

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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**ALINORM 05/28/28**

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

**CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

*Twenty-eighth Session  
Rome, Italy, 4 – 9 July 2005*

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING  
COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**

*Rome, FAO Headquarters, Italy  
25 – 28 January 2005*

**Note:** This document includes Codex Circular Letter CL 2005/4-AFRICA

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CX 3/5.2

CL 2005/4-AFRICA  
February 2005

**TO:** - Codex Contact Points  
- Interested International Organizations

**FROM:** Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme,  
FAO, Viale, delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

**SUBJECT: DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING  
COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA (ALINORM 05/28/28)**

The report of the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa is attached and will be considered by the Twenty-eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (4 - 9 July 2005).

## REQUEST FOR COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

### 1. Draft Strategic Plan for the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (see Appendix II)

Governments and interested international organizations are invited to provide their comment on the above subject matter and should do so in writing to: Mr Mohamed Majdi, Chef de la Division de la Répression des Fraudes, Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement Rural et des Pêches Maritimes, DPVCTI F.B.P 1308, 10100 Rabat, Maroc (Fax No.: +212 3 7297544, email: [mmajdi@menara.ma](mailto:mmajdi@menara.ma)), with a copy to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy (fax: +39 (06) 570.54593 or e-mail: codex@fao.org) **not later than 1 May 2005.**

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Sixteenth Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa reached the following conclusions:

- Generally supported the revision work undertaken by the CCGP of the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food (para. 8);
- Expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for their efforts to make the Trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex operational and also thanked the donor countries for their contributions and agreed that there was the need to expand the assistance of the Trust Fund to other food safety related activities to enhance the effectiveness of countries' participation in the Codex process (para. 13);
- Generally supported the current role, geographic coverage and the Terms of Reference of the Coordinating Committee for Africa and agreed that that in many countries of the Region food control infrastructures including the Codex Contact Points (CCP) and National Codex Committees (NCC) were weak and poorly coordinated and were hampering active participation of these countries in Codex work. (paras.14-18);
- Noted the view of some delegations that while the Coordinator should maintain its current functions as *ex-officio* Chair of the Coordinating Committee, the role of the Member of the Executive Committee elected on a geographical basis was ambiguous and needed to be clarified (para. 23);
- Expressed its gratitude to FAO and WHO for carrying out activities related to the provision of scientific advice, in direct support of Codex as well as its member countries and stressed the importance of the output of the FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultations for member countries of the region in conducting their national risk assessments and for taking risk management decisions (para. 29);
- Thanked FAO and WHO for their extensive capacity building activities to assist the countries of the region in improving their national food control systems, however, it called for increased effort to mobilize additional resources to address unmet needs (para. 42);
- Exchanged updated information on Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees, and thanked FAO and WHO for their efforts to enhance capacity building in food safety and control; (para. 97);
- Decided to consider an information paper on opportunities and guidelines for effective consumer involvement in Codex for discussion at the next session of the Committee (para. 128);
- Nominated the Kingdom of Morocco as Coordinator for Africa for appointment by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (July 2005) on condition a written assurance be received by FAO from the Government of Morocco, before the end of April 2005, whereby Morocco would undertake to organise the next session of the Committee in Morocco by complying with all the conditions required for hosting a Codex Coordinating Committee session. The Committee also agreed that, if Morocco failed to meet this condition, Ghana would automatically be considered as Coordinator nominee, in place of Morocco, for appointment by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (paras 129-138);
- Strongly recommended the further elaboration of Draft Strategic Plan for FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa and (para. 146);
- Noted the arguments presented by the Delegation of Morocco for the revision of the provisions of the Labelling Section in the Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-type Products (paras 148-151);
- Noted the views expressed by a number of delegations in favour of the development of a new Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese (paras 152 - 158).

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO (Codex) Regional Coordinating Committee for Africa held its Sixteenth Session in FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, from 25 to 28 January 2005. The Session was chaired by the Mr Mohamed Majdi, Chef de la Division de la Répression des Fraudes, Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement Rural et des Pêches Maritimes, Morocco. The Session was attended by 88 delegates, advisors and observers representing 28 Member Countries, 6 Observer Members from outside the Region, and 6 international organizations. A complete list of participants, including the Secretariat and representatives of FAO and WHO, is provided in Appendix I to this report.

## OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. Mr Hartwig de Haen, Assistant Director-General of FAO, welcomed the delegates to Rome and pointed out that the elaboration of food standards required cooperation between all interested stakeholders, including research, coordination and information exchange between countries. Mr de Haen pointed out that FAO had been assisting developing countries in Africa to improve their food safety systems, including the functioning of the National Codex Committees. He stressed the need for African countries to actively participate in Codex work in order to ensure that Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations take into account their conditions. In particular, food safety requirements should adequately protect consumers and not raise unnecessary barriers to trade. Finally Mr de Haen wished all success to the meeting.

3. Dr Patience Mensah, Regional Adviser for Food Safety, WHO Regional Office for Africa, drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the WHO Executive Board endorsed the WHO's Global Strategy for Food Safety in 2002 and that the 53<sup>rd</sup> Regional Committee for Africa adopted a resolution on food safety urging the Regional Director to strive to strengthen food safety programmes in countries. Dr Mensah pointed out that the development of the FAO/WHO training package would make countries' participation in Codex work more effective.

4. Mr Ahmed Faouzi, the Alternate Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations' Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome also welcomed the delegates and pointed out that it was necessary for countries of the Region to actively participate in Codex work in order to ensure the protection of consumers and fair practices in food trade and that strategic planning of the work of the Committee was an important element to achieve this objective.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)<sup>1</sup>

5. The Coordinating Committee agreed to the proposal by the Delegation of Morocco to discuss, under Other Business, in addition to the Draft Strategic Plan for the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for Africa, two documents on Codex work on sardines, i.e. the Inclusion of Additional Species in Standards for Fish and Fishery Products (document CX/FFP 05/27/11) and the Discussion Paper on an Amendment to the Labelling Section in the Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-type Products (document CX/FFP 05/27/12).

6. The Committee also agreed to discuss, under Other Business, the proposal of the Delegation of Botswana<sup>2</sup> on the elaboration of a standard for parmesan cheese. On this basis, the Coordinating Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as the Agenda for the Session.

## MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 2)<sup>3</sup>

7. The Committee noted that many issues arising from the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission were presented for information purposes or would be covered elsewhere in the Agenda. The Committee noted matters referred as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/1.

<sup>2</sup> CRD 7 (Elaboration of a Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese, submitted by Benin, Botswana, Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda).

<sup>3</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/2; CRD 2 (comments of Uganda); CRD 3 (comments of Ghana); CRD 6 (comments of Kenya).

### **Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food**

8. The Committee generally supported the revision work undertaken by the CCGP of the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food, given that developing countries, many of which did not have well developed food control infrastructures, needed to be protected against imports of sub-standard or unsafe foods. The Observer from Consumers International stated that the work by the CCGP should be expedited and that the revised Code should also address the issue of food aid.

### **FAO/WHO Trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex**

9. Several delegations, while acknowledging the benefit of the Trust Fund, which had become operational since March 2004, expressed the view that the use of Trust Fund could be expanded to cover not only physical participation of the delegates in the Codex meetings but also other important areas of Codex-related capacity building such as technical assistance for strengthening research and communication facilities including improving internet access or for formulating national/regional positions on specific issues discussed in Codex sessions.

10. Upon requests from some delegations to make procedures for the application to the Trust Fund more flexible, the Representative of FAO indicated that the current criteria and procedures for the selection of the beneficiaries were proposed by the FAO/WHO Consultative Group for the Trust Fund and agreed upon by the Commission. He also indicated that the above criteria and procedures were available from the WHO website and would be reviewed as necessary. The Representative also clarified that the Trust Fund did not consider funding of the participation of more than one delegate from the same country to Codex meetings, to encourage better inter-ministerial coordination at the country level and to allow countries to attend a larger number of Codex sessions.

