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

Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Sixty-first Session - Cent soixante et unième session -
161.º período de sesiones**

Rome, 8-12 April 2019

VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Rome, 8-12 avril 2019

PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL

Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019

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

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
8 April 2019

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.45
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the first meeting of the 161st 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.

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. Furthermore, the European Union will be participating in the Drafting Committee in accordance with the aforementioned paragraphs of Article II of the FAO Constitution and, on matters within its competence, will be exercising, on an alternative basis, the membership rights of the European Union member states elected to the Drafting Committee.

The declaration made by the European Union and its member states is contained in information document CL 161/INF/3.

I would now like to extend a warm welcome to the Director-General, who has joined us and I now invite him to address the Council. Director-General, you have the floor.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Khalid Mehboob, Independent Chairperson of the Council; Excellencies; Ministers and Vice-Ministers and High Authorities coming from the capitals; Members of the Council; Distinguished delegates; Distinguished guests; Ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honour to welcome all of you to this new Session of the FAO Council.

As you know, the main agenda item of this Session is the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, as well as the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed).

But before referring to the PWB for the next biennium, allow me to make some considerations.

Since I took office as FAO Director-General in 2012, I have managed the Organization under the concept of zero nominal growth in our regular budget.

This means less and less money in real terms every biennium, while Member Countries have consistently asked for FAO to do more and more.

And this has happened in a context where more than 80 percent of FAO's regular budget is to pay salaries, benefits and maintenance costs.

If we add to this 80 percent the minimum of 14 percent that goes to the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), we have 95 percent of our assessed contributions linked to fixed costs.

To face this difficult budgetary situation, and give more flexibility to our budget, we have focused on two main aspects in the last years:

First, to reduce costs and find savings, and make FAO much more efficient, effective and results-oriented.

And second, to attract more voluntary contributions.

I must say that we have succeeded in achieving both objectives.

Since January 2012, we have found more than USD 150 million in savings.

We have also improved FAO's effectiveness based mainly on extended partnerships and a strong decentralization process. As I have said from the very beginning, FAO must be a knowledge Organization with its feet on the ground.

We are very happy and proud to notice that the 2018 FAO assessment made by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (known as MOPAN) has found FAO much better than in 2011 and 2014.

According to MOPAN, FAO has strengthened its performance particularly in terms of enhanced strategic focus, stronger operational management, and stronger commitment to partnership along the last seven years

So we have rebuilt the trust of members and donors in the Organization, and therefore attracted more voluntary contributions.

The amount of extra budgetary contributions has increased from USD 1.6 billion in the biennium 2010-11 to almost USD 2.1 billion in the last biennium 2016-17. This is an increase of more than 30 percent in six years.

For the current biennium (2018-19), we expect voluntary contributions to grow even further beyond USD 2.1 billion.

One important modality of voluntary contributions is the Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF).

This is a government financed funding modality for programmes and projects implemented in the country. FAO provides technical expertise and supports ownership by the recipient country.

In the last years, we have seen an unprecedented increase of UTFs.

In Latin America, for example, those contributions of development projects have increased by almost 40 percent since the biennium 2012-13.

In parallel, we have made important progress in diversifying the resource partner base as part of the strategy not to be too dependent on our traditional donors.

In 2012, we had about only 20 new partners, including middle-income countries and regional organizations, which contributed only USD 28 million.

Today, we have more than 100 new partners, which have contributed more than USD 200 million to our budget.

At the same time, we have increased our work with UN agencies by actively engaging in joint programmes and interagency platforms.

These partnerships have almost doubled since 2012, and they represent a monetary increase of contributions from the UN system by 100 percent, accounting nowadays up to USD 800 million.

But let me take this opportunity to raise some concerns regarding the growing level of voluntary contributions on FAO's budget.

We are in a situation in which two-thirds of our financial resources depend on the goodwill of donors, not on assessed contributions.

This is, per se, a risk as voluntary contributions are subject to many variables that are beyond our control. We never know when they would come and how much would come.

And, it also runs the risk that the performance of the Organization will respond more and more to the priorities set by our donors.

This reality needs to be considered by the membership in light of the constraints of requiring ever more from the Organization without increasing the level of the regular budget.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The proposed Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium is both a continuation and a consolidation of the work to make FAO more efficient and more effective.

Let me recall that in the last two budget negotiations, Members were able to reach a consensus on the budget level at the session of the Council preceding the Conference.

As you know very well, the Conference in June will elect a new Director-General.

So it is very important that we repeat this healthy practice of agreeing on the budget level before the Conference, so we can swiftly move past what is usually a time-consuming issue.

Let me now explain some features of the proposed PWB.

We are projecting efficiency savings up to USD 30 million in the next biennium.

Let me highlight that this USD 30 million, this is not new money, most of this is money that we recovered from projects, so an important part of it will need to go back to where they were produced, that is at country level.

From this amount, we intend to use nearly USD 20 million to cover cost increases; USD 5,1 million to cover FAO's cost share to the UN Resident Coordinator System; USD 1 million to separate and strengthen the ethics and ombudsman functions; and an additional USD 4 million to strengthen our work in two specific areas.

The first area is the promotion of nutrition-sensitive food systems.

As I have been stressing before, we cannot only focus on tackling hunger anymore. The Sustainable Development Goal number 2 calls for the eradication of all forms of malnutrition. And there is a steady growth in the levels of overweight and obesity all around the world.

While hunger is circumscribed to specific areas, like conflict areas, obesity is everywhere. In fact, we are witnessing the globalization of obesity.

Some projections estimate that the number of obese people will very soon overcome the number of people suffering from hunger. This has already happened in Latin America.

So we are proposing to allocate USD 2 million to reinforce activities centered on combating all forms of malnutrition, in particular obesity.

The second area that we intend to strengthen is innovation, including digital innovation and information technologies.

FAO has been at forefront of promoting innovation in agriculture and food systems.

Last November, FAO hosted the First International Symposium on Innovation here at headquarters.

The event highlighted that innovation in agriculture and food systems are fundamental to face the challenges ahead, particularly water scarcity and the impacts of climate change.

So we intend to allocate another USD 2 million to promote innovative and sustainable agriculture approaches.

The Finance and Programme Committees welcomed the strengthening of nutrition and innovation. And they also requested the Secretariat to increase the funding regarding other priorities, particularly the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), CODEX and biodiversity.

So we are again with the problem that I mentioned in the beginning: less and less money for our regular budget and more and more activities for FAO to perform in an ever expanding area of multiple fields and tasks.

There is a striking difficulty in addressing all of the identified priorities in the context of a flat nominal budget.

There is no magic. If membership wants to increase funds for a specific programme or area, please also point out what area should be de-emphasized.

I found particularly sound the remarks made by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee at the opening to the Members. I quote: "when Members bring proposals to increase an area of work, they should also make a concrete proposal where we find the source for that increase".

In the last years, sustainable funding for scientific advice for CODEX and IPPC has been raised repetitively by Members. Let me recall the funding we have consistently committed to those areas. Firstly, FAO Regular Programme allocates to CODEX Secretariat the amount of USD 7.1 million, and WHO contribution is only 1.7 million. In other words, FAO continues to cover from its regular budget 80 percent of the CODEX Secretariat.

I should also note that for most of the time that I have been in office this budget has been underspent. In addition, a number of units and divisions within FAO support food safety and scientific advice to CODEX, which is covered by budgeted resources from different divisions of approximately USD 3.4 million, so a total of USD 10.5 million is allocated to CODEX every biennium from FAO.

We have even set up a Trust Fund for attract more voluntary contributions to CODEX but as of now, we did not receive any contributions from donors.

Let me tell you something new: we were about to receive a contribution from the private sector, and unfortunately, we could not accept it due to the position of WHO regarding voluntary contributions from the private sector to CODEX.

Furthermore, USD 5.9 million is ring-fenced in the Regular Programme Budget for IPPC. I kindly request Members to review this issue carefully, considering the additional information we are providing.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me now make reference to some human resource issues.

First, in terms of geographic representation of staff, only ten member countries are not represented in FAO at this moment, and just two countries were over-represented as of March 2019.

FAO also continues to move forward in its efforts towards gender parity in the workforce.

At the beginning of 2012, female staff accounted for 36 percent in professional positions. In March 2019, this figure rose to 43 percent.

The Organization has elaborated a specific strategy to achieve gender parity. We estimate that gender parity at professional level would be achieved before 2022.

Regarding female staff in senior positions, it accounted for 21 percent at the beginning of 2012; and now this proportion has risen to 25 percent.

We are committed to further increase this proportion. For that, we need to have good candidates. I also have to say that when it comes to senior positions, usually Member Countries often present names of candidates, most of them only male.

So I ask the support of Members to also help us identify good female candidates for senior positions in FAO.

Another point that I want to highlight is that FAO is also fully committed to uphold a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and all kinds of harassment, and to foster a safe and inclusive working environment in the Organization.

We have introduced a new policy on prevention, as well as presented an updated corporate action plan for your consideration on sexual harassment.

We are now taking steps to improve our coordination with WFP and IFAD, in order to organize a joint survey, as requested by the Programme and Finance Committees.

Regarding the election of the next FAO Director-General, the Secretariat received five nominations. These nominations were announced on 1 March, according to the rules of the Organization.

We received nominations from Cameroon, China, France, Georgia and India. And some weeks ago, Cameroon withdrew its candidature.

In line with my commitment to ensure an efficient transition process, I sent a letter to the ambassadors of the countries that submitted nominations, offering FAO availability, and my personal one, to meet the candidates individually.

We also circulated an internal administrative note to ask our staff to keep maintaining neutrality during the campaign period, in line with their responsibilities as international civil servants.

Furthermore, as I said before, we consulted the candidates on the possibility of broadcasting their addresses to the Council this week, but no consensus has been possible in this regard.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before concluding, let me refer to some events that took place since the last Council Session in December, as well as some events that will take place before the Conference.

In January, we participated in the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin, which was focused on innovation.

The GFFA Communiqué asked FAO, in partnership with other stakeholders, to draw up a technology impact assessment of the opportunities and risks presented by digitalization for agriculture and rural areas, based on the availability of voluntary contributions.

The outcome of this technology impact assessment will be used to develop a common methodology to assess and track the digital development situation at the national level.

We are already in contact with IFAD and other partners, like the World Bank, to move forward in the implementation of this assessment, and I hope we will soon receive voluntary contributions to start the process.

In February, FAO, WHO and the African Union co-organized a Conference on Food Safety in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event was focused on the relationship of food safety and healthy diets.

And just last week, I participated in two other very important events.

First, the launch of the third food crises report in Brussels. The event highlighted the importance of strengthening the resilience of the vulnerable and affected populations to conflict and the impacts of climate change. To save lives, we also need to save their livelihoods.

The second event of last week was the Near East and North Africa Land and Water Conference, in Cairo. Countries in the NENA region discussed how to scale-up innovation, specific policies and investments to address water scarcity. This is a global problem that requests urgent action.

Regarding the upcoming events, a second conference on food safety will take place later this month in Geneva, which FAO is co-organizing with WHO and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The event will address the importance of strengthening food safety standards for improving international trade.

In May, FAO will host a big conference here at headquarters to officially launch the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028.

This will present a great opportunity to put together all the important aspects that we need to address to properly support family farmers. These include climate change adaptation, social protection, innovation, natural resources management and much more.

In June, we will organize two important Seminars here in headquarters: one on healthy diets and the other one on agriculture innovation, which emphasize on digitalization, which are exactly the two areas of emphasis that I mentioned previously in our proposed budget.

Also in June, I will participate in the Second Meeting of the Parties of the FAO Port States Measures Agreement. The PSMA is the first-ever binding international instrument that specifically addresses Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing.

As of today, 86 countries are already part of the PSMA, which entered into force three years ago.

We want to quickly push this number up to one hundred parties, and let me renew my appeals to every country to become part of this global effort against IUU fishing. We would welcome if Council Members could make an additional appeal in the same direction. I thank you for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Director-General, we thank you for your comprehensive statement, which highlights various aspects of the activities of the organisation. As you said, the named agenda item before us in this session is the Programme of Work and Budget. We must acknowledge that you have managed the Organization under the concept of zero nominal growth. This has meant less funds in real terms to face the increasing challenges that the Organization has faced. It has been noted that you have addressed the situation firstly through, reducing costs and secondly through extra budgetary financing.

On the question of reducing costs, I recall that I always give the example of the elastic band and with due caution not to stretch the band beyond the limit when it may snap. Yet, Director-General, you have managed the elastic band well. The band did not snap and the support by donors for the extra budgetary fund shows confidence of the donors in the Organization and in its management.

However, there are challenges there as well such as: voluntary contributions versus assessed contributions, and these challenges need to be addressed.

Another successful aspect is the decisions by consensus, which I know very well from my past working experience. This element, has been present in the Organization over the past eight years. There was a time when important decisions were taken by a vote rather than by consensus, but over the past eight years it has always been by consensus which, in my view, strengthens the governance process as well as the the Organization.

After these brief remarks, I would like to open the floor to Members for any comments or remarks they have on the Director-General's statement.

Ms Terri SARCH (United Kingdom)

The European Union will be making a statement on PWB (Programme of Work and Budget) later on, which will reflect our views. I would just like to take this opportunity to very much welcome FAO's management offer to Director-General candidates for their addresses to the Council to be webcast. Our opinion is this would be a very important improvement in transparency and we would very much welcome it. I would like to take this opportunity to urge all candidates to take up the offer from FAO management to have their addresses webcast.

CHAIRPERSON

Obviously, this is a matter for the Members to decide. I believe the candidates' countries were consulted and there was no consensus on this issue. If the matter has to be opened again, it is up to the Members to consider on how to proceed on this issue. Yet, as I have said, the four candidates' countries could not reach a consensus on this point.

The Director-General has to leave us now, as he has got other commitments.

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 wish to remind delegates that in order to ask for the floor, you should simply need to press the red button located by the microphone. The light will flash until you have finished speaking. The order of speakers will be automatically noted and displayed on the screen above the podium.

Finally, in line with the UN-wide "PaperSmart" initiative, I wish to remind Members that hard copies of Council documents are available on a "print-on-demand" basis and can be requested at the Documents Desk, if required.

Before we move on to item 1, I have to inform you 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.

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 161/1 Rev.1; CL 161/INF/1 Rev.2; CL 161/INF/3

CHAIRPERSON

The first item on the agenda is the *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable* as set out in documents CL 161/1 Rev.1, CL 161/INF/1 Rev.2 and CL 161/INF/3.

With regard to the Provisional Timetable, I would like to draw the Council's attention to my pre session letter of 4 April proposing that item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21* and item 4, *Mid-term Review Synthesis Report – 2018* be deliberated upon under their respective items and not when considering the reports of the Programme and Finance Committees, or of their Joint Meeting.

For ease of reference, the relevant paragraphs in the reports of the committees are included in the Provisional Timetable under the respective items.

Furthermore, I wish to inform Council that further to discussions in the Informal Meeting with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups held on 4 April 2019 regarding the possibility of holding item 9, *Address by Candidates for the post of Director-General* in the Plenary Hall instead of the Red Room due to the foreseen high level of participation by delegations.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform Members that this item will now be held in the Plenary Hall on Thursday 11 April 2019, as set out in the Timetable.

As the addresses will commence at 09.30 hours, I kindly invite all delegations to be seated in the Plenary Hall by 09.15 hours to ensure we start promptly with item 9.

May I take it that the Council approves the Agenda and Timetable for the session?

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

He solicitado la palabra en nombre del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC) para pedir la inclusión en el rubro 15, *Otros asuntos*, de la iniciativa destinada a crear el “José Graziano Da Silva Award for Zero Hunger” en reconocimiento a los grandes esfuerzos desplegados por el actual Director General de la FAO para la consecución del hambre cero.

Sr. Nelson ROBELLY LOZADA (Ecuador)

Ecuador apoya la iniciativa.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comments? So we will include this under any other matters.

Thank you, the Agenda and Timetable are approved.

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 designación 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*.

I wish to inform Council that as not all the nominations have been received, I propose that we take this item as soon as all the names have been submitted. I trust this is agreeable to the Council.

I wish to remind Members to submit a copy of their statements in advance, if possible, to assist the interpreters and verbatim reporters. Statements should be submitted to the email address projected on the screen behind the podium.

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.

In this regard, in line with the practice implemented at our previous sessions, the draft conclusions will be projected on the screen behind the podium after the close of discussions on each item.

This will enable Council Members to see the draft text while it is being read out and react with comments more easily. Non-English speakers of Council will be able to follow and provide comments through interpretation.

In this regard, I wish to emphasize that my conclusions will be concise and focus on decisions by Council, with some flexibility afforded to the Drafting Committee in finalizing the draft report, while not re-opening substantive discussions which remains the prerogative of the plenary meeting.

Item 4. Mid-term Review Synthesis Report – 2018

Point 4. Examen à mi-parcours – Rapport de synthèse 2018

Tema 4. Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad de período correspondiente a 2018

PC 126/2 – FC 175/7

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentleman, we begin our substantive work this morning with Item 4, *Mid-term Review Synthesis Report – 2018*.

Before we start our deliberations may I remind Members to keep their interventions as brief and focused as possible, with preference given to Regional Group statements rather than single countries repeating comments already made.

For item 4, the document before the Council is PC 126/2-FC 175/7.

I now invite Ms Beth Crawford, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to present the report.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

The Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report 2018 (MTR) informs the membership of the progress during 2018 in implementing the approved Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (PWB). It is based on FAO's results-based monitoring framework for work under all sources of funds.

I just want to highlight that in addition to the main document, we also have a handbook version of the MTR 2018, which is now available in all languages.

The MTR reports on the extent to which FAO is on track to deliver the Outputs against indicators and targets of the Strategic Objectives, highlighting achievements at global, regional and national level.

It also reports on the key performance indicators and targets under Objective 6, and the Functional Objectives and Special Chapters, as well as on management of delivery and resources.

Not in scope of this document is the achievement of Outcomes and Objectives, which will be reported in the Programme Implementation Report 2018-19 in May 2020.

2018 has seen improvements in work planning, including stronger articulation of country needs and supply of technical support, as well as more precise target setting.

For the Strategic Objectives, progress was considered “on-track” if the 2018 target was fully met. Outputs were highlighted as “needing attention” if the 2018 target was not fully met, or when progress was below 30 percent of the 2019 target.

Results show that 74 percent of the Strategic Objective Output targets for the year were fully achieved, while 26 percent were partially achieved.

The targets were generally skewed towards 2019, confirming the Organization's strategic choice of consolidating results within a two-year time span, rather than with shorter one-year achievements. Progress against the 2019 cumulative targets is in line with the planning expectations.

Divisions, Offices and Strategic Programme Teams continue to carefully monitor the 2019 work plans, and are assisted by this mid-term review information to take proactive actions to fulfil biennial commitments.

The 2018 Regional Conferences endorsed the 17 Regional Initiatives and welcomed their bringing in capacities, skills and resources from across the Organization and providing a leading entry point for enhancing partnerships.

Under Objective 6, key performance indicators are on track for delivering technical quality and services, including statistics and the cross-cutting themes of gender, climate change, nutrition and governance.

Under the Functional Objectives and Special Chapters, 28 of the 31 key performance indicators measured in 2018 are on track, and all KPIs are expected to be achieved by end-2019.

The delivery of net appropriation resources in 2018, the first year of the biennium, is on track, at 49 percent of the budgeted resources.

During 2018, there was a 43 percent approval rate of TCP resources against 2018-19 appropriation. The end-2019 target of 100 percent is expected to be fully met due to increased rate of project approvals and streamlined implementation procedures.

TCP delivery in 2018, for both 2016-17 and 2018-19 appropriation, amounts to USD 64.1 million. The Organization is on track for 100 percent delivery of the 2016-17 appropriation by end-2019.

Mr Chairperson, distinguished delegates, the Mid-Term Review 2018 is provided to Council for its review and for any advice on performance.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Mr Lupiño Lazaro, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, to report on the discussions on this item during the 175th Session of the Finance Committee, you have the floor.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to briefly present the outcome of the discussions of the 175th Session of the Finance Committee on the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report – 2018 contained in document PC 126/2 and FC 175/7.

