have better supply. At the same time Sudan has a big potential to produce what is required locally. We are not talking only about cereals but also fisheries and agriculture production in a broader sense.

So that would be my comments, we will provide you with further information the soonest. I would also encourage my colleagues to provide any additional information, if they wish to do so.

Ms Daleya UDDIN SYEDA (Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to FAO)

Regarding funding, there is a bit more details in the report, but a couple of points that I would like to highlight are that Morocco in the region has been very successful in attracting foreign directed investment (FDI). As a middle income country, Morocco has also created a fund of its own for South-South Cooperation with FAO. The Government is providing up to one million dollars itself and has managed to attract another one million from the private sector for a total of two million for South-South Cooperation.

What happens is the projects are tested on a pilot basis in Morocco and then they are shared with other African countries and other regions who are interested. For example, the MOSAICC (Modelling System for Agricultural Impacts of Climate Change) that we showed is going to be shared with four other African countries.

Then in terms of funding for Sudan, one of the biggest challenges is that they do have funding. There is some funding from the Italian Government. We saw some projects funded by European Union as well. The bulk of the funding is focused on humanitarian assistance and there is still a need for funding for FAO and more development related work on the ground.

In terms of staple foods, I think I took a thousand pictures during the visit so maybe I will make another video of the great food that we enjoyed in both Morocco and Sudan, culture cuts that were not included in this video.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I am glad to see that the trip coincided with International Women's Day and that you were able to see a bit more closely some gender projects.

I was wondering if these two countries were countries that had done a gender analysis and if there is any sense of how these projects are helping at the country level, scaling-up some impact on food security? I would like to know if the projects that you visited were all under a regional initiative or if one was a regional initiative and others not.

Have you seen any indication of Rome-based Agency collaboration? On the gender side, I believe it is quite appropriate. We all often say that it is an area where the collaboration is appropriate in order to foster this issue. I would be interested in your insights.

Sra. Claudia GUEVARA DE LA JARA (Observador de Perú)

Mi intervención es como participante en la visita de campo de la FAO. Tratando de responder a la pregunta que realizó Irlanda sobre la movilización de recursos, efectivamente, como mis compañeros ya expresaron, la movilización de recursos para ambos países, para el caso de Marruecos y para el caso de Sudán, es el principal reto que afrontan.

En el caso de Marruecos, una de las principales razones es porque se trata de un país de renta media.

En el caso de Sudán, la principal razón es porque la asistencia está más inclinada hacia la asistencia humanitaria y el reto es hacer que esa asistencia ahora se vuelva hacia el desarrollo.

En cuestión de números, la Oficina de la FAO en Marruecos nos informó que el programa del país para 2013-2016 tenía un presupuesto de 25 millones de dólares, de los cuales Marruecos aportó 6.3 millones, FAO 1.6 millones y otros donantes 17.5 millones. Entre estos otros donantes destacan el GEF (Global Environment Facilities, en inglés) y SECO (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, siempre en inglés).

En cuanto a Sudán, la movilización de recursos fue bastante variada. FAO aportó el 11%, la Unión Europea el 20%, el Reino Unido 25%, Darfur Facility el 15%, Canadá 2% e Italia 3%.

Ms Daleya UDDIN SYEDA (Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to FAO)

In response to Canada's question on gender, we found that both countries had incorporated it into their Country Plan with FAO.

But one of the issues that I wanted to raise on gender is we found in Sudan when we visited the women's project in the rural village in Kassala. Despite the fact that FAO is doing a really good job helping women with their food security, some of the women are facing other development challenges in the village such as access to healthcare and other things that are impacting their ability to generate income. It is a challenging task to take a cross-cutting development look at the issues.

I think Mr Lazaro is going to address the Rome-based Agencies issue.

Mr Lupino LAZARO (Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to FAO)

With regard to the collaboration and whether these are regional initiatives, we observed that they are mainly at the country initiatives because the regional initiatives in Near East and North Africa focuses more on say resilience for food security and nutrition, small agricultural development including family farming and addressing the issue of water scarcity.

I think similar to what the approach is here, it is a cross-cutting topic or concern among the regional initiatives. Gender is a cross-cutting concern as well.

On the Rome-based Agencies collaboration, if you will recall one of our recommendations really is to strengthen the collaboration between United Nations agencies through their regular meetings. This should really be encouraged so that we could identify better the cooperation and at what level should this cooperation be including on gender.

In Morocco, FAO has an established Country Office but they only have WFP and IFAD representatives that are not at the same level of organizations as that of FAO.

In Sudan they are a little bit advanced aside from the Country Office. WFP has a Country Office and then IFAD also has at least a more advanced Liaison Office. That is why they can collaborate more but they collaborate in the context of the United Nations system, not the one like here, the Rome-based Agencies that has separate or exclusive meetings for the Rome-based Agencies. They are meeting under the United Nations system so there are other agencies involved when they do meet.

Ms Daleya UDDIN SYEDA (Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to FAO)

It was possible because they were able to secure flights through WFP because they have better resources on the ground in Sudan.

In Morocco I wanted to highlight we mentioned this but the importance of a really good country representative. The Morocco country representative really believes in local stakeholder buy-in so the projects that we observed in Midelt of the High Atlas Mountains you will notice that they added extra income generation high value added product processing but those ideas all came from the Women's Cooperative. They were not part of the initial project.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

First of all we highly appreciate the introduction by the two colleagues on their visit.

From our perspective the country that can really give us good lessons in water scarcity management is Morocco. It is highly successful. For the Near East, it really is a model. FAO should do something to produce the experience of Morocco.

In Sudan, it is a country with enormous potential for agriculture. The problem in Sudan is lack of investment. There the Government of Sudan is promoting for an investment but it is coming very slowly. Take the case of pulses. Sudan is a huge, huge potential in the production of pulses.