11. The Committee noted the proposal of the Delegation of Lesotho that in view of the limited life of the Trust Fund and its matching requirements, the Trust Fund should be made available to support activities that would allow strong messages to be sent to high-level decision makers so that participation in Codex would become national priority in a sustainable manner.

12. The Committee noted that FAO and WHO were considering to organize a donor meeting of the Trust Fund and a meeting of beneficiary countries during the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission.

13. The Committee expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for their efforts to make the Trust Fund operational and also thanked the donor countries for their contributions. The Committee agreed that there was the need to expand the assistance of the Trust Fund to other food safety related activities to enhance the effectiveness of countries' participation in the Codex process.

### **Review of the Regional Coordinating Committees**

14. The Secretariat recalled that the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission requested that a Circular Letter be sent to all Codex Members to invite comments in the following areas:

- Role of Regional Coordinating Committees in furthering the objectives of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
- Membership of Regional Coordinating Committees, including their current geographic coverage;
- Terms of reference of the Regional Coordinating Committees as set out in the Procedural Manual, including the relevance of developing regional standards;
- Effectiveness of Regional Coordinating Committees in respect of country participation record and of venues and meeting intervals (currently every two years);
- Respective roles of the Regional Coordinator as *ex officio* Chairperson of the Regional Coordinating Committee and the Member(s) of the Executive Committee elected on a geographic basis, particularly within the framework of the Executive Committee; and
- Any other issues.

15. The Committee discussed this matter as follows.

16. The Committee generally supported the current role, geographic coverage and the Terms of Reference of the Coordinating Committee for Africa.
17. The Committee noted the view of several delegations that the role of the Coordinating Committee should be strengthened especially in the light of strategic planning, which would guarantee a higher level of sensitization to and implementation of Codex standards and other texts at national and regional level.
18. The Committee agreed that in many countries of the Region food control infrastructures including the Codex Contact Points (CCP) and National Codex Committees (NCC) were weak and poorly coordinated and were hampering active participation of these countries in Codex work.
19. Upon the proposal to hold the Coordinating Committee meetings every year, the Secretariat clarified that its financial and other logistic implications and tight schedule of Codex meetings would make it very difficult to realize it under the current circumstances.
20. The Committee noted that its current regional membership covered a geographic area with diverse socio-cultural background and several sub-regional trading blocks; therefore the effectiveness of the Coordinating Committee should be measured against the degree to which the following factors were addressed: socio cultural factors, common markets, research capabilities, utilization of capacity building tools, coordination at national and sub-regional levels.
21. The Committee noted that effectiveness of country participation and dialogue between countries could be improved and made more dynamic if more emphasis was put on the use of electronic means of communication.
22. Many delegations stated that it was very important to develop and report to the Commission a common position of the Region, where possible and appropriate, on matters related to food control and food safety.
23. The Committee noted the view of some delegations that while the Coordinator should maintain its current functions as *ex-officio* Chair of the Coordinating Committee, the role of the Member of the Executive Committee elected on a geographic basis was ambiguous and needed to be clarified.

#### **ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX (Agenda Item 3)<sup>4</sup>**

24. The Representative of FAO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced document CX/AFRICA 05/16/4 to the Committee and highlighted several issues of particular importance to the Region.
25. The Committee was informed that a number of requests for scientific advice were still pending due to lack of sufficient financial resources. FAO and WHO had consulted the Executive Committee to seek its view on how to prioritize these requests. This matter would be discussed at the forthcoming session of the Executive Committee.
26. The Representative of FAO drew the attention of the Committee to the outcome of recent meetings of the FAO/WHO expert bodies (JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA) and of the special expert consultations held on such subject as residues of veterinary drugs without ADI/MRL, the antimicrobial resistance resulting from non-human usage of antimicrobials, biotoxins in bivalve molluscs, and the “Guidance Document on Obstacles to the Application of HACCP, particularly in Small and Less Developed Businesses and Approaches to Overcome them”.
27. The Coordinating Committee noted the ongoing activities of the parent organizations in the framework of the FAO/WHO Consultative Process on Provision of Scientific Advice to Codex and Member Countries, including a workshop to explore new approaches to enhance the participation of experts and use of data from developing countries in the formulation of scientific advice at the international level.

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<sup>4</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/4; Conference Room Document 6 (Comments from Kenya)

28. In reply to the question raised by the Delegation of Uganda, the Committee was informed that FAO had established an internal task force involving several Divisions in order to develop guidelines to assist countries in the application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). A document, which would take account of various aspects of GAP in its wider context, inclusive of the concept of sustainability of agriculture, would probably be prepared by 2006.

29. The Committee expressed its gratitude to FAO and WHO for carrying out activities related to the provision of scientific advice, in direct support of Codex as well as its member countries. The Committee stressed the importance of the output of the FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultations for member countries of the region in conducting their national risk assessments and for taking risk management decisions.

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FOOD STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS (Agenda Item 4)<sup>5</sup>**

30. The Representative of FAO presented the document and informed the Committee about the recent and ongoing global and regional activities undertaken by FAO and WHO in which the countries of the Region were direct participants or beneficiaries. These, among others, included the Second Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators (GF-2) held in October 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand; the upcoming FAO/WHO Regional Food Safety Conference for Africa; and the *Enhancement of Coffee Quality through Prevention of Mould Formation* which involved several African coffee producing countries with the aim of reducing mycotoxin contamination in coffee.

31. The Representative indicated that FAO, WHO, OIE, WTO, and the World Bank had established a Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) in 2003 to coordinate the capacity building efforts of these organizations in the areas of food safety, plant, and animal health and to provide a funding mechanism for countries and stakeholders in meeting the obligations of the WTO SPS Agreement. Countries were encouraged to obtain information on how to apply for the Fund from [www.standardsfacility.org](http://www.standardsfacility.org)

32. The Committee was also informed about a number of global tools containing guidance and technical materials to be used by countries in capacity building. They included the FAO/WHO publication "*Assuring Food Safety and Quality - Guidelines for Strengthening National Food Control Systems*" to enable national authorities, particularly in developing countries, to improve their food control systems; "*Food Quality and Safety Systems - An FAO Training Manual on Food Hygiene and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System*". A Training Manual on Improving Participation in the Work of Codex and another manual on Food Safety Risk Analysis would be finalized very soon. The Committee also noted FAO ongoing regional and national projects and activities in relation to the capacity building.

33. The Representative of WHO indicated that in response to the World Health Assembly Resolutions calling for enhanced communication between WHO and its Member States on matters of food safety, WHO, in collaboration with FAO, had launched the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), to be used for targeted and rapid distribution of various information for the protection of public health.

34. The Representative stated that WHO was managing a global network of laboratories and individuals involved in surveillance, isolation, identification and antimicrobial resistance testing of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* (Global Salm-Surv). At the request of the participating countries of the Region, *Vibrio cholerae* was included in the program. The Global Environment Monitoring System/Food Contamination Monitoring and Assessment Programme (GEMS/Food) had now been introduced to 13 francophone countries, mainly from Africa.

35. The Representative indicated that WHO had elaborated rules to promote the production and handling of safe food, known as the *Five Keys to Safer Food*. She also indicated that the WHO Regional Office for Africa had conducted a survey on food safety, which analysed the health risks associated with food handling. An awareness-raising workshop organized in Bamako for food safety focal points had discussed the results of the regional survey.

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<sup>5</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/4; CRD 6 (comments of Kenya).

36. The Representative of WHO noted the request from the Delegation of Botswana regarding the support to countries of African Region to address the emerging issue of *Enterobacter sakazakii* which has been implicated in a number of infant death associated with infant formula. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene was currently considering the revision of the *International Code of Hygienic Practice for Foods for Infants and Children* and that the issue of *Enterobacter sakazakii* would be addressed through the development of specific microbiological criteria in the above Code.