In its technical review of the document, the Finance Committee noted that of the overall performance in 2018, 28 of the 31 key performance indicators or KPIs of businesses processes under functional objectives and special chapters measured were on track. All Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were expected to be achieved by the end of 2019. The Committee urged FAO management to ensure that the target of 100 percent delivery of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects against the 2016-17 appropriation be achieved by the end of 2019.

Finally, the Finance Committee looked forward to receiving information on the Organization's biennial achievements against the KPIs. We also requested the Programme Implementation Report for 2018-19 to include the review and analysis of TCP expenditures at the country level.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Ambassador Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to report on discussions on this item during the 126th Session of the Programme Committee.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I have the honour to briefly present the outcome of the discussion of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee on the Mid-term Review Synthesis Report – 2018.

On the outset of this presentation I would like to thank Ms Beth Crawford, Mr Dan Gustafson and Ms Maria Helena Semedo, the Deputy Directors-General, and their team for the open and frank discussions we had during the Programme Committee.

It made it possible to have an in-depth discussion on the synthesis report and arrive at consensus conclusions. And those are:

The Committee welcomed the progress report and results achieved in implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, noting that delivery in the biennium was on track, and especially the achievements for delivering technical quality and services, including for the cross-cutting themes were and are on track;

Of course, during the discussions we also realised that we should not forget that although we are on track, we are not on track with the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Sustainable Development Goal 2.

The Committee also noted that the majority of the targets (72 percent) were planned for 2019 and encouraged the Organization to continue close monitoring where needed.

The Committee highlighted the importance of the report as an accountability tool and as a model for illustrating lessons learnt.

The Committee noted the reversal of progress to achieve SDG 2 and stressed that more concerted action is needed by FAO, Members and other stakeholders to address the increasing number of hungry people.

And last, but not least, the Committee agreed on the need to find a balance between setting ambitious yet realistic Output targets to measure and monitor the progress made toward planned results.

Mr Mohd Sallehuddin HASSAN (Malaysia)

Malaysia is pleased that 74 percent of the 43 Strategic Objective Output targets for 2018 has been fully achieved, indicating good progress on most of the programmes. As such we would like to congratulate FAO.

However, reversal of progress in achieving SDG2 raised important message on the need to further enhance the formulation and implementation of our PWB. With the increased cost and increasing areas of priorities, we must set realistic targets while fostering partnerships within the UN system and with all stakeholders at global, regional and national level.

We noted that the majority of the targets were planned for 2019. As such, we support for FAO to monitor progress and increase efforts to ensure its delivery. We also look forward to lessons learned from this biennium to further improve our delivery in the coming biennium, making more effective use of resources and ensuring significant outcomes to target groups.

Finally, we noted that 307 TCP projects amounting to USD 58.3 million were approved against the 2018-19 appropriation, representing 43 percent of the biennial appropriation. We urge FAO to continue providing support to Members, in both development support and emergency assistance, to ensure full utilization of the appropriation by the end of 2019.

With these comments, we endorse the document.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

The EU and its Member States thank Management for the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report for 2018. This report and FAO's Programme Implementation Report are essential accountability tools. It is through our scrutiny of these reports that FAO Members can hold FAO Management to account for the funds that we contribute to FAO.

We would like to take this opportunity to echo the Programme Committee's concern about the reversal in progress towards SDG 2, Zero Hunger. The world is increasingly off-track to achieve the SDGs, especially SDG 2. We note from the Global Food Crises Report published last week that, in 2018,

113 million people in 53 countries experienced acute hunger requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance. We call on FAO and its Members for more concerted action towards the SDG 2 targets.

We agree with the Programme Committee that FAO should set ambitious targets that enable FAO members to monitor progress towards FAO's objectives. We note that the recent MOPAN assessment found limitations in both the targets and indicators in FAO's results framework. We urge the incoming Director-General to pay close attention to the forthcoming evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan considers the Mid-term Review Synthesis Report as an appropriate instrument for accountability to Members and as an input into the subsequent Programme Implementation Report. We note with appreciation that the Synthesis Report for 2018 covers the performance of 78 Outputs: 40 under the five Strategic Objectives, eleven under Objective Six, 21 under the four Functional Objectives and six under Chapters 13 and 14.

We note that for the 5 Strategic Objectives, progress was on track for 35 biennial targets but eight other targets needed more attention. Performance against targets was best for Strategic Objectives 1, 4 and 5; satisfactory for Strategic Objective 2 and less satisfactory for Strategic Objective 3.

All the eleven indicators of Objective Six were on track. One of the two indicators for TCP was also on track. And out of the 22 indicators of the 4 Functional Objectives, only one was not on track.

With respect to gender mainstreaming (table 3), out of 15 actions, 14 were implemented. The one not successfully implemented is that only 30 percent of FAO's operational work and budget at country and regional level is allocated to women-specific targeted intervention. With respect to 17 Regional Initiatives there has been no change in number.

To conclude, Afghanistan considers 2018 to be the year of good performance for the Regular Budget of FAO.

One suggestion we wish to make is that it may be useful for members to know what group of countries will be the potential beneficiaries of the output produced in the year under review, such as low-income, middle-income and fragile and Small Island Developing States.

Sr. Edward Francisco CENTENO GADEA (Nicaragua)

Nicaragua reconoce los importantes esfuerzos de la FAO en el cumplimiento de las metas fijadas a mitad del período 2018 y confiamos que aquellas que aún se encuentran en desarrollo podrán ser alcanzadas plenamente en el transcurso de 2019. Este proceso de revisión es indispensable, ya que nos permite identificar el estado de las actuaciones y focalizarnos en los aspectos que necesitan seguimiento de las metas establecidas.

Podemos afirmar que, hasta el momento, la ruta hacia el alcance de los objetivos para el año 2018 ha sido acertada. No obstante, consideramos imperioso multiplicar esfuerzos para el pleno cumplimiento de aquellos parcialmente alcanzados. Igualmente, observamos con interés el desempeño relativo a las metas e indicadores de los Objetivos Estratégicos 1, 3 y 4, permitiéndonos hacer las siguientes reflexiones.

“La Reducción de la pobreza rural”, que es el Objetivo Estratégico 3, es un tema fundamental tanto para la Organización como para todos los Estados Miembros. Si bien, se han alcanzado plena y satisfactoriamente cinco de los nueve propósitos fijados, podemos afirmar que completar el total de metas será determinante para el cumplimiento de otros objetivos estrechamente relacionados; como por ejemplo, la meta del Objetivo Estratégico 1, “Contribuir a la erradicación del hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición”.

En este mismo orden, es necesario aumentar el trabajo coordinado a fin de conseguir la totalidad de las metas establecidas en el Objetivo Estratégico 4, “Propiciar sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios más inclusivos y eficientes”, en particular, las cuatro metas pendientes de completar.

Para ello es imperioso incrementar la colaboración con los países incluyendo la participación de otras agencias especializadas que aporten asesoramiento científico y favorezcan la generación de empleos productivos, el desarrollo de eficientes cadenas de valor, la elaboración y aplicación de acuerdos comerciales, directrices voluntarias y el establecimiento de estándares alimentarios internacionales, que permitan hacer los sistemas agrícolas cada vez más productivos, inclusivos, eficientes y competitivos.

Agradecemos y felicitamos a FAO por los esfuerzos realizados en 2018 e instamos a continuar en 2019 prestando particular atención a estos aspectos, con la certeza de que todos los objetivos y metas establecidos serán alcanzados satisfactoriamente.

Por otro lado, el Programa de Cooperación Técnica es, y debe continuar siendo, un instrumento fundamental de FAO especialmente para los países en desarrollo. Por tal razón, es indispensable continuar fortaleciéndolo mediante la mejora de los mecanismos de agilización y flexibilización de los procedimientos de aprobación de los recursos del Programa de Cooperación Técnica hacia los países.

Esperamos que al cierre del bienio se consiga alcanzar un dinamismo en la actividad de cooperación técnica a la luz de las nuevas funciones del Departamento de Apoyo a los Programas, lo cual podrá coadyuvar a lograr las metas establecidas.

Por último, en relación a la puntualidad y los plazos de presentación de documentos de los órganos rectores en los idiomas previstos, solicitamos a FAO realizar los esfuerzos necesarios para conseguir un mejor cumplimiento al respecto. Esto, sin duda, es esencial para garantizar una participación activa y proactiva de los Miembros.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We note the quality of the documents submitted to us on the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report for 2018. And we welcome the achievements of the Organization, achieving 32 out of 43 targets in this reporting period. We expect that, in the course of this year, work will continue more intensively in those areas in which some delays were recorded.

We welcome the breakdown of outcomes by the different regions, including Europe and Central Asia. FAO's efforts in this Region are greatly needed, and specifically, we are referring to the work to achieve food security and enhance nutrition, in particular in school feeding programmes. And also, the implementation of social protection programmes for the population.

On our side, we support, and will continue to support, including also financially, FAO's activity in these areas. We would specifically like to underscore the importance of building capacity in our country in the area of reducing antimicrobial resistance.

We receive very positive feedback from our capitals regarding the organisation of the regional Atlas course in our country for assessment of tools for laboratories, and in our surveillance systems.

Our work with FAO in this area is very important. In our estimation we finance corresponding technical projects of FAO, with a focus in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. However, so far, we have not made progress with the FAO's Secretariat regarding the organization of an FAO reference centre on antimicrobial resistance in Russia which, in our estimation, would be a substantial contribution to controlling AMR, not only in our country, but also in the entire Asian area.

We would like to ask the Secretariat to engage more constructively in our joint work in this area, taking into account the regional specificities and practical complexities. We support FAO's work in the area of emergency preparedness, and response. Nonetheless, this is not the first time that we note the unfounded mixture of work in this area with peace building.

In particular, we do not support the thesis in the document, according to which "FAO has positioned itself as a key and active participant in the peace process". This is a quote from paragraph 82.

Once again, we support the limitations of FAO's mandate in this area, and the need to be guided by the fact that the main responsibility in this area lies, according to the United Nations Charter, with the Security Council.

In this connection, we ask the FAO Secretariat to clarify the reference in the document to the Corporate Framework to Support Sustainable Peace in the Context of Agenda 2030. We are interested in receiving information on which Governing Body authorised the FAO Secretariat to prepare this document, and include it in its activities.

We would also be grateful for additional information on the financial sources of this work.

Sra. Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Agradecemos a la Administración la presentación de estos documentos.

Respecto al Plan a plazo medio revisado para 2018-21, vemos con agrado que refleja de una manera equilibrada los tres retos que tiene la Organización: erradicar el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición en primer lugar; la eliminación de la pobreza e impulsar el progreso económico y social en segundo lugar; y la ordenación y utilización sostenible de los recursos naturales en tercer lugar.

Respecto a los desafíos y novedades en el documento, destacamos cuatro puntos: 1) mejorar la productividad agrícola; 2) garantizar una base de recursos naturales; 3) sistemas alimentarios más eficaces, y 4) mejorar las oportunidades de generación de ingresos y atender el tema de la migración. Nos agrada, asimismo, que el Plan a plazo medio incorpora los trabajos de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático (CMNUCC), y poco a poco los resultados del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica (CDB), el Pacto Mundial para una migración segura, ordenada y regular, y del Pacto mundial sobre los refugiados. Apoyamos, asimismo, los esfuerzos para que la Organización cuente con personal que posea una amplia gama de conocimientos especializados en los distintos ámbitos de competencia de la FAO y que trabajen de manera interdisciplinaria. El personal de la FAO debe facilitar el proceso basado en resultados, organizando y definiendo la forma en que sus componentes interactúan entre sí con los países y sus asociados.

Respecto al Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21, apoyamos el crecimiento nominal cero de la parte del presupuesto correspondiente a las cuotas, reflejo de ahorros encontrados por la Administración y del entendimiento de la austeridad con que los Gobiernos dirigen sus actividades.

Hay que tener en cuenta que la confianza en la FAO sigue siendo fuerte, ya que, de manera global, el 65 por ciento del presupuesto proviene de recursos extra presupuestales, cifra que poco a poco se va incrementando. No obstante, los recursos extra presupuestales deben ser en ayuda de las prioridades nacionales y no exclusivamente a favor de los objetivos de países donantes. De lo contrario la naturaleza de la FAO estaría en riesgo de cambiar. Sería deseable contar en los planos regional y nacional con instrumentos programáticos anuales y/o bienales que constituyan una derivación práctica y sencilla de los grandes instrumentos como el Plan a plazo medio y el PTP.

Apoyamos que el PTP para el futuro bienio mantenga el nivel del Programa de Cooperación Técnica a 14 por ciento del presupuesto basado en cuotas. Este programa da un sentido práctico a las actividades de la FAO en países en desarrollo.

Como en todos los presupuestos y planes de trabajo, hay áreas para hacer mayor énfasis y otras para reducir trabajos. Apoyamos las nuevas prioridades para enfoques innovadores y de agricultura sostenible, así como para combatir la malnutrición en todas sus formas. Esta clase de actividades son las que le dan sentido a la FAO. También nos sumamos a las solicitudes para asignar mayores recursos a las labores de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria, al Programa de asesoramiento científico sobre inocuidad alimentaria de la FAO-OMS y muy en particular, a la integración de la biodiversidad en los trabajos de la FAO. En este último tema existe un reconocimiento creciente de que la agricultura y la biodiversidad se apoyan mutuamente a largo plazo, uno necesita del otro. La futura estrategia sobre diversidad biológica en la FAO es un buen inicio y requiere los recursos financieros para implementarla.

Los trabajos del Comité de Finanzas reflejaron esfuerzos para apoyar a la Administración en buscar más economías que permitan financiar las nuevas prioridades fijadas por la membresía y por ello solicitamos se realice un nuevo examen de las posibilidades para adoptar mayores medidas de ahorro y eficiencia, así como para dar un seguimiento continuo de los supuestos de aumentos de costos. Esperamos que rumbo a la Conferencia así como a la sesión del Consejo de la FAO en diciembre se obtengan los recursos adicionales para asignarlos a estas prioridades.

Con estos comentarios, apoyamos presentar a la Conferencia el PTP con la cuantía presupuestal, basada en cuotas, de 1005.6 millones de dólares estadounidenses (USD).

M. Abdenmour GOUGAM (Algérie)

Permettez-moi de vous féliciter pour l'excellente manière dont vous dirigez nos travaux. Nos félicitations vont également au Secrétariat pour la très bonne organisation de cette session et pour la qualité des documents de travail.

L'Algérie prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique au titre du point 4 de l'ordre du jour, sur le document intitulé: «Examen à mi-parcours – Rapport de synthèse - 2018» et cette déclaration s'aligne sur celle faite au nom du Groupe des 77 et la Chine.

Le Groupe Afrique accueille avec beaucoup d'intérêt le rapport à mi-parcours, qui nous a informés des résultats obtenus par l'Organisation à l'issue de la première année de l'exercice biennal 2018-2019.

On note avec satisfaction que l'adoption par l'Organisation, depuis 2012, d'une gestion axée sur les résultats a permis non seulement une approche holistique lui permettant de faire face à des défis complexes et interconnectés, mais aussi un alignement très pragmatique sur les objectifs de développement durable à l'horizon 2030, qui veut transformer les efforts en cours en une vision d'un monde durable faisant ainsi de la sécurité alimentaire une réalité.

Les résultats enregistrés, selon les documents à notre disposition, et l'atteinte de la majorité des cibles des cinq objectifs stratégiques, à savoir 32 des 43 cibles fixées pour la fin de l'année 2018, renseignent sur les efforts fournis par l'Organisation pour contribuer à l'élimination de la faim, de l'insécurité alimentaire et de la malnutrition, pour rendre l'agriculture, les forêts et les pêches plus productives et plus durables, et pour réduire la pauvreté rurale, en encourageant des systèmes agricoles et alimentaires plus inclusifs et plus efficaces.

Ces efforts ont été confortés par l'adhésion entière des États aux politiques et orientations développées par la FAO, qui travaille en partenariat avec les gouvernements et d'autres acteurs du développement, afin de mettre en place le cadre politique et institutionnel et les capacités nécessaires pour éliminer durablement la faim, l'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition sous toutes ses formes.

Le Groupe Afrique insiste sur l'importance du rapport en tant qu'outil d'information et modèle illustrant les enseignements tirés.

Nous constatons avec satisfaction les réalisations des services et de la qualité techniques, s'agissant notamment des thèmes transversaux contribuant aux objectifs stratégiques.

Afin de permettre la mise en oeuvre de toutes les cibles enregistrées dans le Plan stratégique et devant la complexité de la situation alimentaire dans le monde, notamment en Afrique, et l'ampleur de ses répercussions sur les populations vulnérables, seuls des efforts conjugués peuvent nous permettre de faire face aux défis auxquels nous sommes confrontés.

Aujourd'hui, les États Membres, et plus particulièrement les pays africains, ont besoin de plus d'accompagnement technique à même de les aider à relever le défi de la sécurité alimentaire, d'où l'importance de traduire les décisions et plans au niveau mondial en résultats concrets dans les domaines techniques, normatifs et de biens publics.

Une démarche qui doit être confortée par des mesures visant à améliorer l'efficacité organisationnelle et apporter une réponse appropriée aux parties prenantes et un déploiement de la FAO sur le terrain et le renforcement de son assistance technique adaptée aux besoins des Membres et de leurs priorités en matière de développement.

L'apport de la FAO est sollicité dans différents domaines, notamment dans le développement agro-industriel, l'emploi des jeunes, la gestion efficace des eaux et des sols, la lutte contre les organismes nuisibles et les maladies des animaux (PPR) et des végétaux (chenille légionnaire d'automne), ainsi que la résistance aux antimicrobiens.

Il convient de souligner la place qu'occupent les questions de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture dans la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable (ODD), notamment la réalisation des cibles des Objectifs 14, 15 et 7.

Le Programme de développement déclinant les ODD à l'horizon 2030 est le résultat d'un consensus de la communauté internationale autour d'une vision du monde, bâtie notamment sur l'élimination de la pauvreté, la réduction des inégalités, la protection de la planète des conséquences du dérèglement climatique et la nécessité de léguer aux générations futures au moins les mêmes opportunités de développement que celles dont nous disposons nous-mêmes aujourd'hui.

L'Afrique partage cette vision du monde et de notre planète et elle est pleinement engagée dans sa concrétisation. Cette conviction n'est pas nouvelle. Elle relève d'une longue tradition d'engagement de notre continent en faveur du développement durable, notamment à travers l'Agenda 2063, qui a fixé l'intégration des prescriptions du développement durable dans ses stratégies socio-économiques.

À ce titre, les pays africains sont mobilisés pour l'intégration des ODD dans les programmes et stratégies nationales, dont celles portant sur le développement agricole avec tous ce qui se rapporte à la préservation et la restauration des écosystèmes, la gestion durable des forêts, la lutte contre la désertification et la préservation et la gestion durables de la biodiversité.

Nous notons, toutefois, un recul dans la réalisation de l'ODD 2, d'où la nécessité d'une coordination et d'une concertation entre la FAO, les pays membres et les autres parties prenantes pour remédier à l'augmentation du nombre de personnes souffrant de la faim.

Les pays africains accordent une grande importance au soutien de la FAO pour les accompagner dans la réalisation des ODD et leur permettre de les atteindre d'ici 2030, permettant ainsi une amélioration de la vie quotidienne et du bien-être des populations africains, et de ne laisser personne pour compte.

Le Groupe Afrique encourage les progrès continus dans la réalisation d'une représentation géographique équitable du personnel et dans le respect du genre. Il recommande de continuer à accorder la priorité aux partenariats et à accroître la mobilisation de ressources au niveau décentralisé, en mettant l'accent sur la coopération Sud-Sud et la coopération triangulaire, tout en maintenant une collaboration étroite avec les organisations ayant leur siège à Rome.

Dans ce cadre, nous saluons les efforts conjoints de la FAO en termes de renforcement des partenariats avec le système des Nations Unies, les organisations internationales et régionales, les communautés rurales, la société civile et le secteur privé, entre autres parties prenantes.

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

Le PTB présenté pour l'année 2019-2020 augure d'une gestion financière rationnelle. Le Groupe Afrique propose de renforcer le soutien accordé par l'Organisation à ses États Membres, notamment à ceux du continent africain.