M. Imed SELATNIA (Algérie)

L'Algérie saisit cette occasion pour saluer et louer cet instrument efficace que sont les visites de terrain, qu'organise la FAO. Elles démontrent les efforts que déploie l'Organisation dans le cadre de la décentralisation et à travers ce genre de visite, on peut constater l'efficacité des différents niveaux de représentation de la FAO que ce soit au niveau régional ou au niveau des bureaux de pays. Et puisque ces visites de terrain mettent en exergue des «success stories», nous voudrions attirer l'attention de la FAO sur l'importance de les concentrer aussi sur les régions en difficulté en Afrique, notamment dans les zones où sévissent les famines. Et ce pour être à proximité, sur le terrain, là où les populations connaissent des difficultés, et dans le but de fournir des informations importantes pour essayer de remédier à ce genre de situation. Nous saluons donc très fortement ces initiatives qui sont importantes et nous aident ainsi que l'Organisation à être proche des populations et de leurs difficultés.

Mr Badreldin ELSHIEKH MOHAMED ELHASSAN (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

First of all, on behalf of the government of Sudan, we would like to thank the FAO represented by the team that conducted a visit to our country. In Sudan, we value these kind of visits and missions because we are bound to benefit from them. Indeed, through these missions you can see the reality on the field and you can take enlightened decisions based upon them. Thanks to this visit, there was an opportunity to discuss many issues with the team and we believe that Sudan benefitted quite a bit from this visit. We value one more time these kinds of visits and we hope for these missions to be repeated and we would hope for every country to benefit from them.

Our colleague from Afghanistan mentioned something quite important. Indeed, investments are important for us. The lack of investment is due to the sanctions against the country. However, now the situation is improving. There are quite a few investments in Sudan. Our country today can benefit from a document prepared by FAO. It is a document that has to do with investment in agriculture. This is something that we will benefit from and now we call upon everyone to visit Sudan and to conduct also visits to other countries. I would like to seize the opportunity today to call upon all of you to come and visit the country to see the potential of my country and to see what we can do. There is a huge potential in my country and I would wish for all of you to see it.

Mr Lupino LAZARO (Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to FAO)

Thank you once again for the interventions and the additional insights shared by members. Indeed, this is one of the purposes of the field visit to try to stir up what else would members and countries, especially those that are visited, would require more and what they can also contribute back to the Organization.

For example, what Dr. Ayazi has mentioned the areas that we have to focus on and also the additional suggestions from Algeria about the countries with a real need of assistance from FAO.

And to the government of Sudan, we really are very grateful for the kind and very hospitable accommodation. We were lucky that Ambassador Gornass was also there at the time of our visit and she also graciously hosted us lunch on top of the lunch that was catered by the Ministry of Agriculture for us. We were very much informed. We learned a lot. We were assured that we are food secure when we were in Sudan as well as in Morocco.

M. Mahamat Abdoulaye SENOSSI (Observateur de Tchad)

Je voudrais m'associer à tous ceux qui m'ont précédé pour remercier la FAO. Au titre de cette visite de terrain, je voudrais revenir sur la récente visite du Directeur général de la FAO au Tchad, et particulièrement dans le bassin du lac Tchad où il a, dans son interview, reconnu les difficultés des réfugiés à retourner chez eux, suite aux exactions de terroristes dans la région. Mon intervention est donc juste à titre de remerciement et de complément d'information par rapport à la visite de terrain, et je m'associe à l'Algérie qui préconisait de multiplier ce genre de visite sur le terrain pour se rendre compte de la réalité des difficultés rencontrées par les pays membres.

M. Imed SELATNIA (Algérie)

Pour reprendre ce que vient d'aborder le distingué délégué du Tchad, l'intention de notre intervention était justement de jeter la lumière en particulier sur la région du Sahel, où le Directeur général de la FAO s'est donc rendu en visitant le Tchad. En effet la région du Sahel requiert une attention particulière dans ce cadre, dans le cadre du mandat de la FAO, et nous encourageons toutes ces initiatives axées notamment sur cette région du continent africain.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Daleya and Lupino, for debriefing the Council on the field visit in Morocco and Sudan. I also want to thank the whole team who made the field visit and took the effort to grow and elaborate reports as well as in educating the membership. Your recommendations regarding improvements in the arrangements for field visits by perm rep in future could be discussed in the informal meetings heard by ICC with Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the regional groups.

I hope the Secretariat has also taken note as the Director of the Office of Support to Decentralized Offices is here. I also wanted to thank the host countries for the good arrangements and also thank Ambassador Gornass for hosting our team. I know you are the Chairperson of the Committee on Food Security, so food security was at the utmost.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached the end of this morning's plenary meeting. Before we close our morning meeting, I will give the floor to the Secretary-General who will make some announcements. Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind Members of the *Joint FAO/WFP Briefing on the Food Security Situation in Northeast Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen – Working Together to Save Lives and Livelihoods*, which will take place in the Sheikh Zayed Centre from 12:30 to 14:30, with the participation of the FAO Director-General and a video-link with the Executive-Director of WFP from Geneva.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, this brings us to the end of this morning's meeting. We shall meet again at 15.00 hours this afternoon for the Adoption of the Report.

The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12:00 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.00

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| Hundred and Fifty-sixth Session Cent cinquante-sixième session 156.º período de sesiones |
| Rome, 24-28 April 2017 Rome, 24-28 avril 2017 Roma, 24-28 de abril de 2017 |
| SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA |
| 28 April 2017 |

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 15.13 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 15 h 13
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 15.13
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Seventh and final meeting of the 156th Session of the FAO Council.

We will now proceed with the Adoption of the Report. Please ensure that you have the relevant document before you: CL 156/Draft Report.

Before I pass the floor to the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee I wish to inform Council that under item 10, *Arrangements for the 40th Session of the Conference*, we have now received the nomination of Vanuatu for the third Vice-Chairperson of the Conference.

I wish to remind Council, that the nominations of His Excellency Aziz Akhannouch, Minister for Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests of Morocco and Mr Thomas Duffy, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to FAO were endorsed by Council on Wednesday morning.