37. Some delegations called for increased synergy and coordination among the activities and projects undertaken by various organizations and donors in the countries of the region.

38. Several delegations requested FAO and WHO assistance for the establishment and functioning of national Codex structures/committees, and providing them with the necessary means, including communication means, to enable them to play their expected role at national and international level.

39. In relation to the on-going FAO project in the UEMOA French speaking Member Countries, the FAO Representative noted that the donor's attention could be drawn to the possibility of extending the project to Guinea or non French speaking neighboring non-UEMOA Member Countries, such as Guinea.

40. Some delegations spoke in favour of considering pulling together resources available with relevant organizations and donors, with a view to developing and implementing sub-regional projects that could cover the needs of several countries in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

41. With reference to a request to FAO and WHO to provide model project documents outlined to assist countries in formulating their project proposals, the FAO Representative informed that such models already existed and were available upon request.

42. The Committee thanked FAO and WHO for their extensive capacity building activities to assist the countries of the region in improving their national food control systems. The Committee, however, noted that such assistance was far from covering all the actual needs of the Region and called for increased effort to mobilize additional resources to address unmet needs.

#### **FOOD LEGISLATION AND FOOD CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 5)<sup>6</sup>**

43. The Secretariat recalled that the Codex Circular Letter CL 2004/23-AFRICA had been sent to all Codex Members to invite Member Governments to provide information and comments in the light of the "measurable objectives" listed therein especially the status of national legislation and/or the preparation of Codex meetings and related matters.

44. The Committee noted the information provided by delegations as follows.

#### **UGANDA**

45. The Delegation of Uganda informed the Committee that activities in food safety and control in the country were being implemented by different agencies and authorities where mandates are stipulated or provided for under different laws and regulations as detailed in CX/AFRICA 05/16/6 Add.1.

46. Uganda thanked FAO for its support in setting up the National Codex Committee (NCC) which was inaugurated in June 2002 with the objective of creating an effective mechanism for considering the national food control requirements in relation to the work of Codex. The NCC membership has been reviewed based on the recommendations made during the FAO/WHO training course, "Strengthening National Food Control Systems through Enhanced Participation in the Codex Process", held in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, 22-26 March 2004. Support for conducting local training of stakeholders is being sought from FAO and WHO.

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<sup>6</sup> CL 2004/23-AFRICA; CX/AFRICA 05/16/6-Add.1 (comments of Uganda, Niger); CRD 1 (comments of Morocco); CRD 5 (comments of Ghana); CRD 4 (comments of Côte d'Ivoire); CRD 5 (comments of Republic of Benin); CRD 6 (comments of Kenya).

47. The current food safety control system is still severely hampered by obsolete laws. With support from UNIDO, a Food Safety Bill, based on the FAO Model Food Law, was drafted and submitted for Cabinet comments and approval through the Ministry of Health. In addition, a National Food Safety Strategic Plan (NFSSP) has been drafted to support the stakeholders in implementing provisions of the proposed Food Safety Law.

#### **NIGERIA**

48. The Delegation informed the Committee that official agencies involved in food control matters in Nigeria included: Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) of Federal Ministry of Industry, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Federal Ministry of Health, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Plant and Animal Quarantine, Strategic Grain Reserve and Fisheries) and Federal Ministry of Commerce (Produce Inspectorate). Laboratory analysis and certification of processed food is carried out by SON and NAFDAC. The Departments of Fisheries and Livestock are involved with fish (seafood) and animals respectively. The Standards Organization of Nigeria is the Codex Contact Point and also the Secretariat of the National Codex Committee chaired by NAFDAC. Various food legislations from different government bodies exist with mandates, some of which have overlapping functions and the Government presently working at streamlining functions. Nigeria has developed bilateral co-operation with Ghana, while discussions are ongoing with other African countries for regional co-operation.

#### **MOROCCO**

49. Food control activities are distributed between various ministerial departments and are also implemented in the whole country including its borders according to predefined intervention procedures. These activities are based on a large number of jurisdictional and regulatory texts many of which are outdated. Coordination in this field is carried out within consultative bodies such as the Permanent Interministerial Committee for Food Control Fraud Repression on Foods or the National Codex Alimentarius Committee established in 1997.

50. Concerned with the need to increase efficiency of food control activities, Morocco with the assistance of FAO, has recently undertaken to implement two TCP projects with the objective of recognizing and reviewing the National Food Control system and to reformulate the food legislation in use. These activities have led to the preparation of two draft Food Laws presently being considered for adoption.

#### **GHANA**

51. Ghana has twelve institutions and agencies involved in food control activities, including the Ghana Standards Board, Food and Drugs Board and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. However, there is an on-going review of the statutes to re-align the functions and responsibilities of these agencies to overcome overlapping areas.

52. Cooperation in the sub-region on food safety issues is low and this must be given even higher priority. It is expected that ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) will set up a desk for Codex matters to promote food safety standards in the sub-region.

53. Ghana has been associated with Codex for over 30 years and has 22 members in the National Codex Committee (NCC). The NCC is actively involved in matters of food standards and safety. As part of a project to establish an integrated food safety management system for Ghana, FAO/World Bank have supported a survey on baseline studies on food control activities in Ghana. The actual project is yet to take off.

#### **CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

54. In Côte d'Ivoire, the official organizations/institutes involved in food control activities included: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Animal Production, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Economy and

Finance, Public Analytical laboratories, National Center for Agronomical Research, National Agency for Support to Rural Development and the CODINORM.

55. The organ in charge of standards, codes and texts related to Codex is CODINORM in which are represented Ministries and structures listed above. This organ is represented within the National Codex Committee and is under the Ministry of Industry.

56. As regards bilateral activities and contacts, Côte d'Ivoire, as member of the UEMOA, participated actively in the "quality programme" of UEMOA. In terms of trade, Côte d'Ivoire participates in the regulatory work of ECOWAS.

#### **BENIN**

57. In order to protect the national and international consumers' health, and to export food goods, efforts and activities have been ongoing. The National Codex Committee is being strengthened in matters of membership, technical activities, sensitization and communication. The different laws and decrees are being updated. Three laboratories have been selected to be prepared for accommodation. From these three laboratories, the central laboratory of food analysis, where the Codex Contact Point is situated, is very old and outdated in support materials, technical materials and therefore deserves a special and clement attention from FAO. Human and material capacity building for this central laboratory at the "Direction de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquée (DANA)" and for the National Codex Committee focal point, is very critical for a real, good and new departure. The human and material capacity building efforts le by UEMOA Quality Programme are very useful to make efficient food control system, could be better performed.

#### **KENYA**

58. The agencies which carry out food safety and control activities are spread within four major ministries: Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Livestock and Fisheries Development, and Trade and Industry, which houses the Kenya Bureau of Standards. The functions of the agencies include sensitization and implementation of Codes of Hygiene and Agricultural Practices by stakeholders throughout the food chain. The enforcement functions include inspection and monitoring of food and premises for catering and manufacturing, abattoirs, fish landing sites, imports and exports of foods and planting material among others.

59. Codex standards are used as reference documents in the development of food standards. The National Codex Committee (Contact Point - Kenya Bureau of Standards) links all the regulatory agencies and food chain stakeholders, research institutes and universities. However, the functions are not properly coordinated and need strengthening.

#### **ETHIOPIA**

60. The Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia (QSAE) is the organ responsible for approving Ethiopian Standards (i.e. national standards). There are various regulatory bodies which enforce regulations associated with food safety. Some of them are the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Drug Administration and Control Authority and the Quality and the Standards Authority of Ethiopia. The food control activities are scattered among various regulatory bodies. The activities are not coordinated so as to give maximum benefit to the safety of consumers.