Aussi et afin de donner à notre Organisation les moyens financiers d'honorer ses engagements envers ses Membres, le Groupe Afrique souligne l'importance des contributions extrabudgétaires pour permettre le financement des domaines d'activité clés.

Le Groupe Afrique salue les efforts fournis par les pays donateurs et fait appel à leurs sens d'engagement en faveur de la réalisation des missions de la FAO pour soutenir financièrement l'Organisation.

Concernant le repositionnement du système des Nations Unies pour le développement, le Groupe régional Afrique se félicite de l'engagement de la FAO à participer activement à la gouvernance du processus de repositionnement.

Avec ces commentaires le Groupe Afrique appuie l'approbation de ce document.

Sr. Antonio FLORES LORENZO (España)

España se alinea en todos los puntos con la intervención realizada por Rumanía en nombre de la Unión Europea.

No obstante y en aras de una mayor precisión del Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad del período correspondiente a 2018, queremos poner de manifiesto que hemos detectado una inconsistencia en la página 11 de la versión resumida, por cuanto los dos primeros sitios europeos de los Sistemas importantes del patrimonio agrícola mundial (SIPAM) reconocidos por la FAO han sido españoles y no corresponden a Italia y Portugal, como erróneamente se consigna en el citado informe.

La inconsistencia también se recoge en la versión completa del Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad del período correspondiente a 2018, párrafo 62, en la página 17.

Pedimos por lo tanto que tal inconsistencia se corrija en la versión definitiva de ambos textos.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

The Trinidad and Tobago Delegation intervenes on Item 4 on behalf of the 15-member group of CARICOM countries, members of the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

Countries, like individuals, have multiple identities. In this regard, our comment also embraces the interests of Small Island Developing States.

Firstly, may we commend the overall performance of the Organization as reported in the Mid-Term Review. In particular, we note and appreciate the support provided to many CARICOM States to strengthen strategies and legal frameworks to implement the Port States Measures Agreement.

However, we are constrained to note the absence of any reference to progress in respect of FAO's implementation of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the SAMOA Pathway.

I recall the motivation which inspired the global community to address the challenges and priorities of SIDS in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals on Food and Nutrition Security.

A reflection that while small may be beautiful in terms of development and, in particular, with respect to the mandate of FAO, small is disadvantaged. And as a footnote I may add, when disadvantages seem to be ignored, small tends to become agitated and bothersome.

I also recall actions recommended to achieve the objectives of enabling environments for food security and nutrition; establishing sustainable, resilient food systems that support healthy diets and nutrition; and empowering people and communities to achieve improved food security and nutrition, with a focus on vulnerable groups.

We were advised that FAO was delivering its contribution to the implementation of the GAP through an Interregional Initiative (IRI) on SIDS, and that the IRI includes a cross-regional component to promote South-South Cooperation, partnership and experience sharing.

Given the importance of this initiative to a significant segment of the membership of this august institution, we are disappointed that the Review made no mention of progress in this area.

Mme Delphine BORIONE (France)

La délégation française s'aligne, bien sûr, sur la déclaration de l'Union européenne prononcée par la Roumanie. Cette déclaration a souligné l'importance de considérer le Rapport de synthèse sur l'examen à mi-parcours, comme un outil stratégique, pour la FAO, de gestion des responsabilités. Elle souligne aussi les progrès effectués par la FAO, mais aussi l'inquiétude que nous pouvons tous avoir concernant les résultats insatisfaisants pour atteindre l'objectif de développement durable, ODD 2, l'objectif de Faim Zéro dans le monde. Pour tous, en effet, l'atteinte des ODD doit être notre priorité.

La France souhaite des améliorations aussi en lien avec la dernière évaluation du Réseau d'évaluation de la performance des organisations multilatérales, MOPAN. Je voudrais juste insister sur ce point: ce Rapport met en avant le renforcement de la performance de la FAO en termes stratégiques, saluant le passage de 11 objectifs stratégiques (OS) à cinq OS transversaux. Il salue aussi les améliorations en matière de gestion opérationnelle et le développement accru de partenariat. Le Rapport note que la FAO est perçue de manière positive par ses partenaires.

Ce Rapport du MOPAN identifie également des risques et des points d'améliorations possibles pour notre Organisation. Il fait un certain nombre de recommandations, notamment s'agissant de l'évaluation et du renforcement des indicateurs de résultats des activités de la FAO. La France espère que les recommandations seront prises en considération par la FAO dans les années à venir, pour améliorer encore l'efficacité et l'efficacité de l'Organisation.

Elle sera par ailleurs attentive aux résultats de l'étude de cas qui va être prochainement menée par le MOPAN, sur la collaboration des trois organisations romaines, et qui pourra certainement contribuer à alimenter les réflexions.

Permettez-moi enfin de revenir sur le point qui a été soulevé par la déléguée du Royaume-Uni en ouverture de nos débats, concernant la possibilité de diffuser en webcast le déroulement de l'audition. Je voudrais juste signaler que la candidate française avait donné son accord à ce webcast, et espérait que les autres candidats puissent le faire également comme un moyen de renforcer la transparence du processus d'audition, d'établir un mécanisme de redevabilité et de pouvoir toucher plus de personnes dans les différentes langues de l'Organisation. Il en allait de même pour le débat qui sera organisé par Chatham House vendredi prochain.

Mr Dun NIU (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, China would like to express our appreciation for the achievements of FAO in 2018. In particular, the activities and outcomes in the area of regional initiatives, and priority areas of work. Second, we encourage FAO to continue to strengthen its implementation of TCP programmes, currently at 43 percent.

And we also have taken note of the fact that some of the objectives have not been achieved in terms of implementation. But as this is a Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report, and bearing in mind, also, the explanations and reasons that are set out in the report, we look forward to all of the key performance indicators being achieved by the end of 2019.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

Jordan welcomes the achievements of 2018, at the regional level. I would like to comment on Item 4, TCP, and a number of the paragraphs in the report, the regional initiatives. Allow me to point out the issue regarding water scarcity.

I have noticed from the report that FAO carried out activities regarding water accountability, and water productivity, climate change, drought, capacity building, and participating in international and regional events regarding water scarcity. The question that we have to ask here, or to raise here, is that we need to link those activities and the local regional priorities, we have to provide assistance to the small farmers, to improve their techniques in collecting and harvesting water, and to increase their productivity.

Regarding family farming, which is of great importance to many regions, especially our region that suffers from many challenges, I should like to stress here the need to work together with WFP and IFAD in joint projects to assist the region to reach its objectives.

Our region requires these small family farmers projects. Regarding resilience and food security, and despite the systems in place to monitor this aspect, and despite the VAM system, the monitoring of water and natural resources, we still believe that we need to implement field projects. We need to provide assistance from the regional office directly to the smallholders.

I have suggested to add an item on the agenda of the Programme Committee regarding the initiatives, and the concrete results achieved by FAO. Together with my colleague from Egypt, we also suggested to increase the percent, the share of TCP, from 14 percent to 17 percent.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to observer countries, any other member would like to speak? I see none.

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

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela saluda la presentación del Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad de período correspondiente a 2018, ya que representa un mecanismo para garantizar la transparencia en la gestión de la Organización.

Asimismo, celebra los progresos realizados durante 2018 en la ejecución del Programa de trabajo y presupuesto, PTP, aprobado para 2018-2019 con arreglo al Marco de la FAO, donde se evidencia que la FAO se encuentra en vías de alcanzar los indicadores y las metas y se destacan los éxitos alcanzados en los ámbitos mundial, regional y nacional.

Apoyamos también la visión holística con la que esta Organización ha logrado enfrentar los desafíos actuales para el cabal cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. Celebramos que se haya alcanzado el 74 por ciento de las metas para 2018, así como el cumplimiento de la mayoría de los resultados que se lograrán durante el segundo año del bienio, como habían sido planificados.

Asimismo, encomiamos que se hayan cumplido las nueve metas planteadas en el Objetivo Estratégico 5, “Incrementar la resiliencia de los medios de vida ante las amenazas y crisis”.

Reconocemos el avance de la FAO en materia técnica estadística en una mayor disposición de datos por país; sin embargo, es importante recordar que debe darse prioridad a los datos nacionales por encima de las estimaciones o juicios de expertos, como fue acordado en la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

También estamos complacidos por el logro en la aplicación de las 15 normas mínimas para la incorporación de la perspectiva de género y las intervenciones específicas en favor de la mujer, definida en la política de igualdad de género de la FAO, donde se alcanzaron 14 de ellas.

Celebramos los logros alcanzados por la FAO en materia de políticas orientadas a reducir el hambre y las formas de malnutrición, los alentamos a seguir exponiendo la necesidad de lograr un mundo de paz donde se eliminen los conflictos, las guerras, las intervenciones, así como las formas más modernas de intervención como son las medidas coercitivas y unilaterales que atentan contra derechos humanos fundamentales, como son la alimentación y autodeterminación de los pueblos.

Solicitamos que se sigan fortaleciendo las alianzas con el Sistema de Naciones Unidas, las organizaciones internacionales y regionales, las comunidades rurales, comunidad científica y demás partes interesadas.

Para finalizar, los invitamos a seguir en ese sendero de esfuerzos para alcanzar al cierre de este bienio el resto de las metas.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Mr Lupiño and Ambassador Hoogeveen, and the Secretariat, to respond to the issues and questions which have emerged during the debate.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I only have three comments. First, I am glad to hear that Council Members share a number of views, and observations made by the Finance Committee on this item. Such as the emphasis that has to be given on the target delivery for TCP, particularly at country level.

Second, I did not hear any particular comment for the Finance Committee, although I heard of some enquiry, or request for clarifications on financial implications on certain initiatives. I believe this is more directed to the FAO Secretariat. I leave to the Secretariat the response to this one.

Finally, I would just like to express gratitude to the Members, and particularly the Finance Committee Members, for their contributions. Also, thank the FAO Management and the Secretariat for their full engagement, which similar to the Programme Committee, has facilitated the discussions on this agenda item to be productive, and efficient.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I would like to echo the words which were said by my colleague on the Finance Committee. I think it is very important that all the Members of Council recognise, not only that we are on track, but at the same time, that we have to step up our efforts if we really want to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger, in 2030.

And then, it is not only about, I would say, the work being done here in Rome, but what was also said, for example, by my colleague of Jordan, about regional, and especially national initiatives, and work on the ground. And I think listening to the discussion which we had in the Programme Committee, it is also important that we learn lessons from the work done until now.

And I think we can learn lessons, not only for certain countries, but as it was clearly stipulated in the Programme Committee, it should be lessons learned for all countries, in all regions. I think there was a clear emphasis on meeting the targets on the TCP programme.

And at the same time, it is also clear that we have to find a balance, as was done within the Programme Committee, also to other work related to standard setting, the crucial work of FAO, as well as innovation and biodiversity.

And I also would like to thank the members of the Programme Committee for their hard work during the discussions on the Medium Term Plan, the Synthesis Report, and the Programme of Work and Budget. Not only for their hard work, but also seeing how we can make a way forward on crucial issues of the Organization.

I think with that we have set a clear scene for continuing our hard work, but also a scene for stepping up our work.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I will begin to respond to some of the questions and then my colleagues will respond to some of the others. But first, I would just like to thank all of the Members very much for your comments, and your guidance, and your feedback.

I think this really shows the importance of this document, especially when we are looking at it after the first year of the biennium, because we can really benefit. First of all, we benefit as a management team to take stock, and to see how we are doing. But we also benefit from your comments, and guidance, and suggestions, for areas of focus, so I would like to thank you very much for that.

A few of the more specific comments, and many of you have noted this important linkage with SDG 2. And indeed, we are looking at it from this broader context as well. This document before you does not yet report, within this document, on that, the achievements at those higher SDG levels.

But just to recall that in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) for 2018-19, so the biennial version of this document, we will also be presenting information and results at the outcome levels, so that is the intermediate level, and at the out objective level, which will be fully measured through SDG targets.

So it will be an interesting discussion, I believe, next year as well, when we have that full document.

Several members, including also the distinguished delegate from France, mentioned the MOPAN Report. Again, there are many interesting things coming together for us at the same time. So the MOPAN has very in-depth and interesting information for us on how we are operationalising ways we might improve.

This will be discussed by Dan Gustafson and I, at a session on Wednesday at lunchtime, when we will be looking at the MOPAN Report. We also, of course, have evaluation reports that have come to the Programme Committee. So as a combination, with this document at MTR, I believe we have lots of interesting information before us.

Trinidad and Tobago, speaking on behalf of the Small Island Developing States, mentioned his disappointment that there was not more on the Global Action Programme for Food and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States. Your comment is well noted.

This, again, is important for us, to look forward to the PIR, to make sure that we do, more fully, present that. I would also say that the Asia-Pacific Region has included some paragraphs on that, paragraphs 236 through 239. But we will try to do that more holistically next time.

I would just like to thank you once again for the valuable comments and feedback.

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

The Russian Federation requested some information on where we stand with the Russian request to recognise an Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) reference centre. Indeed, we received a request from the Russian Federation, we are analysing the request on the framework of creating a group of reference centres for AMR. And we consider it a good proposal. It is being analysed by our department and we hope very soon we will be able to move forward on the request.

The second question is regarding Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and Spain. Indeed, you are right. The first two centres for Europe were the Spain Centre, so we will correct it in the document.

Regarding the question by Trinidad and Tobago, the Small Islands Developing States, as you have seen, have been given very high priority here in FAO. We prepared the GAP, we are having some regional programmes on Small Island Developing States. It was not reflected in this Mid-Term Review, but that does not mean that they are not being given the importance deserved in the Organization.

We are working very close with UN-DESA to report on the SAMOA Pathway Mid-Term Review, happening this year. We are having a side event during the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in June, where the Director-General will be attending, and we will also be reporting on the work we are doing with Small Islands Developing States.

Just to assure you that just because it is not referred in this Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report, does not mean that it is not still a priority in the Organization.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)

The one that I will respond to specifically is the Russian Federation's question on paragraph 82, and its context. Paragraph 82 refers, as you have seen to FAO's work in Colombia, as part of the larger peace process in the country, following the Peace Accords.

And refers to entirely voluntarily funded projects, in which FAO has a role, particularly in implementation of land reform issues, and the land components of the peace process, in addition to others relating to building, or re-building trust, and social cohesion at the local level.

I would just put that in the broader context of FAO's work on peace building within, really, the context of Security Council Resolution 2417, looking at the connection between food security and conflict.

As we saw last week, with the launch of the Global Food Crisis Report, referring to the 113 million people in acute malnutrition, either phase three, four, or five of crisis, emergency, or famine around the world, 74 million of those 113, two thirds in fact, just under 66 percent of those, were in conflict situations.

So, while certainly, peace building in the sense of United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) certainly, it's not within our scope of operation.

But an awareness of how our activities on the ground contribute to social cohesion, trust-building, particularly around natural resource management issues – land, water, grazing – are often the source of conflict. Furthermore, the work at the community level, in re-building trust and diminishing tensions, is a key aspect of that work. In fact, we should highlight, how important the work of all of us in that dimension is.

CHAIRPERSON

So that brings us to the end of our discussion on this item, so I may conclude item 4 as follows:

1. The Council welcomed the Mid-term Review Synthesis Report 2018, and endorsed the guidance and recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees.
2. The Council, in particular:
 - a) welcomed the good progress and results achieved in implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, noting that delivery in the biennium was on track, as well as progress in the delivery rate of resources under all sources of funds;
 - b) noted that the majority of the Strategic Objective Output targets (72 percent) were planned for 2019, and that 28 of the 31 key performance indicators measured for 2018 under Functional Objectives and special Chapters were on track; and welcomed confirmation that all KPIs were expected to be achieved by the end of 2019;
 - c) welcomed that progress against the 2019 cumulative targets was in line with the planning expectations, while noting the need to find a balance between setting ambitious yet realistic Output targets to measure and monitor the progress made toward planned results, and encouraged the Organization to continue to closely follow progress;
 - d) appreciated the MTR as an important accountability tool and as a model for illustrating lessons learned;
 - e) stressed the challenges ahead, and the concerted efforts needed from FAO, member countries and other stakeholders, for effective progress towards achieving SDG 2;
 - f) noted the importance of continued monitoring of target and indicator setting within the Organization's results framework;
 - g) urged improved approaches and processes to enhance the delivery of the the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP); requested that the Secretariat deliver fully against the 2016-17 TCP appropriation by the end of 2019; and noted the desirability of increasing the share of TCP to 17 percent of net budgetary appropriation of FAO;
 - h) underlined the importance of south south cooperation, and partnerships with UN entities and other stakeholders for the effective delivery of FAO's programme of work.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

If we could kindly go back to point (e). I think that several countries, besides our region, have pointed out the concerns that were expressed during the Programme Committee regarding the reversal in the progress towards achieving SDG 2.

And we would kindly ask that this view, expressed by many Members, should be reflected in your conclusions, and probably point (e) would be the best place for that. So if we could kindly reflect that.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Romania. Would you have specific wording to suggest?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Well, I think we could say, "while echoing the Programme Committee's concerns about the reversal in progress towards SDG 2".

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I don't think the addition is needed. The original text is quite clear.

Mr Boumedienne MAHI (Algeria)

Could we go back to (h) please. "Underlined the importance of South-South Cooperation" we should add "triangular": "South-South and Triangular Cooperation".

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I kindly ask the Secretary to move up to the beginning of the page. I am just asking your advice about the word “endorsed” [in paragraph 1]. Shall we add after “endorsed”: “and welcomes the guidance” because some of those guidances were not endorsed by all countries, including mine. So we delete the word “endorsed” and just leave “and welcomes”. “The Council welcomed” and “welcomes”, the word “welcome” therefore appears twice.

I do not know whether my suggestion was correct. No, this is fine.

Sra. Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Consideramos que, por la importancia del tema, el párrafo e) debe ser b) o quedar en segundo lugar.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

With due consideration to our distinguished colleagues from Afghanistan, I think that the fact that we have a setback in the implementation of achieving the SDG 2, which is a very important and alarming issue, should probably be reflected in your conclusions. Point (e), as it stands right now does not properly reflect this serious situation. Therefore, we urge members and our colleagues from Afghanistan to reconsider this aspect and to keep the reference to the negative evolution of SDG 2 implementation.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I want to go to paragraph (g), which is not clear for me. In the second line we have “Requested that the Secretariat deliver fully”. Deliver what? Fully deliver implementation? Yes, it will be okay.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Is the Council asked to approve or endorse this report? Or do we just say “welcome” the report. I think the Council has to say something.

CHAIRPERSON

The Committees are Committees of the Council and therefore the Council has to give an opinion on those reports. Afghanistan, I think you have a point that the Council has to be clear on what its reaction to these Committees’ reports are as they are Committees of the Council which are dealing with aspects of the activities of FAO in detail and submitting their reports.

The Council should not be adopting a neutral position like “the Council noted or the Council welcomed”. What is the Council's view on that aspect? So members, the floor is open, I would be happy to have your views.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

Chairperson that was also my suggestion. As I mentioned during the discussion, we understand that not all guidances and recommendations were supported by consensus, and at the beginning you mentioned that consensus was an important factor in our work.

So, as we are working in the UN environment and know how to deal with the wording. In order to take on board some of the concerns expressed by our Afghan colleague, may I suggest that instead of the word “endorse” we use the word “support”, which is more neutral.

My proposal was taken on board, I am just asking whether it is okay with other delegates, including our Afghan colleague who has concerns.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on the amended version? I take it there are no comments so we can agree on the wording proposed by the Russian Federation. The word is “supported” now I believe.

Now coming to the issue of point (e), Afghanistan, this issue was highlighted in the Programme Committee's Report, and since this is dealing with the Programme Committee's Report, and the Council is supporting the reports, and in particular, highlighting some aspects. And this was specifically highlighted in the Programme Committee's Report. So, would you go along with it?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The text is not polished.

CHAIRPERSON

Should we leave it to the Drafting Committee to polish the text? Any other comments on the conclusions?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

First, for point (e), we agree with what is in purple right now in the paragraph but understand that discussions will be pursued in Drafting Committee.