May I take it that Council endorses the nomination of Vanuatu as third Vice-Chairperson of the Conference. The name of the officer will be communicated by the Government of Vanuatu in due course.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

With regard to the nomination of Oman as Chairperson of Commission I, endorsed by Council on Wednesday morning, I wish to inform that His Excellency Ahmed bin Nasser Al-Bakry, Undersecretary for Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Oman has been nominated. This information will be included in the Report of Council.

I now invite Mr Khaled El Taweel, Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to present the report.

Mr Khaled EL Taweel (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

It was a great honour and a pleasure to chair the Drafting Committee of the 156th Session of the FAO Council. I am pleased to report to you that the Committee met for one session only on Wednesday 26 and successfully finished its deliberations and reached consensus in exactly 100 minutes.

I was told this may be a record and I believe that the credit for that goes entirely to the ICC for his efficient leadership and excellent summaries of the Agenda Items which was not always an easy task.

My sincere appreciation goes to all members of the Drafting Committee: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mexico, Romania, Russian Federation, Sudan, and the United States of America. I thank them for their exceptionally constructive spirit, flexibility, as well as total respect of what became now the customary rules of the Drafting Committee.

As usual, the Committee's work was made more efficient with the excellent support from the Secretariat and I would like to thank them for that. I also thank the interpreters for their excellent and tireless work. The report of the Drafting Committee was agreed by consensus; this includes the endorsement of the budget level as well as the approval of the Programme of Work for 2018–19. This again confirms the constructive spirit of Members.

Before I conclude, and since this will be the last Council session under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Ngirwa, allow me to express my sincere personal appreciation for his invaluable work and dedication.

Mr Chairperson, as Chair of the Drafting Committee, I recommend you to invite the Council Members to adopt the report in block. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr El Taweel. I would like to extend my appreciation to you and to the members of the Drafting Committee for the good work done.

It appears to me, and I think it appears also to you, that the Report of this Session may be approved in block. Any linguistic observations should be communicated in writing to the Secretariat for inclusion in the Final Report.

Does the Council wish to adopt the Report in block?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. The Report of the 156th Session of the FAO Council is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

I now invite the Director-General to address the Council.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Let me start by thanking all of you for the support throughout this Council Session, and especially for your endorsement of the budget level as proposed in the PWB 2018-19. As I said on Monday, this will allow us to focus more on substantive matters during the Conference in July. Thank you very much.

I also very much appreciate your encouragement for Members to provide voluntary contributions to reinforce and address some areas that could not be properly accommodated in the regular budget.

In fact, voluntary contributions are essential to unlock its full potential to support Member Nations achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDGs 1 and 2 of ending extreme poverty and hunger.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is our guide for the coming years. The PWB, the Medium Term Plan 2018-2021 and the Reviewed Strategic Framework will put FAO to work in total coordination with the SDGs. I would also like to thank you for supporting the priorities and areas of de-emphasis in the PWB.

I welcome the inclusion of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) among the areas to be reinforced to promote sustainable agriculture production, along with biodiversity, agroecology and biotechnologies.

South-South Cooperation is also important for countries to exchange knowledge and achieve sustainable development. I am sure that South-South Cooperation will gain further momentum at FAO with the new Division for Partnerships, Advocacy, Capacity Development and South-South Cooperation. We very much welcome extrabudgetary contributions in this area.

This Council Session represents another step forward in our common quest to make FAO more efficient, more fitted to address complex and interconnected challenges, and more effective in supporting its Members.

The results of the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity confirm that we have been on the right track since 2012. Over the last five years, we have been able to increase our technical capacity despite the flat nominal budget level and overall decline in the number of regular budget posts. I firmly believe that Council has taken the right decision in recommending the involvement of the Office of Evaluation, in order to internalize and institutionalize future assessments.

I spent the last three days in Geneva. And I am glad to confirm that FAO has been designated as co-chair of the Global Migration Group (the GMG), in 2018, along with the International Organization on Migration (IOM). As co-chair of the GMG next year, we will have three priorities: First, leverage the contribution of the GMG for the elaboration of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; second, highlight the importance of investing in agriculture sectors and rural development to address the root causes of distress migration; and third, harness the contribution that migration can give to sustainable development.

In fact, FAO is committed to make migration an important element of the development agenda, and not allow migration to be considered only from a humanitarian point of view. This approach is also part of FAO's efforts to support conflict-affected rural livelihoods.

Many of you were present today in the joint side event organized by FAO and WFP on the situation of famine in South Sudan and the risk of famine in Somalia, Northeast Nigeria and Yemen. Building resilience of rural-based livelihoods, and supporting agriculture sectors, including livestock and fisheries, are fundamental actions to save lives now and in the future, and preserve their livelihoods.

To face this enormous challenge, as well as many others to achieve sustainable development, we need to act immediately. In this regard, FAO, WFP and IFAD are entering a new era of further and intense collaboration between the three Rome-based Agencies.

A better, safer and more peaceful world can only be achieved with the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. These are, and must be, our priorities and we have the obligation to work together to do it.

Thank you very much for your support and this opportunity to address the Council

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General.

Before proceeding to the closing of this Session, I will ask Ambassador Claudio Rozencwaig of Argentina, the Vice-Chairperson, to take the seat and chair the following part of this session.

Unveiling of the Portrait of Mr Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the Council

Dévoilement du portrait de M. Wilfred Ngirwa, Président indépendant du Conseil

Descubrimiento del retrato del Sr. Wilfred Ngirwa, Presidente Independiente del Consejo

EL PRESIDENTE

Gracias Señor Presidente Independiente del Consejo.

. Es un honor presidir esta parte de la sesión en vista de que ha llegado el momento de descubrir el retrato del Señor Wilfred Ngirwa.

Aunque el mandato del Señor Ngirwa como Presidente Independiente del Consejo no concluirá hasta la Conferencia de julio de este año, este es el último período de sesiones del Consejo que él va a presidir. Su retrato ahora se unirá a los retratos de los otros Presidentes que han dirigido el Consejo desde 1945 en esta Sala Roja.