61. The Codex activities in Ethiopia are undertaken by the National Codex Committee (NCC). The Committee (NCC) is composed of regulatory bodies, food producers, Chamber of Commerce, research organizations, professional associations and the National Standards Body. The Codex Contact Point is located in the Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia which is the secretariat of the Committee. Codex standards are used as references for adopting national standards and regarding food safety issues, concerned organizations in collaboration with the UNIDO, conduct awareness programmes each year on various themes. The expected objectives of the National Codex Committee are not realized because of various capacity limitations. Hence, Ethiopia would like to obtain assistance for strengthening the National Codex

Committee and installing appropriate systems to selected testing laboratories including training of personnel in food safety fields.

#### **SOUTH AFRICA**

62. The Departments of Health, Agriculture and Trade and Industry (SABS), are the three main agencies responsible for food control. The Department of Health serves as the National Codex Contact Point. The Department of Agriculture is the point of enquiry on SPS matters whereas the SABS serves as the TBT enquiry point. Over 14 pieces of legislation are administered by these agencies.

63. South Africa has a National Codex Committee that is chaired by the Department of Health. Current initiatives are geared towards an over-arching food control Act and a food safety authority. This also includes separation of notes in terms of policy formulation and implementation (inspections, audits etc.). South Africa has been involved in various capacity building programmes on food safety that involved its neighbors and also other countries in SADC and the Region. Public consultations take place when developing national positions through electronic means as well as physical participation in preparatory and feedback meetings.

#### **BOTSWANA**

64. In Botswana the responsibilities of food control, food safety and food quality are mainly shared among four ministries. The Ministry of Health coordinates the implementation of the Food Control Act and Public Health Act (including food regulations under these Acts) through the National Food Control Board. The Codex Contact Point is in the Ministry of Health. Codex standards are used in the preparation of food regulations. The Ministry of Local Government, through the local authorities, implements the Township Act and all other Acts having provisions of food control, particularly food inspection. The Ministry of Industry and Trade implements Acts on licensing of food industries, Consumer Protection and Standardization. National food standards are prepared by the Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) in collaboration with other key stakeholders. These standards are mainly based on Codex standards. International, regional and bilateral food control cooperation is coordinated by the National Food Control Board. There is a strong bilateral cooperation with South Africa where most of Botswana food imports come from.

#### **ZIMBABWE**

65. Food control in Zimbabwe evolved and developed in the form of several laws, by-laws, and regulations under the health, agriculture and trade ministries, local authorities and some private countries. The main legislation was updated in 1996 to include the establishment of the Food Standards Advisory Board, made up of representatives of the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Standards Association, Law society and the Consumers Council. FSAB advises the Minister of Health on all matters concerning Food Safety and Control. FSAB secretariat and coordinating office is at the Government Analyst Laboratory. This is also the Codex Contact Point.

66. FSBA also acts as the National Codex Committee. The grassroots food safety regulatory services are in Ministry of Health – Environmental Health Unit, Ministry of Agriculture Veterinary Services and Agricultural Research and Specialist Services, Local authorities, and Ministry of Industry and Trade (import/export). These provide food inspectorate and compliance activities supported by laboratory services of the Government Analyst and others. The FSAB has drafted the Food Safety Control Bill which has been submitted through the Ministry of Health, Cabinet thereafter to the Parliament. This will establish the Food Safety Control Authority.

#### **GUINEA**

67. Activities for the promotion and control of food quality are poorly coordinated in Guinea as these are undertaken at different levels by several services and institutions that report to the different ministries and two private offices. Only the Technical Commission for Agricultural and Food Standards is able to provide a collective framework for all actors involved in elaborating food standards.

68. A National Food Safety Commission has existed since 2003 but is not yet functional because of a lack of financial resources. Funds are available at the WHO Representation in Guinea for the establishment of a National Codex Committee.

69. On the regulatory level, there is no law on the control of food products but there are texts with a regulatory function such as the law on standards and certification, the law on consumer protection and the law governing trade in basic commodities and merchandise.

70. In order to render the promotion and control of food safety and quality more effective, Guinea requests FAO assistance in establishing a National Codex Committee and core legislation on food control and in bolstering laboratory capacity and equipment.

## **TOGO**

71. Various ministries ensure control of the safety of foods and all of them are members of the National Codex (CNCA). The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries acts as the focal point of CNCA. It performs this function through the Division of Nutrition and Food Technology under the Department of Laboratories of the Togolese Institute of Agronomical Research (CINTA/DL/IIRA). At the national level, the National Standards Board (CNS) is established by Decree 1'83- 118 of 21 June 1983 and composed of five technical committees, was restructured by decree 132-2001/IR, with support of the Quality Programme of UEMOA. This new structure reports to the Cabinet of the Ministry of Industry, Transport and the Development of tax-free Zone. The National Codex Alimentarius Committee has been established since March 2004, supported by the Programme of Quality of UEMOA, but its function is yet to be determined. Togo requests financial and technical assistance from FAO and WHO to enable the body to function optimally. Togo has prepared since 1979 a draft law to regulate food control. This document provided a basis in the elaboration of the National Plan of Action Food and Nutrition, adopted in November 2001. Soon the draft law will be submitted to the Council of Ministries, which will introduce it to the Parliament to be voted as law.

72. The current possible development in food quality in Togo has been characterized by the efforts made within the Quality Programme of UEMOA on the system of standardization, accreditation and promotion of quality, initiated by eight countries. Thus significant strengthening of capacities is in progress. A series of training opportunities were given to national leaders and equipment such as SAA and HPLC was supplied. Three laboratories have been selected to be assisted for accreditation. The Quality programme will help the eight countries to have a common policy in matters related to Codex. A training workshop on standardization was held in Burkina Faso, March 2004 on UEMOA and Codex. Togo is grateful to FAO, WHO and the EU for their efforts to assist Togo in issues related to food quality control and reiterates its interest its participation in various meetings.

## **MAURITANIA**

73. Food control in Mauritania is in a gestational stage due to lack of national institutional framework. It is SGS Company which deals with agro-food products. There had been an important progress in terms of quality control of fish products, with the assistance of EEC to processing establishments. After the Second Global Forum Food Safety Regulators, and based on the findings of national participants, the government identified the key agency National Research Institute of, formerly National Health Centre. The mandate of this institute is in food control. The decree creating this institute fills the judicial gap and shows the government's determination in matters related to the safety of locally consumed foods as well as those destined for export.

74. In the future Mauritania looks forward to achieving positive changes in this field, in collaboration with FAO, WHO and other countries with experience in this matter. Mauritania expressed the need to consume local products and those imported. In years to come, Mauritania hopes to effect the necessary changes in collaboration with FAO and WHO and countries like Morocco – which has experience in the area.

**ZAMBIA**

75. The food control services in Zambia are distributed across few main stakeholders namely, Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Commerce, Trade and Industry and local government and Housing. The Ministry of Health is responsible for policy formulation, development and review of legislation pertaining to food safety and implementation is done through the Central Board of Health, created under the Act of parliament through its structural wings of District Health Boards. The Ministry of Agriculture provides the same service through the plant quarantine and the livestock development services whose responsibilities are for protection of plant and animal diseases respectively. The Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry is responsible for registration of food industries and also houses the National Food Safety Committee. The Ministry of Health is the Codex Focal Point in Zambia and it has not yet established the National Codex Committee due to lack of funds and a high turnover of staff as a result of structuring and movement of professionals to managerial positions with no replacements. This trend has greatly affected the effectiveness of proper Food Control services. The food legislation in use is the Public Health Act 295 which is now in the process of being reviewed. The Food and Drug Act cap 303 has not been reviewed since 1972 but the regulations were reviewed in 2001.