I would like to come back to point (g). The last part that says: “and noted the desirability of increasing the share of TCP to 17 percent”. I am not sure what is the implication of this sentence in this Mid-Term Review, but given that the Council is supporting the recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees, both of these Committees did not talk about TCP in the recommendations with respect to the Mid-Term Review, but did say on TCP that they supported maintaining 14 percent. The Programme Committee also asked for an impact evaluation to see how we can improve the visibility of the TCP.

So, this line could be misleading and premature at this point and I am not sure that this is the right place to add any guidance on this. I note that the delegation did mention this issue, but I am not sure that it reflects the Council decisions here. So, I would like to seek clarifications on this or add that this be removed.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Canada. As you say, it was mentioned from the floor.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We share Canada's question on this. We take note that in the opening statement, the Director-General talked about the challenges facing the Organization in terms of the regular budget. This perennial request of member states to ask the Organization to do more and more, but within a limited zero nominal growth budget, which arrives, in a sense, to a requested increase here.

When we discussed this matter in the Finance Committee, it was a topic of a lot of interest and we came up with some language that might work. So, firstly, we would share the idea of taking that whole portion out. And if that is not satisfactory, our recommendation would be to revert to the language of the Finance Committee which is “it takes note of Conference Resolution 9/1989 and the recommendations of the Conference at its 39th Session.”

But our first recommendation would be to go with the Canadian suggestion to remove the whole clause.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We have discussed this matter and our colleague from Egypt raised this issue during the Joint Meeting of the two Committees on 18 March. It was proposed that the current budget should be maintained at 14 percent but that in future FAO budgets we should raise the technical cooperation programme portion to 17 percent. We are not talking about the current situation but rather the future situation that was supported by Iran and Jordan and the proposal was submitted by Egypt.

I think it is a given right of countries to ask that in the future the rate be raised to 17 percent. Once again, this is about the future, not the current budget, given the Technical Cooperation Programme is extremely important in achieving sustainable development, especially in developing countries.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We would like to raise our voice in support of comments made by Canada and the United States on this paragraph and also point out that the language used in Finance Committee is relevant.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I want to thank my colleagues from Jordan on reminding us about the issue that we raised during the deliberations of the Finance Committee. But honestly speaking, we raised these issues during our deliberations on the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 not the review of 2018.

It is very important for all the developing countries to remind Council that there is a resolution from the Conference to increase, or to seek opportunities to increase, the budget of TCP, the share of TCP to 17 percent. I think we can keep this in the budget when we are going to discuss it and also the Programme of Work 2020-21.

CHAIRPERSON

Egypt, so I think there is agreement on that. So from here it can be okay.

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I agree with what was just said by our colleague from Jordan as well as our colleague from Egypt. We should bear in mind what was said during the Finance Committee regarding increasing TCP ration to 17 percent.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Nous apprécions la manière dont vous dirigez les débats et nous vous en félicitons. Monsieur le Président, je prends la parole tout simplement pour confirmer ce que mon frère d'Égypte vient de dire.

Je pense que ce débat a déjà eu lieu, mais vu l'importance et le contexte, le bon endroit pour utiliser cette phrase serait au titre du point 3. Je pense que les débats au niveau du Comité financier et du Comité du Programme, lors de leur réunion conjointe, traitaient du plan à moyen-terme 2018-2021 et du Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021.

Donc je confirme l'importance de la phrase, mais je pense que nous devrions la conserver pour le point 3.

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algérie)

Permettez-moi de me prononcer au nom du Groupe Afrique et de dire, premièrement, la pertinence de cette phrase au sujet de l'augmentation du budget du Programme de coopération technique (PCT) à 17 pour cent. Je dois rappeler que le Rapport à mi-parcours a souligné dans plusieurs paragraphes la nécessité d'accorder plus d'importance au soutien et à l'assistance techniques à tous les pays, notamment aux pays en développement.

Je voudrais aussi faire mention spéciale de l'idée qui apparaît de façon très claire dans le Rapport, à savoir la nécessité de traduire les décisions globales dans les activités et pratiques sur le terrain en faveur des pays en développement, ce qui justifie effectivement la proposition faite, à savoir d'élever la part du PCT à 17 pour cent. Par conséquent, au-delà de l'idée de garder la phrase ici ou de la reporter au moment où l'on examinera le Programme de travail et budget, je pense que cette proposition est très pertinente, et le Groupe Afrique soutient tous les pays qui ont souhaité garder cette référence dans nos documents.

CHAIRPERSON

I see there is quite a lot of support for bringing this discussion under item 3. So, since we are at item 4 and we have to move forward, this wording can be deleted from the conclusions under item 4 and then we will have a discussion under item 3.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Just to say that we agree that we could move that to discussion under item 3 as long as we have the same consistent discussion during item 3 and the views would be reflected the same.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I think we reached a consensus here to keep this sentence when we are going to discuss item 3. But I want to put some adjustment here in point (g) to also be consistent with the recommendations of the

Finance Committee, we requested that the Secretariat deliver full implementation of TCP projects. “Against the 2016-17” and we delete “TCP” from here. Yes, I think this will be okay.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am afraid I have to contradict my distinguished colleague from Egypt. We only so far reached consensus on the fact that we should take this discussion during item 3 but not on the language that is on screen right now. So either we continue to have the discussion on the language now or we can carry it over to the afternoon session and the item 3.

CHAIRPERSON

Romania, that was my understanding too that this matter can be discussed under item 3. So, that is why it was being deleted from here and the discussion would take place under item 3.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I agree with Egypt and Congo. We should indeed keep this sentence in and insert it under item 3 focusing on the increase of the TCP allocation to 17 percent.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to remind my colleagues from Romania that we are speaking about two different items here. One about increasing the TCP share from 14 to 17 percent and we agree that it is better to discuss this issue when we are going to discuss Programme of Work and the Budget 2020-21.

But we are here discussing the review of 2018 and we are asking here, the management to make sure that there is a delivery of 100 percent of the TCP projects. And I think there is no connections between the two issues. So, I insist to keep this language as it is consistent with the recommendations of the Finance Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Egypt. I don't think there is any difference of opinion on the aspect of implementation. We were talking about the increase to 17 percent which we said would be discussed under item 3 and that is it.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I agree with my colleague from Egypt.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not think there is any dispute on the wording which is dealing with implementation of TCP projects against the 2016-17 biennium. Nobody is disputing that. That wording is agreed.

So, may we move forward from that aspect because there is agreement on that? If there is no other comment on the conclusions we can move forward and adopt.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Could you kindly move to the paragraph that deals with targets. Could we add at the end of that paragraph, the sentence: “and noted the importance of the forthcoming evaluation of FAO strategic results framework”.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. May we move forward? We are becoming like a drafting committee.

This I have to keep pointing out, that we have a Drafting Committee but we get tempted in to behaving like one here, made up of 49 countries. We can't have that.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

First of all, that was what Romania on behalf of the EU said. It is included in the Programme Committee's Report but it was not decided that the Strategic Framework would be part of the work of the Evaluation Division. So, this is still maybe, maybe not.

In addition, what is said is they need noted the importance of monitoring. Whether you take that evaluation of the framework, if you do, or you do not, that still does not reduce the value. So, the first sentence stands quite well. It is not needed to add the second.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

With all due respect, I think that our points, the points that we are raising are substantial points that need to be discussed and decided upon by the Council at its plenary and are not trivial points that are of the competence of the Drafting Committee.

In fact, we might have other minor points that we could raise that are indeed of competence of the Drafting Committee, but we abstain from burdening all colleagues here with minor editorial changes. So, we are keeping in mind very well the distinction between the work of the plenary of the Council and the Drafting Committee.

Coming back to our proposed text and the intervention of our distinguished colleague from Afghanistan, we would like to point out that it is in fact part of the work of the Evaluation Department, thus making it relevant. So, we believe that it is still relevant to have this reflected in your statement.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

It is best that our colleague from Romania raises this issue when we are discussing Item 6.

CHAIRPERSON

Afghanistan, do I take you are fine with the wording?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Our colleague from Romania can raise this sentence when we we are discussing Item 6, which is the work of the Programme Committee.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We still believe that monitoring targets and indicators is relevant here during the discussion of this item. So, we don't see why we should just move it to another item since we are already discussing it right now.

CHAIRPERSON

However, Romania, this issue is not covered in the Programme Committee's Report.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We just wanted to point out that it was discussed during the Programme Committee and, in our opinion, it is relevant here during this discussion.

CHAIRPERSON

I will give the floor to the Chair of the Programme Committee in a while to expand on the issue.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Nuestra intervención es solamente con la finalidad de ser constructivos y destacar que lo que está mencionado en el literal f); es una actividad que sí o sí tiene que desarrollar la Secretaría de la FAO. Por lo tanto, es importante que quede reflejada la trascendencia que le dan los Países a este monitoreo permanente de los indicadores, de las metas y de las realizaciones; pero que, en realidad, es un tema de desempeño natural y permanente de la Secretaría. Simplemente, lo que estamos haciendo acá es llamar la atención sobre la importancia de esta actividad que tiene que desarrollar la Secretaría.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I think of course, we discussed the importance of the FAO Strategic Results Framework. However, as a Programme Committee, we did not decide yet on an evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework. It was discussed, but it was moved forward to our next meeting of the Programme Committee when discussing the further priorities of the evaluation and work to be done.

CHAIRPERSON

I think that is clear and, in fact, I see that this item is in the tentative agenda for the next meeting of the Programme Committee. Therefore, would you like to wait till we make reference to this?

There is a slight amendment to the wording that is “the potential future evaluation”. With that, could we go forward?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The Chairperson of the Programme Committee quite clearly says that they have not approved the item. So if they did not approve it, it is not sure it is approved in the report which we are discussing. In this case the item stays, because this sentence will look awkward if you put it that the evaluation is coming and in that second you say, we are not so sure.

In any case, a very important point was raised by Argentina. It says that instead of “noting”, it says “stress the importance”. I think that should be taken in to account.

Mr Shri Sanjay AGARWAL (India)

If we remove the word “importance” and keep “noted the potential future evaluation of the FAO's Strategy Committee”, then that thing would be there, thereby the “importance” can be removed.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

As you pointed out it is part of the tentative agenda for the next Programme Committee. It is important to still maintain a reference. Therefore, I think in the spirit of compromise we can move along with the text as it is now displaying on screen.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Romania. So with this, could we move forward? Thank you.

Any other comment on the conclusions? If not, they are adopted.

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21**Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021****Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21**

C 2019/3; C 2019/3-WA11

CHAIRPERSON

We have still got a few minutes left. May I suggest that we start with the Secretariat introducing item 3, then the discussions can take place after the lunchbreak.

I give the floor to Beth Crawford to deal with item 3, *the Medium Term Plan 2018-2021 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21*. The documents before you are C 2019/3 and C 2019/3 Web Annex 11.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

This morning the Director-General presented the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. We believe this is a realistic proposal, as it presents a flat nominal budget, as well as an optimistic proposal, which counts on strong and continued voluntary contributions from Members and other resource partners, to ensure that we together continue to demonstrate results at country, regional and global levels in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The document builds on achievements over the past seven years to make the Organization more focused, effective and efficient.

I will briefly highlight the main features of the proposal.

Firstly for the Medium Term Plan, this is the second biennium within this Medium Term Plan. As foreseen in the reformed programming, budgeting and result-based monitoring system put in place by the Conference in 2009, the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 was reviewed during 2018, taking into account trends and developments in the external environment and the guidance provided by the

Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Programme and Finance Committees and the Council. There has been strong and consistent support expressed by the Governing Bodies and FAO partners during 2018 for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the reviewed Strategic Framework.

The Medium Term Plan sets out what FAO aims to achieve with Members over the four years; it describes the measurable impact and results of our work in terms of objectives, outcomes and outputs. The global trends and challenges under the Reviewed Strategic Framework remain valid at the end of 2018. They form the basis for the conceptual framework and theory of change of the five Strategic Objectives (SO), within the context of FAO's vision, attributes and core functions.

In the context of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization, the results framework has maintained the overarching principle of adopting exclusively the SDG targets and related indicators for measuring progress at Strategic Objective level. Overall, FAO's work will contribute to 36 SDG targets measured through 45 unique SDG indicators.

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

Moving on to the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

The Programme of Work and Budget sets out how the Organization will deliver its programmes and achieve the Outputs with all the resources put at our disposal. It proposes a biennial Programme of Work funded from the assessed contributions by Members and an estimate of extrabudgetary voluntary contributions.

This proposal has been developed around four main principles.

First, as already mentioned, it maintains a flat nominal budget, with no change in the level of assessed contributions and net budgetary appropriation compared with 2018-19.

Second, it identifies areas of programmatic emphasis and de-emphasis, based on developments and guidance received.

Third, it ensures that all increased costs are covered without negatively impacting the technical work of the Organization.

And fourth, it uses the programme management arrangements now in place to accelerate the delivery of effective and demonstrable results, particularly at country level.

Resources have been re-allocated to cover increased costs and high priority areas, as also mentioned by the Director-General this morning, in particular:

- a) Approximately 20 million has been reallocated to cover the estimated cost increases;
- b) USD 5.1 million has been reallocated to cover more than the doubling of FAO's cost share to the UN Resident Coordinator's system;
- c) USD 1.0 million has been allocated for two items: to separate and strengthen the ethics and ombudsman functions, and the other half of the million to strengthen internal control and compliance;
- d) USD 2.0 million has been re-allocated for innovative and sustainable agriculture approaches; and
- e) USD 2.0 million to further strengthen activities centred on combating all forms of malnutrition, and promoting nutrition-sensitive, sustainable food systems.

To enable these resource re-allocations, savings of close to USD 30 million have been identified, mainly as a result of improvements to the recovery of direct and indirect support costs under FAO's

new cost recovery policy, approved by the Council in 2015 and gradually introduced starting in January 2018.

As evidenced in this proposal, the Director-General continues to demonstrate his commitment to finding savings and promoting efficiency, with over USD 150 million in savings identified since 2012, and a further USD 26.8 million expected in 2020-21.

I would like to raise one other topic on which the Council may wish to provide guidance at this session, and that is on the carry-over of any unspent balance of the 2018-19 budgetary appropriations. The authorization for a carry-over has been a matter decided within the authority of the Conference when considering the PWB for the next biennium. If a carry-over is not authorized, any unspent balance is surrendered to the General Fund through miscellaneous income.

Unspent balances arise due to the prudent management of the budgetary appropriation by the Director-General, who under the Financial Regulations cannot overspend the authorized budget level. In order to address budgetary risks related to fluctuating staff costs, income and commitments, and to ensure best use of resources, there is usually a small unspent balance at the end of each biennium.

The Conference at each of its last five sessions has authorized a carry-over of unspent balances for a specific one-time purpose. The unspent balances, which are known after the closure of the biennial accounts, have been in the range of USD 2.5 million to USD 9.4 million per biennium – less than one percent of the appropriation.

Although full expenditure of the 2018-19 appropriation is currently foreseen, experience has shown that a small unspent balance could arise. The Council may therefore wish to provide guidance to Conference on the desirability of authorizing such a carry-over for one-time expenditures in 2020-21.

The proposed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, are submitted for your consideration and recommendation to the Conference, including on the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million.

CHAIRPERSON

We will carry on the discussions in the afternoon.

Before we adjourn, I wish to remind Members of the side event “The way forward for Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture”, which will take place in the Sheikh Zayed Centre during the lunch break from 13:00 to 14:15 hours. Council will resume at 14.30.

The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12:32 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 32

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.32

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
SECOND PLENARY SESSION DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA
8 April 2019

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.41 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 41
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.41
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee (continued)**
- Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction (suite)**
- Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción (continuación)**

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the second meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

Before continuing with item 3, we will take up Item 2, Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee, since all nominations have now been received.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson have been received: Mr Mahi Boumedienne of Algeria, His Excellency Abdulaziz Ahmed Al Malki Al-Jehani of Qatar, Mr Thomas Duffy of the United States of America.

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

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

For the Drafting Committee, the Regional Groups have proposed Ms Jiani Tian of China as Chairperson and the following countries as members: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Cabo Verde, Chile, Egypt, Finland, India, Japan, Kenya, Romania, Russian Federation, United States of America.

Are there any objections?

Thank you, it is so decided.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

- Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (continued)**
- Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021 (suite)**
- Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21 (continuación)**

C 2019/3; C 2019/3-WA11

CHAIRPERSON

We now continue with Item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020 21*. The documents before Council are C 2019/3 and C 2019/3 Web Annex 11

Following Ms Crawford's presentation of the report before the lunchbreak, I now give the floor to Mr Lupiño Lazaro, Chairperson of the Finance Committee and of the Joint Meeting, to report on the discussions on this item during the 175th Session of the Finance Committee, and during the Joint Meeting. Mr Lupiño, you have the floor.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Members of the Council, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen it is an honour and a privilege to re-start the Council discussion on item 3 by reporting to you the outcome of the discussions of the 175th Session of the Finance Committee and of its Joint Meeting with 126th Session of the Programme Committee on the *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21* contained in document C 2019/3.

The Joint Meeting considered the budget level and noted the separate review and recommendations on the documents by the Programme and Finance Committees according to their respective mandates. Both the Joint Meeting and the Finance Committee appreciated the efforts made by the Director-General to prepare a flat, nominal budget with no change in the level of assessed contributions and net budgetary appropriation compared with 2018-19.

The Joint Meeting and the Finance Committee noted the identification of proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis in the reallocation of savings to cover increased costs. In its technical examination of the proposals, the Finance Committee encouraged the Secretariat to continue to review improvements in the format of future PWB proposals also by providing more information on the basis for changes in the budget and reviewing the feasibility of updating the lapse factor methodology.

The Finance Committee reaffirmed the importance of the TCP appropriation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and welcomed the TCP appropriation at 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation while taking note of Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference 6/2015 at its 39th Session.

The Finance Committee requested the Secretariat to increase the funding of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the joint FAO/WHO Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme in the 2020-21 Regular Budget consistent with the requests since the 2017 Conference by numerous Governing Bodies and Technical Committees.

The Finance Committee noted that adjustments in resource allocations and results frameworks arising from decisions and guidance of the governing bodies would be reported in the adjustments to the PWB 2020-21 for consideration by the Council in December 2019. To facilitate consideration of the proposals by the Council in December 2019 the Finance Committee requested further review of the opportunities for savings and efficiency measures as well as areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and continued monitoring and reporting of cost increase assumptions.

The Committee reviewed in detail the anticipated cost increases for personal services and for goods and services and recommended not to apply inflationary adjustments under the net remuneration line of staff pending a review of established practices in relation to the post-adjustment methodology.

Under proposals to improve FAO's financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Committee deferred to future biennia the replenishment of the working capital fund as well as incremental funding of the after-service medical coverage past service liability.

Finally, the Joint Meeting supported the budget level of USD 1005.6 million at the budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 to USD 1.22 and recommended endorsement by the Council for submission to the Conference.

In closing, I wish to express my upmost appreciation to the Programme Committee Chair and the members of the Programme and Finance Committees for their substantive contributions and kind cooperation as well as to the FAO Management, starting with the Director-General and the Secretariat for their full engagement, making it possible for the discussions in this agenda item to be efficient and productive.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to invite Ambassador Hooegeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to report on discussions on this item during the 126th Session of the Programme Committee. Ambassador Hooegeveen you have the floor.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

During the Programme Committee meeting we had a very intense and intensive discussion on the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and, especially, the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 referred to in the documents mentioned by the Chair.

I really would like to thank the members of the Programme Committee for working so hard in balancing all the proposals, the discussions and sometimes, converted views on some of the issues. But, at the end of the day, based on, I think, the strong will to come forth with strong conclusions,

which are crucial for the Organization at this time. We arrived at the consensus document and consensus conclusions of the Programme Committee and I have the honour to present to you the outcomes of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee on the Medium Term Plan as well as the Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-21.

I also, really, would like to thank the Management and, especially, Ms Maria Helena Semedo, as well as Ms Beth Crawford for supporting us in our clear and sometimes difficult discussions, helping us to arrive at good conclusions.

The Programme Committee welcomed the alignment of FAO Strategic Objective Results Framework and programmes through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as developed in the Medium Term Plan. The Programme Committee advised on strengthening the future development of indicators and targets for the outputs of each strategic objective, be reviewed any adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021 in November 2019.