Ahora quisiera invitar al Director General, Sr. Graziano da Silva, al Presidente Independiente del Consejo, Sr. Ngirwa, al Secretario General del Consejo, Sr. Gagnon, a proceder ante el retrato para la ceremonia.

Les ruego que permanezcan en sus asientos durante la ceremonia.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL DIRECTOR GENERAL

Quería solo decirles que tuve oportunidad de convivir con Wilfred desde su tiempo como Representante de Tanzania acá en la FAO, y después en estos últimos cuatro años como Presidente del Consejo. Y quería destacar una sola cualidad que ha hecho mucha diferencia en la manera con que actuó en sus años, o sea, su capacidad de generar consenso. Y lo vimos hoy día, es la segunda vez consecutiva que ese Consejo, en circunstancias muy difíciles, llega a un consenso sobre el presupuesto, liberando la Conferencia para las discusiones del programa, que es el momento cuando los países pueden contribuir, los Ministros que llegan, los Representantes que vienen en la capital, pueden contribuir. Yo creo que eso ha sido un marco muy importante. Generar consenso demanda, muchas veces, una actividad invisible por detrás de la escena como decimos, una actividad infatigable de hablar con uno y con otro hasta lograr posiciones que puedan ser conciliadas y evitar el confronto.

Y yo creo que en eso Wilfred ha sido imbatible. Por eso quiero agradecer, de verdad, todo el esfuerzo que ha dedicado, todo el tiempo extra y quiero aprovechar también y agradecer la familia que aquí se hace presente en este momento tan importante. Yo creo que sin la contribución de su mujer y de su familia no habría sido posible la dedicación integral que tuvo en sus cuatro años. Así que Wilfred Ngirwa y familia, muchas gracias.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL PRESIDENTE

. Ahora invito al Señor Ngirwa para que tome la palabra.

Mr Wilfred NGIRWA (Independent Chairperson of the Council)

Excellencies, Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks to the Director-General for his kind words of appreciation on the unveiling of my portrait. Of course, I am also deeply grateful to Mr Graziano da Silva for his unfailing presence at all sessions of Council during my terms of office, and for his constant support, especially when we were faced with challenging issues.

Indeed, we all know that the Director-General himself has had to deal with programmatic matters that were far from simple to implement, most notably the *Revised Strategic Framework* that now guides the work of FAO, and which was successfully rolled out, thanks also to the constructive engagement of the Council.

As of this afternoon I have, in a sense, joined my predecessors in the form of a portrait. A portrait is a perennial form of “virtual reality” that will keep me connected with FAO when I am back in Tanzania. It is also a mark of continuity of this vital FAO Governing Body.

Looking around, you will see a series of portraits that draws attention not only to the global nature of this institution, but also to the fact that the driving force of any institution flows from the individuals it comprises, whether as representatives of countries, organizations or of management, or, in my case, as your Independent Chairperson.

I was also very glad that the unveiling of the portrait gave me the opportunity to introduce my dear wife to those of you who have not had the opportunity to meet Emiliana. I was able to undertake the role of Independent Chairperson, and previously that of Ambassador of Tanzania, thanks to Emiliana’s kind understanding and generous support.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

I also appreciate the presence of some members of my family, Richard and Andrew and also the Ambassador of the Embassy of Tanzania in Rome, H. E. George Madafa.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have come to the end not only of the 156th Session of Council, but also to the last of the ten sessions I have had the honour to chair since first taking office in June 2013. It therefore is an appropriate time now for me to reflect on the “track record” of the Council over almost four years.

I believe it is particularly significant that productive informal consultations have resulted in consensus on the budget level for 2018-19. This session of Council has agreed on a draft resolution on budgetary appropriations to submit to the Conference for approval, as was the case in March 2015 when it was referred to as an historic consensus.

This achievement is due in large measure to our willingness and ability to work productively with each other, and also with management, towards finding workable solutions to the trials of each session.

During my time as Independent Chairperson, I have witnessed how consensus building takes place when the points of view of all Members are acknowledged, listened to in good faith, understood, and accepted to the extent possible.

I am therefore grateful to all of you, Members and Management alike, for your readiness to engage with complex and sometimes divisive issues in a forthright and respectful manner. This has certainly made my work in facilitating and achieving consensus less strenuous.

Some Members might recall that it took a decade-long reform process, and many sessions of Council and Working Groups, to develop our present business-like and transparent decision-making process.

I am in the privileged position of having seen governance reforms coming to fruition over the past decade. I had the privilege to be Vice-Chairperson of the *Open-ended Working Group on Measures Designed to Increase the Efficiency of Governing Bodies, Including Representation*, and can assure you that reaching agreement on all aspects of the Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA) was no easy task. Nor was implementation of the IPA without its difficulties.

Nonetheless, the Members acknowledged the benefits of having transparent and less divisive governance processes in FAO and, by exploring new ways of working together, we forged a common understanding on how best to conduct our deliberations.

I can confirm that positive changes did occur, and that the way Council works today is undoubtedly more focused and more efficient compared to those pre-IPA practices, which prompted Members to call for reform.

A key milestone in the reform process came in December 2014, when the Independent Review Team reported that progress in governance reform had been considerable, and that trust had largely been re-established between Members and Management, and also among the Members themselves.

I find the benefits of renewal are particularly evident in the regular informal meetings I hold with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Regional Groups, and I wish to recognize the support and engagement of all regions in this useful forum, as well as in the many other informal contacts I had over the past four years, and no doubt will continue until the Conference in July this year, when I will step down as Independent Chairperson of the Council.

I should like to express my gratitude to the Director-General and FAO senior management for having fully grasped and espoused the spirit of the IPA and beyond, and for understanding the importance Members attach to nurturing and strengthening the good governance practices of Council and the other Governing Bodies.

The constructive approach was very evident during my first mandate when we built up a good team dynamic in the FAO/WHO Joint Working Group that negotiated the two outcome documents of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), eventually finalized by an Open-ended Working Group of the entire membership of FAO and WHO. This led to a successful ICN2 in November 2014.