76. The Food and Drugs Board with membership drawn across the Board advises the Minister of Health on issues related to food safety. The SPS Committee under the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for issue of import and export permits for food products with the consideration of food safety. The Zambia Bureau of Standards is responsible for certification of food products and uses the voluntary standards as opposed to Ministry of Health which uses mandatory standards. Both the SPS and the National Food Safety Committee are weak and require financial support. Zambia has not placed food safety as one of the priorities and the funding to this programme is not sufficient.

**SWAZILAND**

77. Food control activities in Swaziland are fragmented. They are found in different ministries, departments and organizations/local authorities. These are the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, (Environmental Health Department), the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (the Veterinary and Home Economics Department), the Standard Section of the Ministry of Enterprise and Employment and the City Councils (Environmental Health departments). Various pieces of legislation are scattered in the above agencies and these include such Acts as the Public Health Act (1969) with its regulations which are administered by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Dairy Act – by the Ministry of Agriculture. FAO has, however provided a consultant to harmonize the food legislation. A draft Food Act is with the Ministry of Justice ready to be piloted in Parliament.

78. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the control of the import and export of red meat and poultry. They are also responsible for the import and export of fruits and vegetables. The Ministry of Health is responsible for the import of other foodstuffs than the above. The Ministry of Health does not have a specific laboratory for food therefore Environmental Health Offices have to rely on other laboratories for food analysis. Reliable laboratories are found in the City Councils and the Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. There is a general lack of capacity and expertise in the food analysis area.

79. There is a designated National Codex Committee which is multi-sectoral. It is composed of officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, and Standards Department, City Councils, National Council and the University of Swaziland. The Ministry of Health is the Codex Contact Point. There is, however, a need to strengthen the operations of this committee as it meets on a very *ad hoc* basis.

80. Swaziland coordinates very well with the Department of Health of the Republic of South Africa on food safety issues.

**TANZANIA**

81. Food control activities in Tanzania are carried out by departments and agencies located in seven ministries, the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) under the Ministry of Health, Departments of Plant Health Services and Post Harvest Monitoring, both in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security,

Department of Veterinary Health and Department of Livestock Production both in the Ministry of Water and Livestock Development, the Fisheries Division in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, the Offices of Health Inspectors in the regions and districts which are under the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government, the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) under the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

82. The multiplicity of agencies is occasioned by the amount of legislation mandating some enforcement role on food safety aspects in the country. To better coordinate food control functions in Tanzania, the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) was established in 2003 under the Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1. The Tanzania Bureau of Standards prepares all the requisite standards for enforcement by all the other agencies but under the supervision of TFDA. The Fisheries Division is the Competent Authority responsible for fish and fish products safety and quality. Tanzania food safety standards are based on Codex standards where they exist.

83. Tanzania has an active and well equipped Codex Contact Point located in TBS which has also received FAO support through TCP/URT/2903 *Strengthening of the Food Control System and the Codex Organization in Tanzania*. An active National Codex Coordinating Committee of 12 members is in place and was involved in 2004 in the initial testing of the FAO Codex Training Manual under preparation.

#### **LESOTHO**

84. There is no comprehensive legislation for food safety in Lesotho. However, general elements of food safety are contained in the Public Health Order of 1970, administered by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. Legislation on marketing of agricultural products also contains some aspects of food safety as do laws on tourism and trade. Efforts are at an advanced stage to enact a more comprehensive and modern legislation, the principal objective of which will be to bring together stakeholders through constitution of a representative Governing Board.

85. Current thrust of activity is to develop policy instruments, including institutional arrangements, to ensure wider participation by stakeholders, political support to food safety activities and national ownership of food safety initiatives.

#### **CHAD**

86. In Chad, food safety has become a national priority. Taking account of new real situation of the country, the government is working towards harmonizing national standards with Codex standards. Besides, Chad is looking forward to receive technical assistance in the following areas: activation and strengthening of Codex-related capacities in all forms; harmonization of the regulations set by various Ministries; and training in the risk analysis and food safety control.

87. Furthermore, a number of regulations are under preparation, particularly those related to the control of abattoirs and the organization of health and quality inspection of live animals and foods of animal origin. In addition, a food analysis and control laboratory will be established this year, funded by the pasture husbandry system assistance project (PASEP).

#### **CAPE VERDE**

88. In Cape Verde, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry of Commerce are involved in food control. The Ministry of Agriculture deals with products of animal and vegetable origin as well as Fishery products. Most of the technicians for food control are working with the Ministry of Agriculture. Presently an agency for control of pharmaceutical and food products is being established, whose objective will be the control of food, preparation of standards and to serve as a Codex Focal Point.

89. On food legislation, the country has a number of laws and texts relative to safety and quality of foods and consumer protection. Laboratory services are very weak except for fishery products and water analysis.

With other countries in the area of food analysis exists with Senegal and Portugal. After the inauguration of the agency, it will be a reference laboratory for food and pharmaceutical products.

#### **REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

90. The Republic of Congo is a large importer of foods. The import volume does not correspond to the level of food control. The Republic of the Congo's food safety programme is in the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS). Despite the existence of this programme, the national authorities have been unable to focus on the issue because: (i) there is no food control infrastructure to ensure food quality and safety; (ii) there are no routine activities at the laboratory of the Centre for Veterinary and Livestock Research (CRVZ) and (iii) there are no regulations on the safety of food on import and export.

91. The Republic of Congo has no legislation on food safety and quality; no national food quality control standards, codes or texts. The Plant Protection Service has proposed a draft legislation which is currently sent for adoption. There was no (bilateral, sub regional or regional) collaboration with other countries on food legislation and food control given the absence of the national legislation.

#### **NIGER**

92. Niger established the National Codex Alimentarius Committee in 1998. Several Ministries belong to the Codex Committee. The Ministries which are most active in Codex activities are the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Trade. The Ministry of Trade drew up the national standards by referring to the Codex standards. The Ministry of Health is the Coordinator of Codex activities and its focal point. Niger has regulatory texts, laws and standards for food products.

93. Niger has already received HACCP training from FAO and training for its official food quality control services (FAO, WAEMU). Its laboratories include Lanspex, Labocel and several at Adbou Moumouni University. Niger will use the Trust Fund to facilitate elaboration and adoption of food safety as a national priority. It is therefore requesting FAO and WHO to support the establishment of an effective food control system.

#### **THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE**

94. The Sierra Leone Federal Standards Bureau was established by Act of 1996. The Bureau has the Food Standards Department which acts as the Codex Contact Point. Presently the Bureau is finishing to develop/adopt Codex standards as national food standards. The Food Standards Department has the National Codex Committee (NCC) as its coordinating body for parastatal activities. Bureau is starting its import and export and certification procedures in February 2005. The supervising ministry presently is the Ministry of Trade Industry and State Enterprises and the Food Standards department having special working links with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Marine Resources.

#### **Final remarks**

95. The Representative of FAO noted that there were a number of common problems faced by countries in the Region and pointed out that one of the FAO priorities was to assist member countries in the region to build capacity and infrastructures for Codex and food control related activities (see also paras 30-42). He indicated that FAO had organized a number of courses to train food inspectors, laboratory workers or on quality assurance. He, however recognized that these activities were not sufficient to satisfy all regional demands for capacity building. The Representative pointed out that the creation of reference centres or regional/subregional laboratories was an effective means to improve food analysis capability in the Region.

96. The Representative of WHO drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the need for laboratory service could be partly satisfied by building regional laboratories and noted that specific training on emerging issues such as determination of *Enterobacter sakazakii* was necessary. The Representative suggested that in order to raise awareness about food safety, public campaigns such as Food Safety Weeks should be encouraged.

97. The Committee thanked FAO and WHO for their efforts to enhance capacity building in food safety and control.

**CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN CODEX WORK AND RELATED MATTERS (Agenda Item 6)<sup>7</sup>**

98. The Secretariat recalled that the Codex Circular Letter CL 2004/23-AFRICA (see para 43) also invited Member Governments to provide information and comments in the light of the “measurable objectives” regarding consumer participation in the elaboration of national legislation and/or the preparation of Codex meetings.