The Programme Committee welcomed the allocation for resources for the Resident Coordinator System and highlighted the importance of incorporating requirements of the new UNDG Funding Compact. When it comes to the priorities for the Programme of Work and Budget, the Programme Committee welcomed the proposal of resource allocations within the flat nominal budget level to meet cost increases and priorities as realistic

The Committee welcomed the maintenance of the share of Technical Cooperation Programme, the TCP at 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriations. The Programme Committee also noted that the priorities areas of the de-emphasis and resource allocations for the Strategic Objectives and Objective Number six, including the additional resources for an innovative and sustainable agriculture approaches and for combating all forms of malnutrition and promoting nutrition-sensitive, sustainable food systems could be supported.

The Committee also noted that guidance received from the FAO Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Programme Committee and Council concerning priority areas of work had been included in the PWB proposal. We also noted that amongst others, the guidance for the need for a sustainable funding for the work on International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and WHO/FAO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme, as well as mainstreaming biodiversity had not yet been reflected.

The Programme Committee highlighted the importance of sustainable funding for FAO's work on scientific advice and standard setting and for biodiversity. The Programme Committee recommended additional resources for IPPC and for WHO/FAO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme with a minimum of USD 2 million as well as for mainstreaming biodiversity also with a minimum of USD 2 million and was set already by the Director-General this morning.

We also said and recommended that it should be found through efficiencies and cost-saving or, if necessary and only if necessary, from the areas of technical de-emphasis to the extent feasible.

With that, I would like to thank, also, the Secretariat of the Programme Committee for their hard work and supporting us to arrive at these consensus recommendations.

Ms Anne ONYANGO (Kenya)

Kenya presents this statement on behalf of the Africa Regional group.

We appreciate the process of reviewing the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 which took into consideration global, sectoral and regional trends in agricultural development. This guided in coming up with the main challenges expected to be faced by countries and development actors in food and agriculture over the medium term period. We acknowledge that these have formed the main subject of discussion in the different forums of the Governing Bodies. Such discussions are of great relevance to FAO's Strategic Framework and the implementation of FAO's Medium Term Plan 2018-21 towards achievement of the Agenda 2030.

We note that FAO's work will contribute to 36 SDG targets measured through 45 unique SDG indicators, nine of which have been included in the FAO Strategic Objective results framework for 2018-21. The fact that there is continuous refinement of the SDGs and indicators based on lessons learnt is encouraging.

The Africa Regional group lauds the review in prioritizing activities with emphasis and de-emphasis in some areas. This has resulted in nominal growth in the Membership contributions in 2019 from 2018, and the savings therein taking care of additional costs. We commend management for the implementation of the planned programs even when the budget has not been increasing, despite rising needs in Member Countries. Reducing costs and realization of efficiency saving is no doubt an important strategy to manage the situation. This is encouraging and we appreciate that part of these savings are going towards increasing support to noble areas of nutrition interventions, technology and innovation. We also thank the many countries that have continued to grow their contribution in form of extra budgets. This has supported the increasing budgetary requirements to address rising needs.

The success of implementing the PWB will not be realized unless Members make payments of the assessed contributions in a timely manner. It is therefore prudent that as Members we make improvement in this area and pay our obligations in good time. We also do appeal for an increase on the voluntary contributions particularly in areas which have already been factored into the 2020-21 budgets for the positive impact of the strategic framework.

With these few remarks, the Africa Regional Group is satisfied with the reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget level of USD 1,005.6 Million for 2020-21 and requests the Council to endorse it.

Ms Alaa Mazher BOKHARI (Pakistan)

Pakistan is pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Asia Group highly appreciates the presentations by the Secretariat as well as the chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees on this agenda item. In this regard, we would like to highlight the following points.

We commend the Director-General and the Secretariat for maintaining a flat nominal budget with no change in the level of assessed contributions. We note the identification of proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and the real location of savings to cover increased costs. At the same time, we highlight the importance of sustainable funding for FAO's work on scientific advice and standard setting.

We request management to review and re-consider the long list of proposed de-emphasised programmes, like the capacity-building of farmers' organizations and agricultural value chain activities, to allocate funds from the assessed contributions in order to continue and complete the ongoing activities. We also seek elaboration from the Secretariat on the criteria used in choosing which areas to emphasise and de-emphasise.

We would like to draw your kind attention to the utilization of allocations and significant outcomes received from the Technical Cooperation Programme. We, especially the developing country members, have serious concerns about the decrease in the TCP expenditure rate in 2018. Its implementation is hindered by the bureaucratic process at the field level and by the lack of detailed report on the impact of TCP projects at the country level.

We endorse the Finance Committee's recommendations to reaffirm the importance of TCP appropriation in achieving the SDGs and welcome TCP appropriation at 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation. While taking note of the Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session, we also call on the Secretariat to review, identify and fix the bureaucratic obstacles for the low TCP expenditure rate.

We fully support the ongoing United Nations Development System Reform. In this light, we commend the Secretariat for the appropriate allocation to FAO's Cost-Share for the UN Resident Coordinator System. The Asia-Pacific Region presented five regional initiatives pertaining to Zero Hunger, Blue Growth, One Health, climate change and inter-regional initiatives on Pacific Small Island Developing States. We expect these regional initiatives to contribute to FAO's strategic objectives and to support countries in achieving SDG's in the region.

With these comments, the Asia Regional Group endorses the proposed level of budget for 2020-21 and congratulates the Chairs and members of Programme and Finance Committees for their guidance and recommendations.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

The United States joins the African and Asian regional groups in commending FAO and the Director-General for their efforts to maintain a zero nominal growth budget. In particular, we thank the Director-General for focusing on this issue throughout his time in office while also overseeing a growth in voluntary funding, which we believe reflects growing confidence in the leadership and the valuable work of this Organization.

We applaud the Director-General in finding new resources or finding the resources, rather, for the new Resident Coordinator Programme and we also appreciate the separation of the Ethics Officer and the Ombudsman's roles and we believe this will strengthen the overall Organization.

We look forward to increased funding for FAO Standard Setting work, notably the Scientific Advice Programme for *Codex Alimentarius* and the International Plant Protection Commission. As a technical agency, scientific advice and normative work are the foundations of FAO. They support evidence based programmatic work that all Members benefit from and provide tremendous value added to FAO compared to the actual cost. Members have been consistent in raising concerns about sustainable funding for these institutions throughout the Regional and Technical Committee meetings in 2018 and 2019 and, indeed, even before, and we look forward to progress on this flagship function of the FAO.

Regarding the appropriate amount of money to be directed to the Technical Cooperation Programme, we, again, stress that we understand the challenges that FAO faces under current budget prioritizations. We urge that we maintain a spirit of compromise that both the Director-General and the Independent Chair of Council alluded to in their interventions this morning.

The question of the appropriate percentage of the FAO budget going to the TCP has been a long-standing concern and it is likely to be one of the issues faced by the incoming Director-General. In the meantime, we think that the compromise language agreed to by the Finance Committee in paragraph 21F of document CL161/4 preserves a delicate balance. That language and I'll re-state it here, paragraph F:

"The Finance Committee reaffirmed the importance of the TCP appropriation in achieving the sustainable development goals and welcomed the TCP appropriation at 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation while taking note of Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session."

Colleagues, we think it is useful in this context to recall the actual language of Resolution 9/89, which and I quote: "invites the Director-General to make every effort in order to restore the resources available to TCP to the former level of 14 percent of the regular programme budget and if possible to raise it to 17 percent."

I want to emphasize two points here. First, it has always been a challenge to even devote 14 percent of the regular budget to the TCP and second, that Conference stressed raising the level if possible. In other words, Conference did not unequivocally call for an increase of the TCP to 17 percent. It stressed the desirability of doing it, if possible.

That 1989 Conference also produced a report and that report language, in paragraph 230, observed that: "with better planning by governments, activities now taken up by the TCP could be financed by other means thereby relieving the pressure of demands on TCP." Paragraph 230 of that 1989 report goes on to say: "the Conference considered that additional funds could be made available to TCP on a voluntary basis and requested the Director-General to contact potential donor countries and other sources for this purpose."

In line with paragraph 230, and in the nearly 30 years since the adoption of Resolution 9/89, the United States and many other donors have continued to give increasing voluntary contributions to FAO, primarily focused at the country level and at programmatic work. We dedicate significant amounts of extra budgetary resources at that country and regional level and we continue to urge FAO to seek financing by other means for Technical Cooperation work, thereby, again to harken back to the language of that 1989 Conference, "thereby relieving the pressure on demands on the TCP."

To give some examples of the type of programmatic work that the United States funds through extra budgetary means that closely align with FAO's strategic objectives and in essence, to provide examples of voluntary contributions for TCP work, I have here with me five pages of spreadsheet for 2017 alone that talks about voluntary contributions that my country has made to FAO in support of TCP work.

I won't read all five pages of the spreadsheet unless forced to, however, I will focus on four separate areas. Here are some examples of what we do and, again we stress that we think this is in line with the agreement we have on how, as a whole, we support TCP.

The first example is Emerging Pandemic Threats. Our US Agency for International Development has supported FAO on Avian Influenza prevention measures including guidance on poultry production, biosecurity and sanitary standards and vaccine quality. In fact, during last fall's FAO Permanent Representative's field visit to Indonesia and to the Philippines, a group of Member representatives visited a long term programme in Indonesia where FAO and the local government, with US support, has worked for many years.

The United States, in the Middle East, has supported FAO work on surveillance and analysis on Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome. We support building a food secure future. The United States, in conjunction with the European Union has funded USD 9.7 million for the "meeting the undernourishment challenge" in Bangladesh on mainstreaming nutrition sensitive approaches to contribute to Bangladesh developing its national strategies.

Other funds address pests and diseases in other parts of the world, addressing the Emergency Protection System (EMPRES) in West Africa, Desert Locusts management in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa and increasing Locust Management Strategies in the Caucuses and in Central Asia.

Other countries, as well, could likely cite similar examples. But, for this Council and for this Conference we ask for continued consensus and cooperation. We fully recognize that the larger issue of TCP funding, to include expenditure rates, as some of our colleagues have already noted, and, also, transparency issues, will be a topic that will need to be considered at the appropriate time.

We, therefore, support colleagues in urging FAO to be more transparent on its use of TCP funds and provide greater visibility on the work that it does. To this end, we do support the devaluation of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would like to join colleagues in thanking the Director-General for presenting a zero nominal growth budget and also for his ongoing efforts to find savings to redirect priority areas.

We would like to highlight an issue of fundamental importance to all of us as committed FAO Members. And this issue is imperative to ensure that FAO's core functions of normative and standards setting are adequately funded. As the draft Programme of Work and Budget says, the quality and integrity of the technical and normative work of the Organization is essential for effective implementation of the strategic framework.

We were pleased to see that both the Finance Committee and the Programme Committee called on FAO to increase the funding for standards setting work – namely the International Plant Protection Convention and the joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme that supports the food safety work of Codex.

But at the same time, we were greatly disappointed that the draft budget before us today did not already include an increase for these activities.

Since the Conference in 2017, Members have consistently asked FAO to provide sustainable funding from the regular budget for these activities.

This has been the most requested area for an increase in funding – including in 15 Governing Body and technical meetings – and totalling over 25 requests. The meeting reports show this. They include the most recent Programme and Finance Committees and Council in December 2018; the Programme Committee in November 2018; COAG in October 2018 – in fact there were three references in that

report; CCP in September 2018 – again, three requests in the same report; Codex Commission in July 2018; COFI in July 2018; COFO, Council, Finance Committee in 2018; North American Regional Conference, the Asia and Pacific Regional Conference; the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures in 2018; and the Council in December 2017.

As I said, this is the single most requested item by Members, more so than any other.

There is overwhelming recognition from members that we need to do something. We believe we have a duty as Council members to listen to the collective wisdom accumulated since the last Conference and to find a way to work together to reflect these priorities in the budget. The collective wisdom is clear.

We were delighted that this year, FAO in collaboration with other international organizations, convened a Food Safety Conference in Addis Ababa, in collaboration with the African Union. We understand that this was well attended and highlighted the importance of food safety for all FAO Members. And we are sure the upcoming Conference on Food Safety in Geneva will also be a success. We congratulate FAO for these initiatives.

The United Nations General Assembly also recently declared 7 June as World Food Safety Day, and we will celebrate the first World Food Safety Day shortly. This again shows the growing recognition of the importance of food safety for all Members.

And next year, we will celebrate the first ever International Year of Plant Health. This is a significant milestone for us all to have achieved global recognition of the importance of plant health to food security. Australia will play an active role in the year and we look forward to working with other members to make it a great success.

We are in the fortunate position of having strong momentum on highlighting the critical role that plant health and food safety play in ensuring food security. And FAO is at the centre of this – it is FAO that has the technical skills on plant health and food safety. It is FAO that countries turn to for help in managing plant health diseases, and in setting up food safety systems.

And it is FAO that brings together countries to develop international standards for plant health to allow countries to trade plant products and minimize the risk of transboundary diseases. And it is FAO that develops international standards on food safety that allow food to be traded and ensure people's health is protected.

But despite the global recognition of the importance of these issues, and FAO's central role in them, this work is at risk.

What does this mean? It means that the IPPC cannot help countries to respond to emerging quarantine pests such as *Xyella*. It means that it can't help representatives of least developing countries to attend key meetings, and it can't help countries to build their capacity to manage phyto-sanitary issues.

And what does it mean for the scientific advice programme that supports Codex's work? It means that there is a backlog of work for scientific advice that just isn't getting done. And it won't get done – and Members are continually asking for more and the bigger the backlog, the longer it takes for food safety standards to be developed that may allow a country to export a product – giving opportunities to the farmer, and the country.

We believe we have a responsibility to fix this. If we don't, we are risking the reputation of FAO and, more importantly, we are not providing the help that Members need.

The good news is neither of these initiatives need much money. Small increases would make all the difference.

We absolutely acknowledge this is a difficult budget environment. And we know that the Director-General said there is only so much that he can do within a zero nominal growth environment.

But we must remember that last year when we discussed how FAO could fund its extra contribution to the UN Resident Coordinator Programme, that FAO said there was no extra money, they could not do it from existing resources. But now the Director-General has identified about USD 30 million in savings, and we congratulate him for this.

During the Finance Committee, we discussed the savings identified in the draft PWB and we discussed whether there may be opportunity for more. I believe there is scope.

We appreciate the budget environment is tight. And we applaud the efforts of the Director-General during his term to find efficiencies, and we are confident he will find more.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

The EU and its Member States welcome the reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (PWB) and support the four main principles. Moreover, we support the recommendations of the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting of both Committees with respect to the MTP and PWB.

We welcome the proposal of maintaining a flat nominal budget for the assessed contributions, and recognise that the organization's overall budget is increasing, thanks to donors' continued strong support to FAO's work. As the voluntary share of the budget continues to grow, we encourage Management to continue to take appropriate measures to ensure a comprehensive approach to resource allocation between core and complementary functions.

We are pleased that many of the priorities identified by FAO's Technical Committees and the Regional Conferences have been included in the proposed PWB for 2020 and 2021. However, we regret that it does not identify biodiversity as one of the priority areas. We also regret that it does not consider the clear message from the Governing Bodies and all Technical Committees to increase funding for the Joint FAO/WHO Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme, which – unlike the Codex Secretariat – has not underspent, and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). This is a core function of FAO and one which every member country relies on FAO for. This is why it is necessary to provide long-term, stable funding through the core budget. In this regard, we would like to recall that the need for additional funding for the IPPC was reemphasised just last week by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures here in Rome. The EU and its Member States therefore support the outcome of the discussions in the Programme and Finance Committees, which recommended additional resources for the work on standards through efficiencies and cost savings, or, if necessary, from the areas of technical de-emphasis to the extent feasible.

As regards Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), we would like to highlight the importance of addressing AMR to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and stress the need of continued work and resource allocation for addressing AMR in agriculture in all regions.

In the proposed areas for programmatic emphasis, the EU and its Member States particularly welcome the strengthened focus on innovative and sustainable agriculture approaches and on further strengthening of activities centered on combating all forms of malnutrition, especially at country level, and promoting nutrition-sensitive food systems. In this context, we especially appreciate:

- a. Efforts to better link policy, programmes and investment to accelerate improved nutrition and food security through sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development.
- b. Cross-sectorial and multi-stakeholder engagement to meet the challenges of a sustainable increase in production while also considering the climate, the environment and nutrition-sensitive food systems, including Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and biodiversity.
- c. Pro-poor policies, family farming, innovative practices and partnerships.

We further welcome the fact that the organization will cover the doubled contribution to the UN Resident Coordinator System from the assessed contributions through additional savings. Since these savings will arise mainly from increased intakes under FAO's new cost recovery policy, cost recovery should occur exclusively for those costs that the Organization actually incurs when providing support in the implementation of voluntarily funded activities. The EU and its Member States reiterate their full support for the reform agenda and the vision of Secretary-General António Guterres.

We strongly support the recommendations of the Finance Committee regarding the need for more transparent and detailed information on the basis for changes in the budget. Furthermore, we would

like to urge Management to follow the Finance Committee's guidance related to the preparation of budgetary cost increase assumptions, especially for the net remuneration of staff.

The EU and its Member States welcome the presentation of areas of de-emphasis and appreciate the transparency in this regard. We are in favour of the Management's proposals. We do, however, as for the last budget, ask for transparent follow-up on the implications of the proposals.

We strongly support the Programme Committee's recommendation that the output indicators and targets for FAO's strategic objectives be strengthened as part of the PWB adjustments. More can be done to improve the transparency and efficiency of FAO's output and outcome monitoring. We expect the recommendations of the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) review to be considered as a guide and we look forward to the evaluation on FAO's strategic results framework later this year. What FAO achieves with its budget is as important as how that budget is spent.

Human Resources is an area in which there is ample room for improvement in terms of the transparency and predictability of FAO policies. Further efforts are needed to improve gender equality in the Organization, particularly at senior level. The extensive use of consultants is worrisome as it deprives the Organization of long-term expertise.

While recalling the importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), we reckon that we need to address the persistent underspending of the programme before discussing changes to the TCP share in the regular budget. In this regard, the comprehensive evaluation of the TCP, and especially its impact, should be carried out – as emphasised by the PC. In addition, in reference to the Conference Resolution 9/89, we would like to point out that the Conference, when adopting this resolution, considered that additional funds could be made available to the TCP on a voluntary basis. The EU and its Member States have made these funds available.

Lastly, we want to reiterate our commitment to support the important work of FAO. As the biggest provider of core and voluntary contributions to FAO, the EU and its Member States expect FAO to continuously improve its overall performance and efficiency and effectiveness, and to maintain its global leadership as a knowledge-based organization for food and agriculture, including forestry and fishery.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

On the whole we would like to express our support for most of the elements in the document. It is particularly important that, in the preparing of this document, the final recommendations of the Technical Committees and FAO Regional Conferences were taken into account.

We also welcome maintaining a zero nominal growth budget for the upcoming biennium and we also share the views expressed by the members of the Finance Committee. We believe it was right to reflect in the priorities the issues of combating poverty; social protection with a food component; combating the spread of animal and plant diseases; under-nutrition; food safety and quality; and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Of no less importance is the role played by FAO on standard setting work, in particular, the framework of Codex Alimentarius. We call for due attention to be paid to these issues. Allow me to mention some of our comments on this current draft document. We agree that SDG 2, Zero Hunger, must remain the core main goal for FAO. We believe this should be clearly reflected in the relevant chapter of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) paragraphs 27 to 32.

Secondly, we lament the fact that the annex to the PWB document C2019/3 Web Annex 11 proposes restricting the use of the Russian language during several upcoming FAO events. This includes the 41st Session of the European Forestry Commission, during which interpretation will be provided under the regular budget in all European languages except Russian.

The same goes for the 10th Session of the International Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources which from this year includes a Russian expert and also the next Session of the Global Mountain Partnership which includes several quite large regions of our country and, also, Russian non-governmental organizations.