Later, in December 2014 the Council tasked me with leading an Open-ended Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. Accordingly, negotiations were held with Regional Group Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons at informal meetings convened between April and May 2015. The outcome of these informal meetings was a Conference Resolution adopted unanimously in June 2015.

Subsequently, I was mandated by the Council to hold consultations with the regional groups, open to all Members, with a view to reaching agreement on the proposed rules for participation of Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector Representatives in FAO meetings. Again, inter-sessional informal consultations were the basis of the consensual decision by Council to maintain the *status quo* in this area.

Similarly, the outcome of the important review of decentralized offices was constructively discussed and negotiated through informal meetings and ended with a sound decision by the Council and Conference.

More recently, I was tasked by the Council in December 2016 to consult with certain Article XIV bodies with a view to developing a proposal on procedures for the appointment of Secretaries of such bodies, and with the assistance of Members and management I have begun to fulfil this mandate.

I have mentioned our informal working groups as I believe they testify the change the IPA brought to our working practices. All of the processes I have outlined combined informal negotiations among Members, with high value input by management, in an informal setting before Governing Bodies formally endorsed our decisions.

On his election as UN Secretary-General in October last year, Mr António Guterres remarked that the dramatic problems of today's complex world inspire us to adopt a humble approach – one in which the Secretary-General does not seek to impose his views; but makes his good offices available, working as a convener, a mediator, a bridge-builder and an honest broker to help find solutions that benefit everyone involved.

I believe this outline of the role of the head of the United Nations Organization can reasonably be extended to, and mirrored in, the leadership of Chairs of all FAO Governing Bodies.

Before closing this session, I would like to express my gratitude to Ambassador Serge Tomasi and Mr Khaled Mehboob for following issues closely as they were discussed by the Committees they chair, and then again in the Council. Likewise, Mr Lubomir Ivanov has constantly supported the work of the CCLM and Council despite the challenges of no longer being based in Rome. I am grateful to all three Chairpersons of the Committees of Council for their unfailing support and wise counsel throughout their terms of office. They leave behind them robust working norms.

I should also like to express my appreciation for the work of those who enabled the session to take place: those who wrote the documents, the translators and interpreters, the verbatim hub, the editors and reports office staff, the Secretary-General, Mr Gagnon, and Assistant Secretary-General, Ms Piacentini, the Secretariat as a whole, which provides support before, during and after the session, the facilities group, the Security Guards and all the messengers. On a special note, I thank my assistant, Mr Giancarlo Mariotti for his support. I thank them all.

A word of closing my concluding remarks is that I have always depended on your understanding, patience, constructive criticism and willingness to seek compromise. Our consolidated methods to work with management while respecting mandates entrusted to each body remain fundamental.

With this we have concluded the 156th Session of the FAO Council. I wish you all a restful weekend and a safe journey to all those who are travelling home.

M. Dominique AWONO ESSAMA (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun prend la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

Au moment où nous clôturons, de la meilleure manière, les travaux de cette 156^{ème} session du Conseil, qui est également la dernière des dix sessions que notre collègue et frère a brillamment présidées, concluant ainsi son deuxième et dernier mandat comme Président indépendant du Conseil, notre groupe régional, par ma modeste voix, lui adresse un satisfecit total et solennel sur l'ensemble de son travail à la tête du Conseil.

Ce satisfecit se fonde évidemment sur une parfaite appréciation des résultats positifs que nous avons engrangés ces quatre dernières années, au plan du fonctionnement des organes de gouvernance de la FAO.

En effet, Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil, vous avez apporté une touche personnelle dans le déroulement des délibérations du Conseil. Vos résumés des discussions sur chaque point de l'ordre du jour, sur lequel un consensus se dégagait toujours en plénière, facilitait énormément le travail du Comité de rédaction. On retiendra, pour les archives, que le travail du Comité de rédaction de la 156^{ème} session a duré moins d'une heure, une prouesse sans précédent.

Par ailleurs, vos techniques de facilitation basées sur l'écoute, la consultation régulière, la négociation et la recherche permanente du consensus ont conduit à créer une confiance soutenue entre les membres du Conseil, d'une part, et entre le Secrétariat et les membres, d'autre part.

Sur le plan personnel, nous savons que la position de Président indépendant du Conseil, et toutes les obligations qui en découlent, vous ont très souvent tenu éloigné de votre famille. Nul doute que Madame Emiliana Ngirwa saura apprécier le nouveau bonheur procuré par votre retour à la maison.

Pour terminer, permettez-moi de vous souhaiter un bon retour en votre Tanzanie natale à la fin de votre mandat en juillet prochain, et, si vous choisissez de jouir localement du privilège de votre retraite, du reste bien méritée, que celle-ci se déroule dans les meilleures conditions possibles.

Que le même succès vous accompagne dans vos autres activités futures et que l'Éternel Tout Puissant vous accorde de longs jours pour faire bénéficier le plus grand nombre possible de votre longue et riche expérience.

Sra. María Fernanda SILVA (Argentina)

La Delegación de la República Argentina, Vicepresidencia del GRULAC, solicita la palabra para la Presidencia del GRULAC, la República de El Salvador.

Sra. María Abelina TORRES DE MEILLIEZ (Observador de El Salvador)

En nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC) es un honor hacer llegar a este Consejo el reconocimiento de nuestro grupo regional al Embajador Wilfred Ngirwa por la excelente labor realizada en los últimos cuatro años como Presidente Independiente del Consejo de la FAO.

Al frente de sus funciones como Presidente Independiente del Consejo, el Embajador Ngirwa ha puesto muy en alto el nombre de su país Tanzania y de África en general, así como el de todo el mundo en desarrollo como reflejo de su experiencia diplomática, profesional y humana.

Su amplia experiencia y conocimiento de la Organización, le ha permitido guiar nuestro trabajo en forma muy acertada y para el bien de la FAO. El Presidente Ngirwa se destacó durante sus dos períodos como Presidente Independiente del Consejo, por sus habilidades diplomáticas como constructor de puentes, facilitador de negociaciones y eliminador de conflictos, a través de diálogo y la concertación, fortaleciendo los principios del multilateralismo y buscando siempre lo mejor para nuestros países y la Organización.