99. The Committee noted the following information provided by delegations.

**ZIMBABWE**

100. The Consumer Council of Zimbabwe has always been involved in food control activities. The Council as a member is represented in the Food Standards Advisory Board (under the Food and Food Standards Act 1996). The representatives of the Council have been part of the national delegation to Codex meetings. The challenge faced by the Consumer Council is insufficient resources for training in technical areas.

**GUINEA**

101. The National Institute of Standardization and Metrology is the Codex Contact Point. This is where national public consultations are organized, in which two of the four consumer associations, ALCO and HYCOV, are actively involved. It is hoped that these two associations to receive FAO and WHO support so that they can become more effective

**BOTSWANA**

102. There are a number of consumer groups in urban areas. These groups are yet to come together under one national umbrella organization. The Consumer Protection Act, addressing consumers’ rights, is implemented by the Consumers Protection Unit in the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The Food Control Act provides for consumers’ representation in the National Food Control Board. The current member representing consumers in the Board is also the chairperson of the National Codex Committee. Improving the participation of consumers in the Codex work has been a challenge due to limited resources and lack of umbrella NGO at national level.

**BENIN**

103. In Benin, the first consumers’ association was created in the 1990s, and the number of associations has been increasing since 2001, when the government started funding them. The two most important associations are “Que Choisir/ What to choose” and “Ligue pour la Défense des Consommateurs/ Consumer Defense League”. These two consumer associations are members of the National Codex Committee. They are in permanent contact with the Codex Contact Point in Benin. They participate in every National Committee meeting, general technical training, sensibilization and communication events on the radio broadcasting and on television. On request, they also assist, as observers, in food sanitary controls of markets and super-markets. The consumers’ associations in Benin are very effective and deserve to be supported and helped to play their role better.

**MOROCCO**

104. In Morocco, the first association of consumers was created in the early 1990’s and its activity has significantly developed thanks to the creation of the National Codex Committee in 1997. It currently consists of more than 20 associations organized under two federations which participate in the work of the NCC and the working groups.

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<sup>7</sup> CL 2004/23-AFRICA; CX/AFRICA 05/16/6-Add.1 (comments of Uganda, Nigeria); CRD 1 (comments of Morocco); CRD 3 (comments of Ghana); CRD 5 (comments of Côte d’Ivoire); CRD 5 (comments of Republic of Benin); CRD 6 (comments of Kenya).

105. There exists a law on fair market practice whose general objectives are to protect the consumer from deceptive practices in commerce. A draft law on the protection of the consumer has been finalized and is being adopted.

## **UGANDA**

106. There are two consumer organizations in Uganda: Uganda Consumer Protection Association (UCPA) and Uganda Consumer Education Trust (CONSENT). Both organizations are members of the National Codex Committee (NCC) and therefore participate in the Codex process at national level. During the most recent NCC meeting, the consumer representative was requested to find ways that would enhance public consultations when developing national positions for Codex meetings. The major constraint was finance. A Consumer Protection Bill was drafted and would be submitted to Parliament through the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI).

## **TOGO**

107. In Togo, consumers are organized within the Association of Togolese Consumers (ATC), which, in turn, is represented in the National Codex Committee. The participation of consumers in food control activities is of great importance to the food quality programme of UEMOA which has greatly supported its strengthening. Consumer representatives are always present at all meetings and on food control and safety events. Taking into consideration its importance for the role of Consumers Association in our countries, it is desirable and urgent that FAO and WHO put into place a mechanism to strengthen these organizations in order to allow them to efficiently protect the consumers.

## **KENYA**

108. Consumer organizations are represented in the National Codex Committee through the Consumer Information Network. They are also involved in developing country positions, but do not form part of the national delegation to some of the Codex Committee Meetings. They tend to participate as Consumers International delegates. Their role in the country is to create consumer awareness, advocate for consumer rights, carry out consumer research, and present their opinions for consideration in standards development. However, their functions are limited by the availability of funds.

## **NIGERIA**

109. There is consumer participation in Codex work in Nigeria. The consumer organizations are members of the National Codex Committee where they make inputs to national positions. Nigeria has a Consumer Protection Council, a federal agency in the Ministry of Commerce. The activities of the Council include sensitization of the consumers about their rights and seeking redress when the need arises.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

110. Consumers, through the South African National Consumer Union (SANCU), participate in the National Codex Committee as well as in the Food Legislation Advisory Group (FLAG) of the Department of Health. However, consumer participation is limited due to lack of technical expertise and the needs strengthening.

## **CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

111. The National Association of Consumers is a member of the National Codex Committee. It participates in the meetings, gives advice and makes observations on issues related to food. Regarding activities on food control, their involvement is limited due to lack of resources.

## **MAURITANIA**

112. In Mauritania, food safety awareness is high among all consumers, following the information diffused by radio and television, and newspapers regarding dioxin in chicken. This message left consumers in an embarrassing state which led to the creation of an association named "Consume local" in order to avoid

all sanitary risks linked with the consumption of imported chicken. This solution does not meet local population needs and should be reviewed.

## **LESOTHO**

113. The Standards and Quality Assurance Department, the lead agency responsible for food control programme, has evolved from the consumer section of the same Ministry, and has good collaborative relationship with that section on all activities, including Codex related initiatives. However, direct collaboration with consumer organisations is hampered by fragmentations and weakness of the latter.

114. The Food Control Act, currently in draft, has a provision for formal consumer representation at the Board level. At the same time there is draft legislation on consumer protection which seeks to streamline relationships with government's structures.

## **REPUBLIC OF CHAD**

115. Chad has an association for the protection of consumer rights which unfortunately only carries out *ad hoc* activities because of insufficient resources. The National Codex Committee will incorporate this association so that it can participate in Codex activities. Given their lack of experience support is necessary for training and organization so that this association can become more effective in protecting consumer health.

## **GHANA**

116. The membership of the National Codex Committee (NCC) includes the Consumers' Association of Ghana (CAG), an independent consumer NGO and the Ghana Private Public Partnership Project, an autonomous food safety initiative. The representatives of these organizations participate regularly in NCC meetings and activities. They are also members of sub-committees of the NCC and contribute to the preparation of national positions for Codex meetings. The NCC is planning to invite representatives of other identifiable consumer NGOs to participate in the Codex process in future.

## **ETHIOPIA**

117. Ethiopia does not have a long history of consumer participation in food control activities. This is primarily associated with a low level of awareness of the consumer and few efforts made by the organizations, involved. Currently, efforts have been made to set up an organization which is linked to consumer groups. These groups are trying to establish a consumer association which will have a mandate on consumer affairs. The consumer rights protection organization is being represented currently in food safety activities at the national level but is not actively involved in the NCC.

## **ZAMBIA**

118. The Consumer Association is mainly responsible for receiving complaints from consumers which are later referred to the appropriate authority for action. The Zambia Competition Commission, created under the Act of Parliament, also receive consumer complaints, but does not have sufficient technical expertise to handle food safety issues. The SPS Committee, under the Ministry of Agriculture, has a member from the Farmers Union. The National Codex Committee has not yet been established. In the absence of the committee there is a need for more coordinated implementation of food safety programmes.

## **TANZANIA**

119. Tanzania has a consumer protection association – the Tanzania Consumer Protection Association (TCPA), which is represented in the National Codex Coordinating Committee. The association is not strong enough and has administrative and technical problems which make its impact in the standardization activities minimal. Several food sector or product specific associations have been formed and advocating safety and quality in their respective areas of interest. The Tanzanian government has realized the usefulness of the civil associations including TCPA and is supporting the strengthening of such associations through the Competition Commission Act.