Thirdly, we welcome the reflection in the document of the importance of the three FAO regional initiatives for countries in Europe and Central Asia. We believe it is important to more closely align the text of this section, in relation to paragraph 70, with the recommendations from the 33st Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia, which took place in May last year.

Fourthly, we support FAOs work on ensuring resilient rural livelihoods in emergency situations which is carried out as part of Strategic Objective five. Our country also, recently, became involved with the FAO work area and the Russian government decided to allocate USD 3 million to an FAO project to revive and sustainably develop the agriculture sector in Syria. We trust that FAO's efforts will contribute to ensuring the food security of this country's population and to the return of Syrian refugees to their homes.

It is important not to increase but to reduce the number of conflicts. We've already had the possibility to touch on this issue of peace building during item four of the agenda. We are disappointed that the comments we made during the 160th Session of the FAO Council have not been taken into account, comments on it being unacceptable for the organization to interfere in peace building issues. As I already said, such issues go beyond FAO's mandate and are dealt with by other UN system bodies which possess the relevant competence and expertise.

In this connection we propose deleting the reference to the term peace building from the text of the Programme of Work, paragraph 207. In this same context, we believe it is important to underscore that FAO's work in the framework of the, so called, Global Network against Food Crises, must be carried out exclusively within the mandate that the organisation has. This also relates to FAO's cooperation with independent institutes, in particular the independent international organization, Interpeace.

In general, we are prepared to accept Director-General's proposed Programme of Work for the coming biennium provided our comments are taken into account. Our proposals will be given to the Secretariat in writing.

Mr Mohd Sallehuddin HASSAN (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of Asia Regional Group and joins others in thanking the Secretariat for the comprehensive presentation and report.

We would like to focus on the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 as follows:

We support the Secretariat's proposal to maintain a flat nominal budget with no change in the level of assessed contributions from the current biennium. On this note, we acknowledge the continuous effort by the Management in finding efficiency savings to cover the increased operating cost while delivering the Organization's priorities.

We also welcome the maintenance of the share of TCP at 14 percent. TCP has been of great assistance to Member Countries to receive technical assistance to address various problems affecting hunger and malnutrition. Malaysia recognized FAO's work on this area and support FAO to continue providing technical assistance and support to Members.

On programmatic emphasis, we agree for the Strategic Programmes to be further refined and strengthened based on the lessons learned from the past biennium, the guidance from FAO Governing Bodies and the global development. We also welcomed the allocation of additional resources to the Strategic Objectives, and the allocation for Strategic and Regional Programme Leaders to support the Regional Initiatives and the work of Strategic Programmes at country level.

On the identification of areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, we support the realignment of focus from mature work areas into new areas of increasing importance. Nevertheless, determination of areas for de-emphasis must carefully consider the need of member countries, and the ongoing programme, including the UN Decade for Family Farming.

With these comments, we endorse document, including the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million and its budgetary chapter allocations.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan does not have any special comments on MTP 2018-21 (reviewed) because the contents of paragraphs 1 to 42 (pages 7 to 18) of document C 2019/3 is almost identical to the one that the Council examined and endorsed in its 156th session in April 2017.

To be specific: FAO's Vision and Global Goals; the ten major Challenges that it faces, its six basic Organizational Attributes, and its seven Core Functions all remain the same. However, there are minor textual improvements, such as updating partnership arrangements with other UN agencies and better realignment and tuning with SDG targets and indicators.

With respect to the Programme and Work and Budget 2020-21, Afghanistan respects the conclusions reached by the PC, FC and the Joint Meeting on the level of the budget despite the fact that the rationale for the zero growth nominal budget could have been articulated given the rising demand for FAO's advice and services, especially in the face of challenges arising from climate change, uncontrolled migration, widening rural poverty and shrinking employment opportunities for the youth in rural settings.

Afghanistan notes that there is no change in the number of budget chapters compared with the previous biennia as well as the numbers of outcomes, outcome indicators and outputs. Likewise, the five Strategic Objectives link to the same 33 SDG targets and 41 SDG indicators.

A positive element of the 2020-21 budget is the sharp increase in extra-budgetary resources expected to reach USD 1869.9 million, a 20.3 percent increase over the biennium 2018-19. This increase is most welcome and raises the share of extra-budgetary funding to 65 percent of the total resources, compared with 60.7 percent in the biennium 2018-19. Approximately, 98.5 percent of the projected extra-budgetary resources are linked to the five Strategic Objectives, with the highest share going to Strategic Objective 5. That is, 47 percent of which includes emergencies.).

Document C 2019/3 does not explain the implications of the 20 percent increase in extra-budgetary resources on the assessed budget. Particularly, in terms of technical back stopping of the projects.

Afghanistan notes the following positive points in the assessed budget of 2020-21 in relation to the biennium 2018-19.

One: an incremental increase of 1.8 percent in favour of the five Strategic Objectives, that is USD 8.87 million.

Two: a shift in Net Appropriation of approximately USD 21 million in favour of decentralized offices at the expense of headquarters. This raises the share of decentralized offices to 30.8 percent of total Net Appropriation.

Three: a 12 percent increase in the Net Appropriation of the Country offices by USD 13.8 million. This is a positive response to the so called reinvigorated UN Resident Coordinator offices.

Four: maintaining the level of TCP at 14 percent of Net Appropriation. And on the level of TCP for the future, which is 17 percent, I refrain from reading the text of our Ambassador from South Sudan, which will be speaking on behalf of the G77 and China group.

With these comments, Afghanistan endorses the MTP 2018-21 (Reviewed) and the PWB 2020-21.

Sra. Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Agradecemos a la Administración la presentación de estos documentos. Respecto al Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) vemos con agrado que refleja de una manera equilibrada los tres retos que tiene la Organización: erradicar el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición, en primer lugar. La eliminación de la pobreza e impulsar el progreso económico y social, en segundo lugar. Y la ordenación y utilización sostenible de los recursos naturales, en tercer lugar. Respecto a los desafíos y novedades en el documento, destacamos cuatro: 1) mejorar la productividad agrícola; 2) garantizar una base de recursos naturales; 3) sistemas alimentarios más eficaces; y 4) mejorar las oportunidades de generación de ingresos y atender el tema de la migración.

Nos agrada que el Plan a plazo medio incorpora los trabajos de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre Cambio Climático y, poco a poco, los resultados del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica, el Pacto Mundial para una Migración Segura, Ordenada y Regular y del Pacto Mundial sobre los Refugiados. Apoyamos los esfuerzos para que la Organización cuente con personal que posea una amplia gama de conocimientos especializados en los distintos ámbitos de competencia de la FAO y que trabajen de manera interdisciplinaria.

El personal de la FAO debe facilitar el proceso basado en resultados, organizando y definiendo la forma en que sus componentes interactúan entre sí con los países y sus asociados. Respecto al Programa de trabajo y presupuesto 2020-2021 apoyamos el crecimiento nominal cero de la parte del presupuesto correspondiente a las cuotas, reflejo de ahorros encontrados por la administración y del entendimiento de la austeridad con que los Gobiernos dirigen sus actividades.

Hay que tener en cuenta que la confianza en la FAO sigue siendo un elemento importante ya que, de manera global, el 65 por ciento del presupuesto proviene de recursos extrapresupuestales, cifra que poco a poco se va incrementando. No obstante, los recursos extrapresupuestales deben ser en ayuda de las prioridades nacionales y no exclusivamente a favor de los objetivos de países donantes, de lo contrario, la naturaleza de la FAO estaría en riesgo de cambiar.

Sería deseable contar en los planos regional y nacional con instrumentos programáticos anuales o bienales que constituyan una derivación práctica y sencilla de los grandes instrumentos, como el Plan a plazo medio y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP). Apoyamos que el PTP para el futuro bienio mantenga el nivel del programa de cooperación técnica a 14 por ciento del presupuesto basado en cuotas. Este programa da un sentido práctico a las actividades de la FAO en países en desarrollo.

Como en todos los presupuestos y planes de trabajo, hay áreas para hacer mayor énfasis y otras para reducir trabajos. Apoyamos las nuevas prioridades para enfoques innovadores y de agricultura sostenible, así como para combatir la malnutrición en todas sus formas. Esta clase de actividades son las que le dan sentido a la FAO.

También, nos sumamos a las solicitudes para asignar mayores recursos a las labores de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria, al Programa de Asesoramiento Científico sobre Inocuidad Alimentaria de la FAO/OMS y, muy en particular, a la integración de la biodiversidad en los trabajos de la FAO. En este último tema, existe un reconocimiento creciente de que la agricultura y la biodiversidad se apoyan mutuamente a largo plazo, uno necesita del otro. La futura estrategia sobre diversidad biológica en la FAO es un buen inicio y requiere los recursos financieros para implementarla.

Los trabajos del Comité de Finanzas reflejaron esfuerzos para apoyar a la administración en buscar más economías que permitan financiar las nuevas prioridades fijadas por la membresía y por ello solicitamos se realice un nuevo examen de las posibilidades de adoptar mayores medidas de ahorro y eficiencia, así como para dar un seguimiento continuo de los supuestos aumentos de costos. Esperamos que rumbo a la Conferencia, así como a la sesión del Consejo de la FAO en diciembre, se obtengan los recursos adicionales para asignarlos a estas prioridades.

Con estos comentarios, apoyamos presentar a la Conferencia el PTP con la cuantía presupuestal basada en cuotas de 1,005.6 millones de dólares.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like first to thank Ms Crawford for presenting the document on Medium Term Plan 2018-21 reviewed and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21.

Egypt would like to align itself with the Joint Statement of the Group of 77 and China that will be delivered by South Sudan and would like to stress on the following points:

Egypt appreciates the significant efforts made by the Director-General to maintain a flat nominal budget by absorbing cost increases through efficiency savings and identifying areas of emphasis, de-emphasis that should take into consideration the priorities of the Regional Conferences.

We would also like also to reaffirm the importance of the TCP appropriation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and take note of the TCP share at 14 percent of the net budgetary

appropriation 2020-21 in order to implement Conference Resolution 9/89 and recommendations of Conference Resolution 6/2015.

Egypt would like to seize this opportunity to remind both FAO management and distinguished Members of Council that there is a need to look for innovative ways to increase TCP share to 17 percent in order to support the developing countries in their endeavors to achieve the 2030 Agenda as we are ten years away from its implementation.

In this regard, Egypt believes that time has come to consider this increase in particular while we are going to elect a new Director-General this June and given the increasing numbers of hungry people in the last consecutive years.

Egypt would like to thank the United States of America for their support to the Technical Cooperation Programmes in the developing countries from extra budgetary resources and we would like to ask other donors to provide voluntary contributions to address priorities of the Organization that could not be accommodated within the Programme of Work and Budget in particular TCP projects.

While we are requesting FAO Management to consider increasing the share of TCP appropriation in the PWB 2020-21 over 14 percent, we would like to request Management to ensure full implementation of the TCP projects and to have a review and analysis of TCP expenditures at the country level to identify its impacts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

With these comments, Egypt welcomes the document on PWB 2020-21.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Brazil aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of South Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

With regard to the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, Brazil appreciates the significant efforts made by the Director-General to prepare a flat nominal budget while protecting the delivery of the Programme of Work and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Over USD 150 million in efficiency savings over the last years, with a further USD 27.8 million expected in the 2020-21 biennium are certainly an achievement. But we shall be aware of the existing limits for further savings, and of the challenges that Members and the new Director-General are going to face in this realm. The amount of voluntary contributions certainly reflects the trust in the effectiveness of the Organization in delivering its objectives. However, their growing proportion with respect to assessed contributions also raises some concerns. Brazil believes that this trend should not lead us to a “donors-driven” Organization, instead of a “members-driven” one.

We would like to make some specific comments on the recommendations of the Committees of the Council.

In the report of the Programme Committee, paragraph 4(c), the Committee, and I quote, “stressed the need for considering all approaches regarding sustainable agriculture and food systems in the preparation of the programme of work of the Organization”. We are in agreement that all sustainable approaches should be considered in the preparation of the programme of work but are also of the opinion that agroecology should be among them. Therefore, we would have preferred to see the express mention of agroecology as one of these approaches, in order to align this decision with the Conference resolution approved by the Programme Committee and currently under analysis in this Council.

In the report of the Programme Committee, paragraph 4(f), the Committee, we read “recommended strengthening and further development of indicators and targets for the Outputs of each Strategic Objectives, especially in the field of AMR indicator(s)”. We appreciate FAO’s work on the topic of antimicrobial resistance and support its continued engagement in this area. Nevertheless, it is unclear to us why we need to specify the need for indicators in the field of AMR, and we would like some clarification on that.

In the report of the Programme Committee, paragraph 5(e), we welcome the recommendation for additional resources for mainstreaming biodiversity. Brazil fully supports the prioritization of biodiversity in the PWB, necessary for the appropriate development and implementation of FAO's activities on this theme.

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

I am making this statement on behalf of the Nordic Countries - Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country Finland. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align themselves with the EU statement.

We appreciate the efforts of FAO to propose a flat nominal budget level for the assessed contributions, which we support.

Furthermore, we would like to underline the importance we pay to governance, accountability and transparency. We would also like to stress that we see Codex Alimentarius and IPPC as unique and core functions of FAO, which are equally important for all Members.

This is why we find it disappointing that FAO has not followed up on the repeated, strong and clear guidance from a number of its Governing Bodies as mentioned already by previous speakers of the EU, Australia and others to ensure sustainable funding for FAO's standard setting work in the IPPC and in the Joint FAO/WHO Food Safety Scientific Advise Programme.

We therefore welcome and support the recommendation of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee to ensure the necessary funding for the IPPC and the Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme.

We note with appreciation that the proposed PWB contains allocation of funds for FAO's contribution to the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator function which we see key in the repositioning of the UN development system. We appreciate efforts of the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) to promote Resident Coordinators from within these organizations.

The Nordic countries see the United Nations as the backbone of our global order. Well coordinated global action is the only way forward to resolve the major challenges that lie ahead.

We appreciate very much the RBA cooperation, but we continue to emphasize that, on the ground, FAO needs to cooperate with all relevant UN organizations. This in order to maximise the impact of actions and programmes, to avoid overlaps and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of available financial and human resources.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

China has four recommendations to make. First, China thanks the Secretariat for the documents and it aligns itself with the joint statements made by South Sudan on behalf of Group 77 and China and Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Group. And China supports the recommendation to support more TCP programmes in developing countries. And also supports FAO in programme planning and TCPs to achieve the best outcome and balances.

Secondly, China appreciates the USD 29.9 million in efficiency savings realised by the organisation and the redistribution of these savings. In particular, with an increase in the innovative practices in sustainable food and agriculture and in nutrition sensitive food systems.

Third, China agrees with the Finance Committee's recommendation to reiterate the importance of TCP allocations in achieving SDGs and welcomes the fact that TCP allocations account for 14 percent of the net budget allocations. TCPs are a key area of concern for developing countries including China. In particular, we take note of the decline in the expenditure rate of technical cooperation programmes in 2018.

China notes that for the topic of TCP, we agree with the proposal of Egypt, Congo, Jordan and Afghanistan to increase the TCP share from 14 percent to 17 percent in the future. At the same time, we would like to draw the attention of the Secretariat and Members that China is willing to assume international obligations and increase its assessed contributions from 7.922 percent to 12.006 percent.

Which also means that China's contribution to memberships has increased more than that of developing countries in terms of TCP growth.

Just like what is mentioned in our joint declaration, it has been 30 years that have passed. It is high time for us to honour our obligations.

Sr. Edward Francisco CENTENO (Nicaragua)

Nicaragua realiza esta intervención en línea con la declaración que hará la honorable Delegación de Sudán del Sur en nombre del Grupo de los 77 más China. Hacemos referencia al Plan de plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) que recoge los ajustes necesarios para que FAO se adapte y reaccione eficazmente ante los actuales desafíos mundiales, ofreciendo un mejor soporte a los países miembros en consonancia con los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO y la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Este documento, en constante actualización, y acorde con la revisión del Marco estratégico de la Organización, es un valioso instrumento que nos permite interpretar las tendencias globales actuales y futuras. Por lo cual, consideramos importante que se incluya, en particular, las decisiones relativas a la labor conjunta de Koronivia sobre las normas para la aplicación del Acuerdo de París, el Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica y la Declaración del Decenio de Naciones Unidas de la Agricultura Familiar 2018-2028.

Igualmente, el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-2021 presentado por la Dirección mantiene un presupuesto sin variación nominal demostrando la imperante necesidad de aplicar periódicamente ajustes que hagan frente a nuevos retos y problemáticas. En este sentido, confiamos en que los miembros puedan aportar contribuciones voluntarias que faciliten alcanzar los Objetivos Estratégicos y la aplicación del programa de trabajo integrado.

Por otra parte, entre los aspectos más relevantes del Programa de trabajo y presupuesto destacamos la nueva configuración organizativa de la estructura bajo la responsabilidad del Director General Adjunto. Confiamos en que se ajuste al presupuesto sin mayor demora, a partir del nombramiento de sus directores, para continuar impulsando con mayor determinación los programas nacionales vinculados a la agricultura, cambio climático y seguridad alimentaria.

Reconocemos la limitación de recursos de la Organización y tomamos nota de la modificación en la reasignación de recursos presupuestarios en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-2021 respecto al bienio anterior, particularmente en los capítulos 1, 2 y 4 siguiendo la lógica de que FAO continuará aumentando su apoyo a los países en la adopción de políticas y estrategias integradas encaminadas a la erradicación de la pobreza y a generar oportunidades que permitan la revitalización económica y social de los territorios rurales.

Conseguir que la agricultura, la actividad forestal y la pesca sean productivas y sostenibles propiciando sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios más inclusivos y eficientes, sin duda alguna contribuirá con efectividad a la erradicación del hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición. Así mismo, un mayor apoyo a los programas estratégicos nacionales de los países en desarrollo, en especial aquellos más vulnerables a los efectos del cambio climático, nos permitirá continuar avanzando hacia una agenda transformadora del desarrollo rural sostenible y resiliente.

Este apoyo debe contemplar la asistencia técnica en diferentes ámbitos que van desde la innovación, la transferencia científica y tecnológica, el acompañamiento en programas de riego en zonas secas, la movilización de recursos que permitan la adaptación y mitigación al cambio climático, incluyendo las medidas para la reducción del riesgo de desastres. En tal sentido, reafirmamos la importancia de la Cooperación Sur-Sur y Cooperación Triangular como mecanismos que catalizan y materializan una mayor solidaridad y cooperación entre los Estados.

Esperamos que FAO continúe impulsando todos los mecanismos y medidas necesarias para monitorear, evaluar y, si es necesario, realizar otros ajustes pertinentes para afinar mejor la eficacia del PTP propuesto para el bienio 2020-2021. Con estos comentarios, Nicaragua apoya el Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-2021 presentado.

Por último, reiteramos nuestro respaldo al trabajo que desarrolla la FAO.

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algérie)

L'Algérie souscrit à la déclaration du Kenya au nom du Groupe Afrique et du Soudan du Sud au nom du Groupe des 77 et la Chine. Nous saluons les observations et réajustements du Programme de travail et budget, et nous soutenons les décisions proposées. Nous estimons que la FAO est appelée à renforcer son apport, notamment dans les domaines du développement agro-industriel, de l'emploi des jeunes et de la gestion efficace des eaux et des sols.

Plus d'efforts sont sollicités pour permettre la réalisation de tous les objectifs et cibles du Cadre stratégique pour les années 2018 et 2019, avec une attention plus particulière sur l'importance d'adapter l'appui aux besoins des Membres et à leurs priorités en matière de développement. Notre délégation prend bonne note des observations du Président du Comité financier, ainsi que des observations du Directeur général au sujet de l'utilisation des affectations budgétaires. A ce titre, les propositions soumises au Conseil pour décision constituent une bonne base pour une prise de décision par consensus, formule que ma délégation a toujours soutenue.

L'Algérie prend bonne note également de l'affectation budgétaire de 14 pour cent au Programme de coopération technique (PCT) et considère que la proposition d'augmenter cette allocation budgétaire à 17 pour cent est pleinement justifiée, du fait de l'orientation proposée dans le rapport à mi-parcours; celui-ci recommande en effet un déploiement plus soutenu des activités de la FAO sur le terrain, traduisant ainsi les décisions globales en une intervention concrète au profit des pays, notamment africains.