La Sala Roja se ve honrada con su retrato.

Le reiteramos Señor Presidente el reconocimiento y felicitación del GRULAC y le deseamos continuar cosechando muchos éxitos en su carrera.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Egypt)

I would like to ask the floor for the Islamic Republic of Iran, to deliver a statement on behalf of the Near East Group. Thank you.

Mr Shanin GHORASHIZADEH (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran)

The Islamic Republic of Iran is honoured to present this farewell statement on behalf of the Near East Group for the ICC.

Chairperson, the Near East Group is sad to see you leave this important post. Not only because you are an incredibly talented leader but also because you are a great friend and a person who exemplars excellence.

You came to Rome as Tanzania's Ambassador to the Rome-based Agencies with the lengthy and rich experience at a high official position in your own country. Before being elected as the Independent Chairperson of the Council in June 2013, the Membership of FAO and the FAO Secretariat benefited greatly from your involvement in the reform of FAO and, particularly as Vice-Chair for the Open Ended Working Group on Governance, whose Chair was Professor Saeid Noori Naeini of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

As the ICC, over the past four years you have demonstrated your competence, dedication, commitment, and your efforts to push the boundaries of any assignment delegated to you. Truly you gave more than 100 percent in reaching for consensus.

I am unable to list all your accomplishments but I do wish to underscore four of them.

First is your 'Superman' management of the Session of Council, we all greatly admire that.

Secondly, your regular consultation with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Regional Groups with the view of reaching consensus on difficult issues facing Membership.

Third is your constant concern to improve the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Council.

And fourth is your precious and brief summary of each Item of the Agenda which has greatly facilitated the task of the Drafting Committee. Yesterday, Mr Khaled El Taweel as Chair was able to complete the work of the Drafting Committee in one session.

Your personal dignity, your open and positive attitude and your commitment to good causes will always be remembered.

As the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, you gave more than 100 percent and your presence will be badly missed. We wish you all the best in whatever you do after leaving Rome. Your portrait will remain on this wall forever along with three distinguished Africans, namely Bukar Shaib of Nigeria, Lassaad Ben Osman of Tunisia, and Aziz Mekouar of Morocco.

We wish you all the best and God bless you. Thank you.

Mr Spyridon ELLINAS (Cyprus)

I would like first to thank the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council for the competence and dedication with which you have carried out your assignment.

Having said that, Mr Vice-Chairperson, I would like to ask you to give the floor to Malta to deliver a statement on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States, and then to the Netherlands to deliver a statement on behalf of the Europe Group.

Ms Vanessa FRAZIER (Observer for Malta)

On behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States, as well as San Marino, I would like to thank you, Independent Chairperson of the Council, for your diligent and tireless way of conducting our work. In this respect, you have made positive steps in strengthening the dialogue between the Membership, the management, and the Governing Bodies.

During your tenure, many relevant issues were raised, discussed, and concluded. For those still in progress, we express our wish to continue having a constructive consultation process and the smooth transition of work between you and the next Chair.

With this, we wish you the very best in your future roles and thank you once again for your service as Independent Chair of the Council.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Observer for the Netherlands)

Independent Chair of the Council, on behalf of the European Regional Group, I would like to thank you for the work you have done. Your last minutes in chairing the FAO Council in the eternal city of Rome are there and we would like to thank you for guiding us in trying to achieve our ultimate goal of food security and sustainability, leaving no one behind.

You have shown us how important the role of Independent Chair of the Council is. The constructive way in which you have done your work with a listening ear and moreover, a very positive attitude, made it possible to arrive at a consensus in the Council on many important issues.

You made it possible to achieve it in a way that we could leave the Council with results and you have dealt with many important issues, you already said it, many budgets, a governance reform, but also difficult and important issues like the Article XIV bodies and I think a crucial event on gender.

With your portrait and via your portrait, you have an eternal oversight of future councils and I was hoping that this would go with celebrations during this afternoon, Friday late afternoon, but I think for that we have to wait until after the Conference.

On behalf of the European Regional Group, I would like to thank you for all of the work done.

Mr João Carlos DE SOUZA-GOMES (Brazil)

I would like to support and endorse the comments made by the Chair of GRULAC and by our dear Director-General referring to the wonderful job carried out by you, Ambassador Ngirwa.

Allow me to address you at this juncture to convey to you our recognition for the outstanding leadership and skill with which you have conducted our work. Your ability as Chairperson of this Council, since 2013, has allowed us to achieve consensus on many delicate issues and thus to overcome what seemed to be, at first, unsurmountable differences among Members.

Twice in the history of the Organization we have been able to recommend to the Conference a consensual budget proposal, both times under your leadership. This is no minor accomplishment, testifying to the high degree of confidence that members have on your chairing of our deliberations. I have not been here long, but I could observe the serene and authoritative way with which you have managed the long agenda for this session.

FAO comes out stronger after these four years. As your Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in your nomination for a second term, there is enhanced trust and unity among Member States. This spirit of trust and deeper collaboration between the membership and the administration is one of your main achievements as Independent Chairperson of the Council.

As you complete your second mandate, my delegation wishes to pay tribute to your consistent and outstanding leadership, your vast knowledge and experience, your diplomatic skills. Please accept our best wishes in your future endeavors. “Asante sana”.

Mr Khalid MEHOOB (Pakistan)

I make this statement on behalf of the Asia Group.

Ambassador Ngirwa, this is a momentous occasion for all who have worked with you over the past ten years.

First, for six years as Tanzania's Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the United Nations Agencies based in Rome, where you also held leadership positions as Vice-Chairperson for the Conference Committee on the Reform of FAO and also as Chair of the Africa Regional Group.

Second, for four years as the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

As ICC over the past four years, you set new standards of objectivity and played an enhanced and proactive facilitation role in achieving consensus among the Member Nations, thus enabling the Council to better discharge its role in governance and oversight.