120. In Tanzania – Zanzibar, the Fair Trade and Consumer Protection Act No. 2 of 1965 provides for promoting consumer protection organizations. It is hoped that through the laws, the TCPA and other similar associations will become more active and be represented in all relevant fora, including food standards and regulations preparation meetings. The major constraints in the consumer movement in Tanzania are organization, financing and training. The government is addressing some of these problems but external support especially from FAO, WHO and regional and international consumer offices will be highly appreciated.

#### **SWAZILAND**

121. A consumer organization exists in Swaziland; however, it is no longer fully active in food safety matters as it used to be 3-5 years ago. There is a need to work in reviving the consumer organization, which used to play a vital role in creating awareness about consumer rights. The Consumer International will be asked for technical advice to ensure full consumer participation in Codex work and food safety issues.

#### **CAPE VERDE**

122. In Cape Verde there are two consumer protection organizations. They are regional nature however to be reunited to form one national organization. These two organizations are very active, control prices and the validity of products, etc. There is a law for consumer protection that has been approved by Parliament.

#### **THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

123. Congolese consumers are grouped under two associations which are regrettably unable to carry out food quality control analyses due to a lack of funds. They have to rely on visual (physical) control, although quality implies chemical, physical, biological, microbiological and many other aspects.

#### **CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL**

124. The Observer from Consumers International (CI) informed the Committee that. The CI Africa Office coordinates and provide support to more than 120 organizations in 46 African countries throughout research, information networks, publications, regional and international seminars, workshops and other activities. The Observer commended those Codex Member States which were taking steps to effectively involve consumers in Codex activities at the national level.

125. CI was aware of the difficulties that some of the Member States were facing in their efforts towards enhancing consumer involvement in Codex activities. The Observer assured the Codex Members of its commitment to working with them and the Codex Alimentarius Commission to address these difficulties. CI urged Codex Members, WHO and FAO, to involve consumer organizations in capacity building initiatives and to accord them funding to enhance their effective participation in Codex.

#### **Final remarks**

126. The Committee noted that consumer organizations existed in almost all countries across the Region. However their input to the Codex work, food legislation and control activities were generally limited and needed strengthening. The Committee also noted that many consumer organizations required training and were experiencing financial problems in participating physically in some national or regional activities.

127. The Committee was of the view that in order to improve communications with consumer organizations and reduce the cost of distribution of documents, it was necessary to explore all possibilities to move to the increased use of modern communication systems such as email.

128. The Committee agreed to the kind offer of the CI, as a way of supporting the efforts towards effective consumer involvement in Codex, to prepare an information paper on “opportunities and guidelines for effective consumer involvement in Codex” for discussion at the next session of the Committee.

**NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 7)<sup>8</sup>**

129. The Coordinating Committee noted that under Rule III.4 of the Rules of Procedure, the Commission at its next session would be invited to appoint a Coordinator for the Region. In accordance with the established practice, the Coordinating Committee was expected to provide a nomination for this purpose.

130. The Committee was informed that Mauritania was considered to belong to the African Region and should be considered as such for the purpose of the deliberations under the presented Agenda Item.

131. The Committee noted that there were two offers, one from Morocco and the other from Ghana, to serve as the next Coordinator for Africa.

132. The Delegation of Ghana expressed its willingness to host, as Coordinator, the next session of the Committee so as to share with other countries of the Region the country's various experience in food safety and food control matters.

133. The Delegation of Morocco drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that it had been customary for the Coordinator of the Region to serve two consecutive terms and that the Delegation was looking forward to continuing to contribute to the finalization and implementation of a Strategic Plan for the Committee.

134. The Committee was informed that the present session of the Committee had to take place in Rome due to the fact that the Government of Morocco had not been able to conclude in time a Letter of Agreement with FAO, including protocol matters.

135. Several delegations stated that the sessions of the Coordinating Committee should be held in the Region as a matter of principle.

136. After an extensive exchange of views and opinions, the Committee agreed to nominate Morocco as Coordinator for Africa for its second term, with the condition that a written assurance be received by FAO from the Government of Morocco, before the end of April 2005, whereby Morocco would undertake to organise the next session of the Committee in Morocco by complying with all the conditions required for hosting a Codex Coordinating Committee session.

137. The Committee requested the Codex Secretariat to inform Codex member countries of the Region of the outcome of this process in due course.

138. The Committee also agreed that if Morocco failed to meet this condition, Ghana would automatically be considered as Coordinator nominee, in place of Morocco, for appointment by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 8)<sup>9</sup>*****DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COORDINATION OF CCAFRICA***

139. The Delegation of Morocco introduced the document and informed the Committee that the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco had submitted, for consideration to the Committee, the Draft Strategic Plan for the Coordination of CCAFRICA, with the understanding that the adoption of the Plan would strengthen the role and enhance the participation in CCAFRICA within the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Region. The Delegation informed the Committee that the Draft Plan had been prepared with assistance from some African countries<sup>10</sup> and the United States of America. The Delegation indicated that the Draft Strategic Plan provided a framework for systematic regional approach and contained seven

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<sup>8</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/7

<sup>9</sup> CX/AFRICA 05/16/8; CRD 7 (Elaboration of a Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese, prepared by Benin, Botswana, Kenya, Swaziland and Uganda).

<sup>10</sup> Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Uganda.

Objectives and concrete proposals of actions on how to reach the Objectives. The third column in the Table “Responsible” had been left blank purposely to reflect further discussion in this regard.

### **General comments**

140. Several delegations drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that it was necessary to align the Plan with the Codex Strategic Objectives and to establish a time frame for its realization. It was proposed that the Plan should cover a period of 5 years as was the case for the Strategic Framework of the Commission.

141. Some delegations stressed the need to streamline and prioritize “Actions” in the Plan in terms of their relevance, importance and time frame (short-, medium- or long- term) and to complete the column on the parties responsible for implementation.

142. Other delegations indicated that implementation of the Draft Plan required the involvement of FAO and WHO as these organizations were responsible for capacity building.

143. The Representatives of FAO and WHO expressed their support to the Draft Plan and their preparedness to support its implementation in the Region.

144. With regards to Action 3 under Objective 1, the Codex Secretariat noted that the maintenance of the list of the Codex Contact Points should be the unique and exclusive responsibility of the Secretariat, in order to avoid confusion and ensure a smooth operation of the FAO/WHO Trust Fund.

145. The Committee noted that the Draft Plan required further elaboration and refinement, while in order to strengthen the coordination of CCAFRICA the development of the Draft Strategic Plan should not be delayed.

146. The Committee expressed its appreciation to Morocco and other members of the Drafting Group, including the United States, for their dedicated work on the development of the Draft Plan and strongly recommended its further elaboration. It noted the commitment of the Drafting Group, including the United States, to contribute to the further development of the Draft Plan.

147. The Committee agreed to append the Draft Strategic Plan to the Report (see Appendix II) and to seek, by means of the Circular Letter, additional comments and proposals from Member Governments. The Committee requested an open-ended Working Group led by Morocco, in cooperation with FAO and WHO, to revise the Draft Plan in the light of comments received in response to the CL and the guidance provided during this session, with the understanding that the revised version of the Draft Plan be prepared for approval by the next session of the Committee. Suggestions were made to explore opportunities for exchanging views through electronic means as well as in physical meetings, including the margins of plenary meetings during the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission and/or the African Regional Conference on Food Safety.

### ***INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SPECIES IN STANDARDS FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS***

148. The Delegation of Morocco drew the attention of the Committee to two working documents CX/FFP 05/27/11 and CX/FFP 05/27/12, which would be discussed at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products.

149. The Delegation stated that there was a need to amend the labelling provision in the Codex Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-type Products, in order to avoid the labelling of different species in the same or similar manner, which was leading to confusion among consumers. The Delegation pointed out that the name “Sardines” should be reserved exclusively for *Sardina pilchardus* Walbaum.