Pour finir, l'Algérie souligne l'importance des contributions extra-budgétaires, permettant le financement des activités de l'Organisation au profit des pays en développement. L'Algérie salue les pays donateurs, et fait appel à leur générosité et engagement en faveur du développement agricole dans les pays en développement.

Après ces observations, notre délégation salue et soutient la proposition des Comité du Programme et financier.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

La República Argentina estima muy valioso que la FAO, en su programa de trabajo, considere todos los enfoques disponibles que conduzcan a lograr una agricultura sostenible. En un contexto mundial en el que la agricultura enfrenta los más variados desafíos, duplicar la productividad agrícola y asegurar la sostenibilidad de la producción en alimentos para alcanzar lo acordado en la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible resulta un compromiso al que la FAO puede contribuir propiciando y fomentado todas las formas sostenibles de producción agrícola sin priorizar una sobre otra.

La Argentina también acoge con agrado que el Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 enfatice la necesidad de considerar las prioridades de todos los países, incluso la de aquellos de ingresos medios y medios altos, ya que aún estos países enfrentan desafíos muy relevantes en aras de lograr el desarrollo rural de ciertas partes de sus territorios rurales. En este sentido, la FAO como organismo internacional que tiene, entre otros fines, el de mejorar las condiciones de la población rural, puede llevar a cabo un aporte altamente significativo.

En otro orden, deseamos destacar la necesidad de proporcionar financiación sostenible para la labor sobre la integración de la biodiversidad. Será fundamental este trabajo en el próximo bienio en relación con las negociaciones que se llevan adelante en el marco del Convenio de Biodiversidad y sus Protocolos. La cuestión de la integración de la biodiversidad es transversal a todos los sectores económico-sociales e incluye a la agricultura y a la alimentación para poder contribuir con una negociación y resultados que sean inclusivos para todas las partes interesadas, Estados Miembros, sociedad civil, empresas, etcétera.

Para poder comenzar a poner en práctica la estrategia una vez se haya aprobado, será fundamental contar con recursos suficientes. En este sentido, coincidimos con lo enunciado en el párrafo 5.e del documento en el cual se destaca la importancia de velar por la financiación sostenible de la labor de la FAO relacionada con la biodiversidad.

Para concluir, desearía apoyar lo manifestado por otras delegaciones, en particular lo señalado por la Delegación de Australia en relación con el Codex Alimentarius y la Comisión de Medidas Fitosanitarias que gobierna la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria para mejorar la seguridad alimentaria.

Nosotros entendemos que las actividades de estos dos órganos están directamente relacionadas con los objetivos estratégicos de la FAO de mejorar la calidad de la agricultura, de erradicar el hambre, la pobreza y la malnutrición. Por eso, tal vez, nos permitimos sugerir que se explore en los órganos pertinentes de la FAO, la posibilidad de asignar en el marco de los recursos que están asignados a estos tres objetivos estratégicos una mayor contribución a estos dos foros.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to voice our support to the statement of the G77 and China. And also I would like to support the statement of Egypt concerning working towards increasing TCP to 17 percent. We thank the United States for their support and call on all countries to support the Technical Cooperation Programme in developing countries, over and beyond South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

We would like to thank all of our colleagues of the Programme and Finance Committees who have discussed these extremely important items. I would like to refer in particular to Strategic Objective Five and the issues of the Near East and North Africa region. Building resilient livelihoods in the face of crisis situations is essential. There are nine different indicators relating to the Strategic Objectives, 1, 2, 11, 16, 17 in particular, the call for improving livelihoods and there is of course reference to also those people who are suffering many difficult situations in the area.

It is essential that the conditions in this area be followed with a view to how they impact the lives of people. I would refer in particular to the situation in Jordan. The indicators do not necessarily reflect the entire situation of Jordan. Jordan is a victim of the difficult situations in the Middle East.

The government of Jordan doubled its budget to deal with the Syrian crisis. It was an enormous allocation for a small country and we are bearing the brunt of the migration crisis. Many farmers have had to abandon their lands, the markets are closed.

And therefore what is the possibility to assist in sustainable development in this area? Over 100,000 Jordanian households are also suffering from malnutrition, 150 million dollars have been appropriated to assist these families over the next three years. But all of this represents an extremely heavy burden for our economy.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Let me first echo all the support expressed in the room for the proposed budget level. We feel that is not necessarily a compromise to have operated under this budget level for the past years but it is actually a reality. The limited resources have allowed FAO to refine its ability to innovate and identify opportunities to do better.

So, we feel that it is very much in line with the spirit of the SDGs to move from funding to most strategic investments as well as to financing to achieve the SDGs. We also note that a lot of increase in the voluntary contributions that FAO has been able to leverage has been in the area of resilience and it attests as well to some of the issues that have been raised in this room and by the FAO Director-General in terms of those who suffer the most acute food insecurity being in protected crisis and conflict.

We also support the efforts in the budget level to cover the cost related to the implementation of the UN Development System Reform, which is a priority.

At the same time, a second point, we note that the funding for the scientific advice and standard setting bodies is inadequate. In this regard, we fully support the comprehensive statement made by Australia. Like many others have pointed out, food safety is integral to food security as well as nutrition. We fully support an increase in funding as consistently requested by various FAO Governing Bodies. So, we fully support the recommendations of the Programme Committee in this regard.

We also feel that this speaks to one of the findings of the MOPAN that recommends that FAO articulate better how its normative work contributes to its results framework. This is something for FAO to take forward.

We look forward to it positioning itself as a top notch knowledge organization with its feet on the ground, but in order to have a better impact on the ground, we feel that it has to invest in its core mandate and functions so that it can be able to deliver on a number of fronts. This relates to my third point on the TCP. Many have said that this is not necessarily about having more money but it is about having access to technical assistance.

We feel it is very much linked to FAO's technical capacity and it is about quality, visibility and impact rather than a percentage. The Programme Committee discussions on this also highlighted the desirability of having more information and impact on this programme to promote its visibility as well. We feel that the proposed language from the United States, to take the language of the Finance Committee, is a sensible one.

The fourth point is that we would like to support the Programme Committee recommendation on the importance of strengthening the capacity of technical officers to mainstream gender in their work. This relates as well to FAO as a knowledge organization, its added value, and we support the integration of gender indicators across all strategic objectives. We feel that this will help the organization move towards a more gender transformative approach.

Last but not least, we welcome the alignment of the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget with the 2030 Agenda. We would like to take this opportunity to raise some questions, or concerns we have with some of the sub sub-indicators used to measure biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture. So, certain sub sub-indicators of SDG 2.4.1 do not accurately reflect common sustainable and biodiversity practices and it would be impractical for agriculture producers around the world to achieve.

We are actively participating in an informal group that includes the FAO Secretariat to revisit those sub sub indicators and propose new indicators that would better reflect the reality of agriculture in many countries. And we encourage others to engage.

Sr. Edison Paul VALLEJO MADRID (Ecuador)

Ecuador se une a las declaraciones presentadas en este Consejo que reconocen y valoran los esfuerzos del Director General para diseñar un presupuesto sin variación nominal y sin cambios en la cuantía de las cuotas asignadas. Asimismo, acogemos con beneplácito el mantenimiento de la proporción de recursos asignada al Programa de Cooperación Técnica en el 14 por ciento sin perjuicio de que estos recursos puedan incrementarse en el futuro conforme a las recomendaciones y los compromisos adquiridos por la Organización y sus Miembros.

Ecuador acoge la propuesta de reasignación de recursos en función de las prioridades programáticas definidas en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto (PTP) y hace hincapié en la necesidad de que la definición y aplicación de programas tengan en cuenta las prioridades de todos los países, incluidos los de ingresos medios e ingresos medios altos lo cuales, como claramente ya expuso la delegación argentina que me antecedió en la palabra, aún enfrentan retos importantes que requieren la atención y un trabajo conjunto con la FAO y los distintos organismos de Naciones Unidas.

Dentro de las prioridades planteadas en el PTP y sus programas estratégicos, el Ecuador valora los trabajos previstos por la FAO en materia de nutrición y cambio climático, los cuales se relacionan directamente con las iniciativas regionales definidas en la Conferencia para América Latina y el Caribe. Solicitamos que las acciones en este ámbito se articulen con los distintos planes de programación de la FAO en los países.

El Ecuador ve con agrado también las reformas organizacionales que buscan fomentar e incrementar el trabajo en materia de Cooperación Sur-Sur y Cooperación Triangular, ya que la consideramos una herramienta idónea para el trabajo conjunto de los países en vías de desarrollo.

Adicionalmente, a nuestra delegación le gustaría hacer énfasis en las acciones previstas por la Organización en su programa de trabajo número tres destinado a reducir la pobreza rural, teniendo en

cuenta que, como bien se menciona en el PTP, el 10 por ciento de la población mundial vive en la extrema pobreza y el 80 por ciento de ellos en las áreas rurales. En este sentido, el Ecuador solicita a la FAO fortalecer acciones tendientes a incrementar el acceso de la población rural pobre, en particular, agricultores, familiares y pequeños productores, a bienes productivos que les permitan participar y beneficiarse de las actividades económicas relacionadas.

En este punto, consideramos que el desarrollo de recursos de innovación, a los cuales la FAO brindará más atención, y sobre todo las facilidades de acceso a los mismos, jugarán un papel muy importante. De la misma manera, el Ecuador considera esencial que la FAO brinde especial apoyo a la formulación de políticas que tomen en cuenta las necesidades específicas de las mujeres y los jóvenes de áreas rurales, así como de los pueblos indígenas que en algunos de nuestros países son los más afectados por la pobreza rural.

Con estos comentarios, el Ecuador refrenda el documento de Plan a plazo medio para el 2018-2021 y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-2021.

Mr Hiromitsu KAWAIDA (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Group comments delivered by Pakistan, and would like to express two points briefly.

Firstly, Japan assesses and approves of maintaining the regular budget level equivalent to the current PWB.

And secondly, regarding FAO's operations on scientific advice and standards-setting, Japan evaluated FAO having recommended additional funding of at least USD 2 million by the Programme Committee for 2020-21 PWB, while highlighting the importance of stable funding.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Chile se alinea a la declaración que Sudán del Sur realizará en nombre del G-77 y China.

La Delegación de Chile agradece la presentación por parte del Director General de este presupuesto con crecimiento cero, tomando en cuenta la situación de la economía mundial.

Reconocemos los esfuerzos constantes de la administración en aumentar la eficiencia de la Organización y por encontrar áreas para realizar ahorros, haciendo más con menos. Respalamos en especial el trabajo de FAO en relación con las cadenas de valor, trabajo fundamental para la superación de la pobreza rural. Y relevamos la necesidad de tener en cuenta las prioridades de los países, incluidos los de ingreso medio y medios altos, que aún enfrentan retos importantes, en particular, respecto a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible 2 y 3.

Apoyamos también la necesidad de tener en consideración todos los enfoques relacionados con los sistemas alimentarios y la agricultura sostenible y respaldamos el trabajo de FAO para terminar con todas las formas de malnutrición. En cuanto al PCT, tomamos nota de la mantención de un 14 por ciento de los recursos destinados a él. Pedimos que se asegure la plena implementación de este presupuesto, lo que es fundamental para los países en desarrollo, y apoyamos que se realice una evaluación de este programa.

Tomando en cuenta lo señalado por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea, quisiéramos asimismo solicitar a la Organización que se entregue información detallada sobre el uso que se hace de las contribuciones voluntarias, su distribución geográfica y por área programática. Nos parece que este es un paso importante para aumentar la transparencia en la gestión de la Organización.

Asimismo, concordamos en la necesidad de utilizar terminología acordada en los documentos programáticos, los que deben tener un fundamento científico sólido y referencias claras a fuentes fiables.

Finalmente, quisiéramos apoyar la asignación de recursos del presupuesto regular de la FAO a la CIPF. Con estos comentarios aprobamos la propuesta de Plan a medio plazo para 2018-2021 y el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-2021.

Mr Hamid SID AHMED M. ALAMAIN (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

Firstly, we would like to support those colleagues who have thanked management for developing this document. We would also like to support the statement made by South Sudan on behalf of the G77 and China.

We welcome the fact that the PWB and the Medium Term Plan continue to follow and provide support to Members in a multi-sectoral fashion, and focus on the multi-sectoral focus of the organization as well as cross cutting issues such as gender, climate change and statistics.

We would also like to note that the PWB takes in to account a separation of the functions of the Ethics Office and Ombudsman. Given that we are working based on a flat nominal growth budget, we would like to support that the organization take into account the de-emphasised domains to do with pest control and on paragraph E, we would like for the organization to commit along with other organisations with the same mission.

The organization is working on gender equality and on improving the technical quality of its work. We support these endeavours primarily in country offices given that this will help us achieve our Strategic Objectives.

At the 159th Session of the Council, the Organization focused on the importance of our work for the region and for our country. Given the importance of development projects at the 159th Session of the Council, we saw a 21 percent increase in the cost of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

Our region saw a decline in TCP projects and that does not enable us to tackle all our needs, be they assistance in crisis situations or other assistance needs. The Council should take in to account the importance of Technical Cooperation Programme projects and should therefore increase this projects allocation.

We would support that the Organization carries out a global assessment, as some colleagues have said, and this evaluation should ensure that there is a review and analysis of the cost of each project, and also factor in the geographical distribution of these projects and costs so as to improve the management of both human resources and technical work distribution on the ground.

We would urge that the Council take these remarks into consideration and that at upcoming meetings it provides us with detailed status reports. The document includes details on the cost of the resident coordinator, and this funding was provided thanks to some savings in the human resources. We support this and would urge that management take in to account for upcoming sessions the need to ensure that this funding can be provided in a sustainable fashion.

The TCP projects should also be provided with sustainable funding as this will help countries improve the technical quality of their projects. As you know, voluntary contributions are not predictable, nor are they stable. We would therefore like to urge that Council consider an increase in the percentage allocated to the TCP and guarantee a sustainable funding source.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

The Trinidad and Tobago Delegation makes this brief statement on behalf of the 15-member group of CARICOM countries of the Latin American and Caribbean Region. We also suggest that aspects of these comments may well reflect concerns of the SIDS (Small Island Developing States), in general.

We commend the Medium-Term framework as an appropriate context for programming FAO's work for the coming biennium. We also fully support the PWB as proposed by the Director General. It is a responsible approach for dealing with current realities.

We recommend that the planning approach adopted be shared with Ministries of Agriculture in those countries where agriculture planning systems are weak.

However, attention is drawn to a matter which, in our view, has not been adequately addressed.

During the 2018 Regional Conferences, each group of SIDS specifically intervened to urge accelerated implementation of the GAP. And while acknowledging the assurances provided by the Secretariat in its responses on Item 4, there remains an issue when we examine the PWB 2020-21.

I speak to the need for greater clarity in the coherence of programme focus and in the coordination arrangements for implementing the GAP.

2019 marks 25 years since the Barbados Programme of Action identified and comprehensively addressed the economic, environmental, and social developmental vulnerabilities facing SIDS. Indeed, it outlined a strategic approach to mitigate those vulnerabilities. Unfortunately, despite several follow-up iterations of that seminal event, support initiatives to the SIDS seem to flow in what may best be described as a patchy manner.

This leads to the comment whether there is not a better way for coordinating targeted interventions within FAO aimed at mitigating the well documented vulnerabilities of SIDS. For example: should there be a specific budget line for SIDS as in some other UN agencies? Should dedicated staff be applied to this purpose? Given the now quarter century since the SIDS conundrum has been on the FAO agenda, we contend that this matter is of sufficient import to merit more in-depth consideration by this Organization. Accordingly, we propose that it be incorporated in the work of the Programme and Finance Committees or other appropriate bodies in the coming biennium.

Ms Natalina Edward MOU (Observer for South Sudan)

The Republic of South Sudan has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf the G77 and China.

I thank and appreciate Ms Crawford for presenting this important document on the PWB 2020-2021.

The G77 and China, appreciate the significant efforts made by the Director-General to prepare a flat nominal budget, with no change in the level of assessed contributions by absorbing cost increases through efficiency savings and identification of proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis.

We welcome the share of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) to 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation in order to achieve Conference Resolution 9/89 and recommendation in Conference Resolution 6/2015. The G77 and China would like to remind management that there is a commitment from FAO since 1989 to increase TCP to 17 percent that unfortunately has not been met yet after 30 years.

And to emphasize that Technical Cooperation Programmes are critical to achieve the target of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this regard, we believe that time has come to consider this increase, given the increasing numbers of hungry people recently as this will help in retaining the core function of FAO as a knowledge based and technical agency.

The Group would like to request management to ensure full implementation of the TCP appropriation and to have a result assessment of these programmes at the country level in order to measure the impacts of these projects to support the governments to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

As well, the G77 and China request the Implementation Report to include a review and analysis of TCP expenditures at the country level.

G77 and China encourage Members to provide voluntary contributions to address priorities of the Organization that could not be accommodated within the Programme of Work and Budget.

And on another note, we encourage the Secretariat to continue to review the improvements in the format of future PWB proposals by making the budget more transparent and providing more detailed information on the basis for changes in the budget.

With these comments, the G77 and China endorse the report.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statements made by Pakistan and South Sudan on behalf the Asia Regional Group and the G77 and China, respectively.

My delegation appreciates the presentations made by the Secretariat and the Chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees. In this regard, Thailand would like to welcome the proposal for maintaining a flat nominal budget level.

However, we support the desirability of increasing resource allocations for TCP as budgetary appropriation of FAO. We realize that an increased share of TCP will assist the developing countries and support the Organization to strengthen the capacities of Members in achieving the SDGs.

We are aware that increasing the share of TCP may affect the resource allocation of FAO. However, TCP is one of the instruments to enable FAO to make its know-how and technical expertise available to the Members. Therefore we request that the Organization and its Members consider increasing and reallocating resources for TCP in the future to improve the capacities of the Members.

We take note that the effort of the Organization to balance between setting ambitious and realistic outcomes towards the plans and expected results is one of the key achievements of the Organization.

We also wish that FAO improve and increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and visibility of its work as well as have more impact assessments be carried out on the ground at the country level.

Finally, Thailand welcomes the proposed level of budget for 2020-21. We thank the Chairperson and Members of the Programme and Finance Committees. We also support FAO in delivering better works' implementation and achievements for sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Ms Jasmine TAN (Observer for Singapore)

Singapore would like to express its appreciation for the work of the Programme and Finance Committees and aligns itself with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Group.

Food safety is of paramount importance to Singapore, and as a country that imports most of its food, Singapore welcomes the shared understanding on the importance of ensuring sustainable funding for FAO's work on scientific advice and standard setting, and joins Australia and others in supporting the recommendation for additional resources for IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

We also support the important work FAO is doing on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in collaboration with the OIE and the WHO within the One Health network and welcome the progress made which will help to ensure safe food. As the ASEAN lead country for AMR in livestock and aquaculture, Singapore will do its best to support FAO's efforts in the region.

Ms Esperança PIRES DOS SANTOS (Observer for Angola)

Angola welcomes the efforts made by the Director-General to prepare a flat nominal budget with no change. We also would like to support the statement made by South Sudan in the name of the G77 and China, the statement made by Kenya on behalf of Africa Regional Group, by Egypt, Sudan and other groups regarding the share of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) to 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation in order to achieve Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation in Conference Resolution 6/2015.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings to an end our list of speakers. I now invite the Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of the Programme Committee to offer any comments on the discussions.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Based on the long list and richness of interventions that we just had, I think it is safe to say that there is consensus that the MTP and PWB is indeed the top agenda of this Council Session. That is why I would like to first appreciate the contributions by Members, especially those that have agreed or supported the guidance and recommendations that have been provided by both the Programme and Finance Committees, including its Joint Meeting.

To start with a positive note, I think there is also agreement on the flat nominal budget and commendation by the Director-General and the Secretariat for preparing and maintaining the budget level at that rate. And there is also appreciation and identification of emphasis and de-emphasis and efficiency savings as well as the allocation of the cost increases for the UN Resident Coordinator System and also the nutrition and innovation technologies areas of work.