In this connection, you also set an example in interacting with the Chairs of the Programme and Finance Committees, as well as the Chair of the CCLM. Moreover, your practice of regular consultations with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Regional Groups contributed greatly to the achievement of consensus on some difficult and controversial issues.

We greatly admire your patience, your positive, open and friendly attitude, as well as your humour and wit, and the great length you always went in order to achieve consensus so that the unity of the Membership is preserved.

Ambassador, we, your colleagues, benefited greatly from your vast experience and knowledge. Moreover, your dedication and commitment to delivering your mandate will always be remembered with admiration by all and your portrait will be a constant reminder of one of our most successful ICCs.

Finally Ambassador, we wish you all the very best in your future endeavours.

Mr Nii QUAYE KUMAH (Observer for Ghana)

We align our statement with that made by Cameroon on behalf of the African Regional Group.

Ambassador Wilfred Joseph Ngirwa, our Senior Ndugu, our Mjomba, like those who made statements before us, we acknowledge that this is humbling time for us to attempt to take stock of what you have guided us to achieve together.

Your steady and experienced hands in steering the affairs of this Council during your tenure of office has brought us this far, to the successful completion of yet another Session. During turbulent times on our voyages, you were the calm Captain who guided us to our destinations safely.

Under your guidance, we chalked the unprecedented feat of achieving consensus on the budget level for the ensuing Biennium at the Session of Council preceding the Conference in 2015. Again this year, you demonstrated your prowess in guiding us to yet another consensus on the budget level at the Session of Council preceding Conference.

Your consistent engagement with Permanent Representatives, seeking their view on all issues and building bridges where there were divergence in opinions and positions, taught us new dimensions of the power of negotiation and how to rally all parties in generating consensus.

You did not engage only Council Members, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, you did so with younger Alternates with whom you discussed freely as you sought their views on key issues. It takes a great leader to have such wisdom and to be receptive to and be guided by views from a wide spectrum.

Chair, you have been a great leader for our Council and we thank you for everything, especially your patience in guiding us through successful Council Sessions.

At this juncture, we wish to thank your dear wife, Madame Emiliana, and the family for their generous support to you during your tenure of office. As you take a bow, we congratulate you on a job well done. You have been an inspiration to all of us and we take this opportunity to wish you well in your next endeavours. “Asante Sana, Mjomba”

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

Ambassador Ngirwa, on behalf of our Delegation, we would like to express our gratitude for a long and fruitful period of work leading the Council's activities over the last four years. We value most highly your constructive contribution to the task of solving the key problems in the Agenda of the FAO's Governing Bodies.

We also welcome the part you personally have played in the efforts to achieve consensus on the many thorny issues outside the Council sessions and your active dialogue with Member Nations.

Your unchanging calm, your inter-per durability and your positive attitude have made it possible in the Council to have a friendly working atmosphere ruling. These qualities will be long remembered in the Organization.

We are grateful to you, our Distinguished Independent Chairperson.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group.

I am very happy that my very good friend, Ambassador Wilfred Ngirwa, a son of Africa is being honoured today. Wilfred is a quintessential African gentleman – kind, affable, humble, infinitely patient, a consensus builder and possessed of a spirit that never gives up.

Indeed, as Africans we never allow circumstances to dampen our spirits or diminish our sense of self-worth. Wilfred acquired these attributes in his childhood while sitting by the fire on many dark nights in his village in rural Tanzania. These qualities have endeared him to many here in Rome and enabled him to help Member States to find common ground even when their interests at first appeared irreconcilable.

I first met Wilfred when I came to Rome in November 2014 but it is like I have known him my whole life. He welcomed me as a brother and never insisted that I should make an appointment before coming to his office. As a result, I just pop in and if he is in he never refuses to see me. I found him to be a fount of knowledge on the Basic Texts and practice in FAO.

I have learnt a lot from you, Ambassador Ngirwa. He soon observed that I have a sweet tooth and filled the two bowls in his office with my favourite sweets. And whenever I arrive home sucking on a sweet my wife immediately knows that I have been to Ambassador Ngirwa's office. Of late, both Wilfred and myself have developed a liking for the tomahawk steak offered by the Rosso restaurant across the road.

I will miss Wilfred. And the sweets too! Thank you Ndugu. You have done us all proud with your negotiating skills, patience, impartiality and dedication to duty.

Mr Yaya Adisa OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

I think we can all just look around the room and see a testimony as to the ambiance of the ability of Mr Ngirwa to get people comfortable. Even with the last minute of the Council we still have the whole room filled with delegates and everybody still looks very fresh. It has not stressed us. I want to thank you for that.

I have listened very carefully to the various accolades that sincerely have been poured on you, which you truly deserve. I was hoping one word would be missed but it was not. The key words that I want to remember you for are patience, wisdom, humility and a consensus builder. You are an amazing gentleman.

I have personally learned a lot from you working with you for about ten years now, as senior colleague and as Independent Chairman of Council. Surely we will all miss your ability and competence of galvanizing opinions and being able to siphon and bring out the key elements that made it possible for us not to have night sessions in Council. This is quite appreciated.

I want to sincerely thank Mrs Emiliana Ngirwa whom I had the opportunity to meet in Tanzania while her husband was here, during a country visit with IFAD. Like her husband, she was quite an amiable lady; very kind, very sincere and very cooperative. We thank you most sincerely for granting him that peace that allowed him to work the way he has done.

I also want to thank all the Members of his family that are here today. As you return to Tanzania, hopefully if you are not called out to New York or somewhere else, we look forward to continuing our friendship with you. Looking at the wall, I think we have a real museum sitting down there.

Mr Badreldin ELSHIEKH MOHAMED ELHASSAN (Sudan)

We align ourselves with the statement made by the Republic of Iran on behalf of the Near East, and by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group.

We would like to avail ourselves of the sad occasion of the end of your term of office as Independent Chairperson of FAO Council to express our heartfelt thanks for your invaluable contribution to the work of this Organization.