150. The Delegation requested the support of the Committee for the revision of the current procedure for the inclusion of additional species in standards for fish and fishery products and to amend the provisions of the Labelling Section in the Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-type Products as proposed in the above two working papers.

151. The Committee noted the arguments expressed by the Delegation of Morocco for the revision of the above two working papers.

#### ***ELABORATION OF A CODEX STANDARD FOR PARMESAN CHEESE<sup>11</sup>***

152. The Delegation of Botswana introduced the document, prepared jointly with Benin, Kenya, Swaziland and Uganda. The document contained information on a proposal to elaborate a new Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese, which had been presented by several countries at the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP). Although the proposal met Codex criteria for the development of new standards, it had not been accepted by some countries on the grounds of Geographical Indication recognition of “parmesan” for cheese.

153. The CCMMP at its 6<sup>th</sup> Session agreed to seek guidance from the Codex Alimentarius Commission by preparing specific questions so that direction could be provided on application of criteria for agreeing on new work and a definitive decision on the proposal for a new standard for Parmesan cheese could be provided to the CCMMP. The 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission deferred its decision until its 28<sup>th</sup> Session in July 2005.

154. The document also referred to the legal opinion of FAO and WHO that “from a strictly legal point of view, there were no requirements to the effect that aspects of intellectual property protection e.g. trademarks, certification marks, geographical indication (GIs) or PDO be considered as criteria to be taken into consideration by Codex when deciding on acceptance of new work or adopting standards”.

155. The document, in conclusion, proposed that the Coordinating Committee for Africa recommends the Commission to approve new work on the elaboration of a Codex Standard for parmesan cheese.

156. A number of delegations which intervened on this matter stated that the restriction on the development of a standard due to geographical indication was not justified; that a decision in this regard would have severe implications on the future work of the Commission as similar situations might arise other products; that safety of products should be of paramount importance in Codex work; that Codex, a rules-based organization, should adhere to its own rules and procedures for decision making and to protect its integrity; that “parmesan” was a generic name; that intellectual property issues were not within the mandate of Codex; and, that the proposal met the criteria for the development of a new standard and was supported by a large volume of evidence.

157. The Committee noted that other delegations had not enough time to examine this matter in detail as the document had been introduced only at the moment of adopting the Agenda for discussion under “Other Business” and was available only in the English language. It was further noted that decisions on this matter were primarily within the mandate of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products and the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

158. The Committee noted the views expressed by a number of delegations in favour of the development of a new Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese.

#### **DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 9)**

159. The Coordinating Committee was informed that 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee was tentatively scheduled to be held from 23-26 January 2007. The final dates and venue would be determined by the Codex Secretariat in consultation with the Host Country, subject to approval by the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission and confirmation at a later stage.

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<sup>11</sup> CRD 7 “Elaboration of a Codex Standard for Parmesan”

**SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK**

<b>Subject matter</b>	<b>Step</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Document Reference in ALINORM 05/28/28</b>
Draft Strategic Plan for the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for AFRICA	-	Governments, 29 <sup>th</sup> CAC	para. 147

## APPENDIX 1

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## APPENDIX II

## DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

## BACKGROUND

As the Coordinator for Africa, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco submits the Draft Strategic Plan for the Coordination of CCAFRICA for consideration with the understanding that this would strengthen the role and enhance the participation and effectiveness of CCAFRICA within the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Region.

**General Objective:** To strengthen the role and enhance the participation and effectiveness of CCAFRICA within the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the African region.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
<p>1. To foster effective and dynamic communication between the CCAFRICA members and other regions, other Codex members, the Codex Secretariat and other relevant organizations.</p>	<p>1. To improve methods for the exchange of information.</p> <p>2. To maximize the use of electronic communication system in countries of the region, and encourage the development of a web page for each contact point.</p> <p>3. To maintain an up-to-date directory of the National Codex Contact Points including addresses as provided by the members of CCAFRICA.</p> <p>4. To organize a virtual chat room with the primary objective of exchanging information prior to Codex Meeting, among CCAFRICA members as well as with other regional committees or Codex members..</p> <p>5. To establish a mechanism whereby the Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees in the CCAFRICA region can share their expertise with each other.</p>	
<p>2. To achieve an active and effective participation of all countries in the Region in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies.</p>	<p>1. To search financial assistance from possible sources to support Codex activities (Trust Fund, WHO, FAO, UNDP, International organisations).</p> <p>2. To take advantage of the Codex Trust Fund.</p> <p>3. To ask for collaboration in the translation of relevant information into English, French and Arabic.</p> <p>4. To establish working groups responsible for examining the strategic aspects of Codex activities.</p> <p>5. To involve all countries in the Region in the activities of CCAFRICA.</p> <p>6. To coordinate all CCAFRICA sessions with other Codex seminars and meetings concerning trade and consumer protection issues.</p>	

	<p>7. To hold as many CCAFRICA meetings in the countries of the region to allow countries to organize meetings on a rotating basis, and to increasingly sensitize the member countries in Codex activities.</p> <p>8. To encourage countries that have a common interest to coordinate their position and present it as a uniform position at Codex Committee meetings.</p> <p>9. To give support to countries of the Region in organizing Codex events.</p>	
<p>3. To promote the development and to strengthen National Codex Committees and/or Codex Contact Points in CCAFRICA Member Countries.</p>	<p>1. To identify the needs for capacity building with other organizations and look for possible financing sources.</p> <p>2. To encourage and support CCAFRICAN Member Countries in establishing National Codex Committees (the central liaison department of the country will have to act as secretary of the National Codex Committee).</p> <p>3. To harmonize working procedures and Codex National Committee rules at the regional level.</p> <p>4. To maintain records of training activities, records of the exchanges of information and expertise between countries and international organizations and records concerning other activities defined in the Action Plan.</p>	
<p>4. To take advantage of available technical and scientific expertise and experiences of the Member Countries of CCAFRICA.</p>	<p>1. To establish a list of specialists and institutions available in the CCAFRICA region based on the information provided by each country.</p> <p>2. Identify regional specialists or organizations who can provide expert support and specialized advice and encourage their participation in the Codex Committee meetings.</p> <p>3. To establish a regional evaluation body that will coordinate communication of expert data with other Codex Evaluation bodies.</p> <p>4. To identify and prioritize working group issues that require specialized expertise.</p> <p>5. To organize working groups that will formulate and oversee research projects of resources and to ensure their follow-up.</p>	
<p>5. To ensure the continuity and sustainability of the CCAFRICA activities.</p>	<p>1. To design a biennial plan of action to be implemented between the CCAFRICA meetings.</p> <p>2. To conduct periodical evaluations and follow up on the actions contemplated in the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>3. To establish mechanisms for the transfer of information during the transition of the coordination.</p>	

	<p>4. To present a report on the achievements in the key result areas contemplated in the Strategic Plan, at the sessions of CCAFRICA.</p>	
<p>6. To obtain technical cooperation and funding mechanisms that would enable CCAFRICA to develop and sustain its activities in accordance with its objectives.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To elaborate a list of organizations that could provide technical and financial cooperation.</li> <li>2. To organize working groups that would formulate and oversee research projects;</li> <li>3. To develop and analyse proposals for the creation of trust funds and other means of financing within the Codex domain, keeping in mind the region's interests.</li> </ol>	
<p>7. Identify and prioritize regional needs in matters of food safety and other domains with a view to finding solutions to meet these needs .</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the issues of economic interest that have consensus within the CCAfrica members for the elaboration of Codex standards.</li> <li>2. Elaborate standards, guidelines and regulations and other recommendations that have been identified of being of interest to the region.</li> <li>3. Conduct studies within the member countries to discover the region's needs.</li> <li>4. Encourage contacts with other interested parties, regularly attending CCAFRICA meetings.</li> <li>5. Apply the principles of risk analysis by reviewing the studies made.</li> </ol>	