Indeed, your perseverance and politeness have proved to be fundamental to respond to the challenges that pave the path of such an arduous task, as chairing FAO Council. Your outstanding ability to mediate has been a point of reference for all of us in these years, and it has been the key to always find a common solution, even when the views were so divergent that an agreement seemed to be out of reach.

Mr Chairperson, your portrait in this room will simply tell us how we can reach consensus.

Therefore, we are sure that your work will constitute an example for whom will hold this post in the future and, thanking you again, we wish you all the best for your future endeavours.

Mr Shengyao TANG (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, the Delegation of China supports Pakistan's intervention on behalf of the Asia Group.

At the closing session of this Council, we would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of Council for his work for the fruitful outcomes and results governing the operation of FAO. Thank you for his invaluable work during his distinguished leadership and oversight.

A lot of work at the Council has gone through changes. We would like to thank the Independent Chairperson for his contribution to FAO and the FAO Council as a key Governing Body. Thank you for your wisdom, energy and leadership. Certainly, all these results would not have been possible without the support of his family members. Therefore, we would like to thank them as well.

I attended several sessions chaired by you and I noticed several changes under your chairmanship which we should remember.

First, under all kinds of circumstances, you always did your best to make sure the Council reached consensus. The consensus on PWB of this session is an example.

Second, at the end of every item, you always wrap up and summarize what has been discussed which laid a very good foundation for further discussion.

Third, your skills of leadership and chairing have proven very effective. As someone else mentioned just now, the Drafting Committee completed their report within 100 minutes. I personally participated in FAO's Governing Bodies and other Technical Committees' work at the turning of the century and my impression was the work then was very arduous. We often spent two or three hours discussing one point and we often worked until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning and the record was when worked until 5:00 in the morning.

However, under your wonderful leadership, the drafting work has been much more efficient. So I want to particularly thank you for your outstanding leadership and chairmanship.

The Director-General mentioned in his speech South-South Cooperation and the importance of GIAHS. The Chinese Delegation firmly believes that under the leadership of the Director-General, South-South Cooperation will be further strengthened.

China will, as in the past, continue to support FAO's work, particularly in food security, sustainable agriculture development, climate change, capacity-building, and, of course, GIAHS and South-South Cooperation.

Mr Joseph NGETICH (Kenya)

I associate myself with the statement made by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group.

As a neighbour, the Kenyan Delegation could not let this opportunity pass without thanking you for your leadership of FAO Council and for which we are greatly proud of. Your calm nature and deep knowledge and wisdom were something to be emulated.

I wish Your Excellency, Ambassador Ngirwa, you could find a role to play in future within our region. I wish you and your family all the very best in all your endeavours in the future.

May the Lord guide you and your family, and I wish you a very long life.

Mr George KAHEMA MADAFU (Observer for the United Republic of Tanzania)

Allow me at the outset to convey my warm regards and congratulations to the Independent Chairperson of the Council and Members of the Council for the successful completion of the 156th Session. On behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, I would like to convey my deep appreciation for the excellent way in which the session has been conducted.

Let me recall that in February 2013 the Government of Tanzania presented the candidature of Ambassador Ngirwa with a strong belief that his long standing leadership and diplomatic skills, vast experience on national, regional and international arena would enable him to continue to make further important contributions to the work of the FAO Council and towards achieving its goals.

In 2015, the Government of Tanzania again decided to present the candidature of Ambassador Ngirwa for the second term after being satisfied that he had diligently fulfilled his mandate, in particular in following up implementation of decisions of Conference and Council.

The Government of Tanzania was overwhelmed to witness that on both occasions Ambassador Ngirwa was unanimously elected by the Conference to be Independent Chairperson of the Council. I have listened to what has been said by the Director General Dr Graziano Da Silva, whose unwavering leadership and cooperation has also contributed to enabling working environment and achievements by Ambassador Ngirwa.

The spirit of trust and enhanced collaboration among Members and between Members and secretariat has opened way to have consensual decisions on many subjects and sometimes complex ones, such as deciding on budget level to implement biannual Programme of Work and Budget.

I would therefore, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania, like to extend our gratitude for the support you have given to him so far. It is our hope that the same spirit will continue to prevail in future sessions of the Council for the realization of FAO goals.

Ambassador Ngirwa, your portrait in this room will inspire hope and success to future sessions of the Council. Many congratulations.

To conclude, the Government of Tanzania reiterates its commitment to working with FAO in achieving food security and nutrition which the Council endeavours to achieve.

EL PRESIDENTE

Gracias a todas las Delegaciones que han intervenido.

Quisiera unirme a nuestros colegas y rendirle un homenaje al Embajador Ngirwa por su dedicación para alcanzar las metas de la FAO, por su manera eficiente en la búsqueda para conseguir consensos, y por sus sabios consejos.

En mi carácter de Embajador Argentino ante los Organismos Internacionales con sede en Roma, y en particular en mi carácter de Vicepresidente del Comité del Programa, tuve la ocasión de conocer sus habilidades diplomáticas, su búsqueda constante de puentes y acuerdos en difíciles negociaciones. Déjeme recordar una que Usted recordó que fue, la larga discusión que Usted guio para alcanzar la resolución sobre resistencia a los antimicrobianos.

Embajador Ngirwa, su excelente trabajo, su excelente trato a todas las delegaciones han recibido estos discursos que usted ha conseguido en el día de la fecha. Su retrato, Embajador, será una presencia benévola, inspiradora, que a todos nos va a guiar y seguramente será un constante recuerdo a su figura. Muchas gracias por todo, y con esto, tengo el honor de devolverle la Presidencia de este periodo de sesiones del Consejo.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much my friend, Ambassador, for chairing this very important section of the unveiling of my portrait. I want to thank all the Members in this room for your good words.

I can say it in Swahili because I heard people speak Swahili: “Asante Sana”. The good words really did inspire me and I continue to feel friendship. I will be here until 8 July, when I step out. I hope during this period we will continue to work together on whatever is still possible for me to accomplish.

I can now declare the 156th Session of the FAO Council closed. Thank you to God and God bless you.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 16:40 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 40

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.40



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