Now, without prejudice to the numerous issues and concerns raised by Members, I observe that there are two recurring themes that have resonated well among Members. First, it is the TCP and there are

extensive discussions on this, in both the Programme and Finance Committees, and I am glad to note that in the conclusions perhaps of this Council Session the language that has been recommended by the Finance Committee could be adopted later in our conclusions and we look forward to that.

Another issue is the increase or the sustainable funding and proposed increase to the budget of the IPPC and the FAO/WHO scientific advice work. Now, to address these two main issues, as well as the other proposals, I think there are reiterations for finding further efficiency savings and also perhaps working on some areas that can be further de-emphasised.

We also heard Finance Committee recommendations that were welcomed by Members, such as the transparency in making changes in the budget. We also are taking on board other considerations mentioned by Members, such as the regional initiatives, especially those that were approved during the Regional Conferences and also specific concerns, such as family farming and other sustainable food production systems.

Now, finally, since I also did not hear any query in particular that was directed to the Finance Committee, I would just like to, again, reiterate the appreciation to the Council Members for all their inputs and also to the Programme and Finance Committees, the Programme Committee Chair in also facilitating the Joint Meeting and, of course, the FAO Management and Secretariat. We have here the three Deputy Directors-General mentioned by our Programme Committee Chair, Mr Gustafson, Ms Semedo and Mr Thomas and, of course, Ms Crawford who took the cudgels in making the presentations and all the explanations.

As well as the Programme and Finance Committee Secretaries. All of these contributed to facilitating finding consensus and, on some areas, while pursuing the guidance and recommendations put forth by the Technical Committees in other areas.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I would like to echo the words of my colleague of the Finance Committee and, indeed, given the importance by many of the Members of the Council as well as the length of the statements, it is true that we are in the heart of the work of FAO.

And it should be because the Medium Term Plan as well as the Programme of Work and Budget is giving concrete direction for the priorities, for the Organization, for the results to be achieved on the ground and it is also, I think, very positive that in this Programme of Work and Budget there are also areas of de-emphasis because, as we know, we always want to set more priorities but we then also need to set areas for de-emphasis in order to find the funding for the priorities.

And I very much acknowledge and appreciate the interventions of the Members of the Council for the work being done by the Programme Committee because I think many of the conclusions of the Programme Committee have been supported by Members of the Council and, as I said before, also this morning and at the beginning of the afternoon, it was intense work of the members of the Programme Committee. We had strong discussions. We focussed on priorities, we focussed, indeed, also on areas of de-emphasis and we had to strike a balance.

And I think it is important what was said also by Argentina that there is a need to take into account all priorities for all the countries, also not only for, for example, the least developed countries but also middle income countries and upper middle income countries.

It is important because FAO is an Organization for all the Members, and that is also stressed, I think, in one of the conclusions or recommendations of the Programme Committee.

When it comes to the request of Brazil, about the indicator and targets for Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), why is it mentioned specifically in the recommendation F, I think when we discussed the item and the importance of developing indicators and targets, of course we looked to the strategic objectives and for many of the issues and the relevant themes and priorities, there are already some indicators and some targets.

But in the area of AMR at this moment there are no targets and indicators and therefore that was the reason why AMR is mentioned specifically. But, of course, mentioning AMR specifically does not say

anything about the other issues which should also get due attention when it comes to indicators and targets.

And, as said already by, I think, the Chair of the Finance Committee, I think in both Committees we had the same discussion about the crucial value of the TCP as well as priorities, like the standard setting related to IPPC and Codex as well as mainstreaming biodiversity, innovation and sustainable approaches for agriculture.

I think in both of the Committees we could find a balance and a consensus on a recommendation to the Council and I think especially in the Programme Committee, besides what was said by the Chair of the Finance Committee, we also said that besides the crucial importance of the TCP for the work of FAO, and maintaining the 14 percent for the TCP, it is also of crucial value for the FAO to report on the achievements of the TCP, to improve its feasibility, because improving its feasibility makes it also possible to attract extra budgetary resources, to look to the efficiency and a degree of implementation, and I think that is one of the reasons why the Programme Committee recommended and evaluation.

And, again, as I said, we had to strike a balance to find a compromise and I hope the Council could do it in line with what was developed by the Finance Committee and also in line with what was developed by the Programme Committee, also make a clear reference to an evaluation, what was said by many of you, as well as to improve its feasibility to attract, indeed, the extra budgetary resources needed.

And, again, as said, as many of you stipulated, besides TCP it is crucial that we also work on other priorities which need funding, as mentioned, the standard setting to Codex Alimentarius and IPPC, mainstreaming biodiversity and, of course, innovation and sustainable agriculture approaches.

With that I really would like to thank the support given by you, to the Members of the Programme Committee. I would like to thank, again, the members of the Programme Committee. It was a very difficult discussion. It was a very interesting discussion but we could arrive at a consensus and, of course, I would like to thank also the management of FAO and the teams of FAO as well as the Secretariat.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I too would like to add my voice to the Chairpersons of the Finance and Programme Committees, to thank you very much for your detailed comments, very clear comments on the document before you today. We have noted the many expressions of support on the budget level, so that is already a very big thing that I believe we have general consensus on.

And also the general appreciation on the areas of reprioritisation, taking into consideration, of course, the other high priority areas that we have all mentioned on the scientific advice for Codex and IPPC, biodiversity and the importance of TCP.

Maybe I will just say there were a few specific questions that I will try to respond to as well as maybe a few words on the process going forward.

Several Members raised comments related to efficiency savings and the cost increases as areas where we might find further savings in order to fund some of the other high priority areas. I would just like to stress, reiterate, indeed, that the Secretariat is continuously on the lookout for efficiency savings.

As the Director-General also mentioned this morning, since 2012 we have found USD 150 million in recurring efficiency savings and we are expecting to have another USD 27.8 million in 2020-21. And every time we find these savings, we reprogramme those savings to technical areas of work. So, this is part of our ongoing process.

Similarly, for cost increases we had long discussions in the Finance Committee. We present, in this document, what we believe are the sort of minimal cost increases that we are foreseeing for 2021 but we continue throughout the rest of this year to monitor that as well, to see if there are any changes coming in and any of the assumptions that we might have made that would change those cost increases.

There were some questions on the areas of de-emphasis, for example from Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Group and this is, again, one of the difficulties we have, that we try to be transparent on how we

are reshifting our focus but there are always areas that are and could be considered of high priority by Members.

But I just wanted to give a little bit of background on how these areas of technical de-emphasis and realignment are identified.

In general, and you will see that also described in the text, it is either where an area of work has come to a logical end and we believe now that it can be appropriately taken up by somebody else, by a partner, or we believe that it can now be appropriately taken up by extra budgetary funding or sometimes it is areas where we have just had less requests for that type of work.

So, the whole idea of identifying these areas is so that the technical focus of the Organization can shift to the areas that are described across the five Strategic Objectives so that we have the entire Organization focussing on the highest priority areas.

The Russian Federation also asked a question about language coverage, noting some of the scheduled sessions and meetings in our Annex where Russian was not included. Again, this is an area where we always try to be as inclusive as possible in language coverage when programming these sessions and meetings, but we also need to work making the best use of the resources available. We can always relook at that if we have not found the right balance, but this always gets back to that point that I am making, of where we have to work within the resources that we have in the best possible way that we believe we can.

A few words then on the process going forward. The guidance coming from the Council, of course, will now move to the Conference and so the Conference will have this document before it, the C 2019/3 along with the guidance coming from you and from the Committees.

We will then prepare for the Conference a new draft resolution, a revised draft resolution. So, in the document before you, that draft resolution follows paragraph 142. This would be updated. For example, there is reference to the After Service Medical Coverage in this draft resolution but the guidance from the Finance Committee has been to postpone that issue. So, reference to that would be removed.

Similarly, if Conference decided to allow for a carryover of funds into 2021, that could come into the Conference resolution as a second paragraph.

So, these are the adjustments that would be made to that draft resolution before you and all of this information would then be going to Conference for its final decision on the budget level, and any guidance that it wishes to give.

It then moves to the final phase which is the preparation of the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21. So, that is a document that will be prepared after Conference in June this year, and it will go to the Programme and Finance Committee and Joint Meeting in November and the Council in December.

So, in a nutshell that is the process that we have before us.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)

Helpful to say a few words about the TCP Programme and some of the questions and comments that you have raised, in particular around the idea that there is underexpenditure or persistent underexpenditure, which is not really the case.

Remember, with the TCP there is the question of allocation that takes place throughout a biennium and the question of expenditure that takes place over that biennium and the following one, because the approval of TCP projects from the allocation continues throughout the entire biennium.

We are not looking to have all TCP projects for this biennium approved in January. We would, in fact, want them spread out essentially throughout the two years as priorities come up and as countries finish some TCPs and roll into the next ones.

What we want with expenditure is that all of the money is spent by the following biennium. Some of those projects, of course, that are ongoing now were approved very late in 2017. We want all of that

money to be spent by the end of 2019, which, in fact, as you saw this morning in the Synthesis Report, we think will be spent.

So, we have also an anomaly in the way that we account for this, much like Ethiopia with a 13th month. What is reported on in the 43 percent figure, I think, of the allocations that you saw, is the amount up to the month of December in the way that we look at December, which is a cut-off date around the middle of the month and with the actual closing of accounts that then takes place later on, and then we refer to that as the 13th month.

That is not a problem in an accounting sense but it does create confusion with regard to TCP approvals, I think. If you look at the projects, the percentage of the allocation that was made by the end of last year, it was, in fact, 49 percent. We would hope it would be 50 percent. At the moment, as of end of March, that amount of allocation for the entire biennium is at 58 percent.

Since we are about 62 percent through the biennium, we are a bit behind on that one. Not very much. Africa, for example, the regional allocation for Africa is at 65 percent, so they are going quite quickly.

Interestingly, the allocation for emergency projects is running at a slower pace this year. So far we have only allocated 55 percent of the emergency pool which I am sure will pick up with projects that are now in the pipeline.

We implement or we approve somewhere between 350 and 400 TCP projects per year for a total of around 700 to 800 per biennium. So, the reporting and looking at the costs and so on, project by project we do, but an aggregate report will not or cannot really go into detail on every one of those 700 or 800 projects. We will, however, in June present an informative report on how the money has been used by country, by area and so on. We are finishing a first draft of this report and we'll have it ready for you in June.

There is also an evaluation of the TCP programme called for by you and by the Programme Committee that will come out next year by the Office of Evaluation.

In terms of streamlining and simplification, we have done a lot, actually, this year. We have made a number of changes to streamline the formulation, the approval process and the reporting process that has, in fact, speeded things up. But still, we needed to do that and have needed to do that for some time and we expect that it will help on the approval process but, again, I do not want to give the impression that there was persistent underspending.

The only other points I would like to make are on the donor voluntary funding and the priority setting. Well, one thing that I think is important to emphasise is that all projects that we implement at a country level of any funding source – TCP, voluntarily funded from donors, of course Unilateral Trust Fund and so on – every project requires the approval and the request of the Government.

So, it is not a question, really, that the voluntary funding will, let us say, put in something that the country would not be interested in. However, the issue, I should say, is one more of the relative balance of different areas.

So, for example, if a group of large donors decided to only be interested in spending money, let us say, on fisheries, of course over time the fisheries portion of the budget may look out of alignment with the rest of the priorities of the Organisation but all of the fisheries projects in any of the countries where we would operate, would come from a request and an agreement of the Government in that regard.

The only exception to that, which, of course, we would encourage all of you to look at, is the unearmarked pooled funding which we have in two areas, through what is called the FMM, where donor money is pooled and relatively unearmarked that is agreed then in a process internally with that group of contributors, and the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund where, likewise, the funding from African governments to be spent in Africa is pooled with a process for deciding then internally, with the Steering Committee, where those funds will be used.

So, the unearmarked pooled funding is a way for donor funding that remains then strictly within the priorities of the Organization, along with everything else and is something that we hope you will consider.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, we come to the conclusions of our discussion, so I can read out my conclusions on this item.

Item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21*.

1. The Council considered the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (MTP/PWB), and endorsed the recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees, and of their Joint Meeting.
2. The Council commended the efforts of the FAO and the Director-General in maintaining a flat nominal Regular Programme budget throughout his term in office, and increasing the voluntary contributions to facilitate achievement of the Strategic Objectives and implementation of the integrated Programme of Work, thus reflecting the confidence of Members in the leadership and work of the Organization.
3. The Council appreciated the preparation of the 2020-21 PWB with no change in the level of assessed contributions and net budgetary appropriation compared with 2018-19.
4. It applauded the Director-General for achieving over USD 150 million in efficiency savings since taking office, with a further USD 27.8 million savings expected in the 2020-21 biennium.
5. Regarding the proposal to improve FAO's financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Council deferred to future biennia the replenishment of the Working Capital Fund, as well as incremental funding of the After-Service Medical Coverage past service liability.
6. Regarding the substance of the proposals in the MTP/PWB, the Council:
 - a) noted that the trends, challenges and developments articulated in the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 were the basis for FAO's Strategic Objective results framework and programmes, and welcomed their alignment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - b) supported the priorities, areas of de-emphasis and resource allocations for the Strategic Objectives and Objective 6, including the additional resources for FAO's contribution to the UN Resident Coordinator System, innovative and sustainable agriculture approaches and for combating all forms of malnutrition and promoting nutrition-sensitive, sustainable food systems, as identified in the PWB document;
 - c) further requested efforts to identify in the adjustments to the PWB 2020-21, through efficiencies and cost savings, or, if necessary, from the areas of technical de-emphasis to the extent feasible, increased funding for: i) FAO's work on the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and on WHO/FAO's food safety scientific advice programme; and ii) mainstreaming biodiversity at FAO;
 - d) welcomed the share of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) at 14 percent of the net budgetary appropriation, while taking note of the Conference Resolution 9/89 and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session to make efforts, if possible, to raise the share of the TCP to 17 percent of the net budgetary appropriation in future;
 - e) recommended continued strengthening and further development of indicators and targets for the Strategic Objective Outputs;
 - f) requested the Secretariat to monitor carefully the anticipated cost increases, including inflationary elements related to staff remuneration, and to update members through established reporting mechanisms;
 - g) underlined the importance of maintaining the integrity of the capacity of language services within the 2020-21 PWB;
 - h) noted that adjustments in resource allocations and results frameworks arising from decisions and guidance of the governing bodies would be reported in the Adjustments to the PWB 2020-21 for consideration by the Council in December 2019.
7. Regarding the budget level for 2020-21, the Council:

- a) appreciated the identification of efficiency gains and savings with a view to reallocating USD 29.9 million to cover cost increases and priority areas without negatively impacting the delivery of the programme of work;
- b) encouraged Members to continue to provide voluntary contributions for the sustainable funding of the integrated programme of work and budget;
- c) encouraged the Secretariat to continue close monitoring and reporting of further opportunities for savings and efficiency measures; and
- d) endorsed the budget level of USD 1,005.6 million at a budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 to USD 1.22, and recommended approval by the Conference of the draft Conference Resolution, as contained in C 2019/3 paragraph 143, and amended in an Annex to this Report.

I think that brings to an end my conclusions, so I open the floor for comments.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I think we will all have to be very patient as we work through this one but I support this method of working. Could we please go back to the item on funding for the International Plant Protection Convention?

I would like to suggest an amendment to more accurately reflect the discussion here today and, equally, the discussions in the Finance and Programme Committees which was a little stronger than “further requested efforts to identify”. I would suggest we say “further requested that FAO increase the funding in the 2020-21 Programme of Work and Budget”.

It is just making it clearer. Therefore it is not just “please try”, it is “please do it”.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on this and other paragraphs?

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Quisiéramos ver uno de los párrafos relacionados con la asignación de recursos para el próximo presupuesto, no puedo identificar ahora el literal; sin perjuicio de eso, quisiéramos consultarle a la Presidencia las conclusiones del Comité del Programa reflejadas en los numerales c) y d).

Quisiéramos saber si esas conclusiones del Comité del Programa van a estar reflejadas en estas conclusiones o habrá otras conclusiones vinculadas a lo acordado en el marco del Comité del Programa. Y le agradecería si pudiera ir hacia el literal en el que se mencionaba asignar al próximo presupuesto el pago de algunas...

En el punto cinco tendríamos que decir “la posible...”, es decir, que esto es posible, no que está acordado, y no que en el próximo bienio se vaya a llevar a cabo esta indicación sino que hay que mencionar la posibilidad de que esto ocurra en el próximo bienio.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Firstly, we support the proposal by Australia for its alteration of paragraph 6 (c).

Regarding the point from Argentina, we would urge careful consideration. We think that the way that paragraph 5 is written, which defers this discussion to future biennia, does not rule out the next biennia taking careful consideration thereof, but we do not want to lock the next Session of Conference into making that decision.

I wanted to spend most of my time talking about 6 (d). Again, colleagues, to review the discussion of this point, we read out Resolution 9/89 which does not call for an increase to TCP but rather it makes it quite conditional and says ‘if possible’.

That is not the sense of how 6 (d) is put right now. Many colleagues today have also reiterated Resolution 6/15. The applicable part of 6/15 is, quote, “recommends TCP appropriation in the PWB for 2018-19 should be in line with Conference Resolution 9/89”. So, in essence, there is no substantive

change from the 2015 Resolution whatsoever. It merely recapitulates this heavily caveated language that we looked at from 1989.

You will note that the Deputy Director-General for Programmes spoke to us during today's Session about the TCP evaluation that will be due next year. We do not think we should be prejudging what these discussions are. We would caution against a rush to judgement, especially for the TCP, which is the second biggest expenditure item for this Organization.

The idea that we simply expand it to 17 percent on the basis of a 30-year old Conference Resolution with a very different financing model, I think raises a lot of questions and it's hard to explain that. Therefore, our change is exactly what the Secretariat has anticipated here.

We think that by bracketing that paragraph and ending paragraph 6 (d) at "39th Session" covers everything. Because of the way the Conference Resolution discusses this, this still gives us the rationale we need to hold this conversation, to take advantage of the evaluation that the Deputy Director-General for Programmes talked about but it does not include unnecessary and, I would argue, divisive language.

Therefore I would like to amend paragraph 6 (d) as indicated. I think it gives us the same message. It allows us to have the same discussion in the coming year, or years, to talk about these points, but not in an unnecessarily divisive way.

CHAIRPERSON

On the proposed Australian amendment, we have incorporated it, as suggested by Australia. Any comments on what the USA just suggested?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We wanted to indicate our support for the comments made by Australia and the US.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nosotros quisiéramos ver reflejada una solicitud que hicimos en nuestra intervención, respecto a que la Organización entregue información detallada sobre el uso que se hace de las contribuciones voluntarias, tanto respecto a su distribución geográfica como por área programática. Hubo varios comentarios de diversos países respecto a que se estaría dirigiendo, tal vez, el trabajo de la Organización hacia áreas que tal vez no serían las prioritarias.

También se nos mostró que había, quizás, muchos recursos que se están dirigiendo al PCT y que nosotros quizás no somos conscientes de que existen. Y nos parece que, además, si dos tercios del presupuesto de la Organización viene de contribuciones voluntarias, es importante para la transparencia en la gestión de la FAO que nosotros conozcamos cómo se distribuyen esos recursos.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We are a little surprised to have heard the remarks on the Programme of Work for 2020-21 as well as the MTP. The Russian Federation's remarks were not reflected in the draft conclusions despite the fact that we submitted our remarks in writing to the Secretariat.

So, if I may, I would like to propose a number of changes to this version of the conclusions.

Continues in English

I will speak in English in order to save time and be more precise.

After paragraph 6 (h), we would like to propose the following text as new sub-paragraph (i). "In the context of future adjustments, the Council stressed the importance of multilingualism at FAO and underlined the importance of maintaining the integrity of language service capacity within the PWB 2020-21". Would it be possible to insert a colon after the word adjustments? And continuing this paragraph, "and cautioned against inclusion of areas which were not consistent with the mandate and comparative advantages of FAO, such as peacebuilding issues."

With regard to the sub-paragraph 6 (a), we would like to continue this sub-paragraph saying that, "and in addition to that, stressed the need to clearly reflect in the PWB FAO's pivotal role in achieving SDG 2."

We also supported the Programme Committee's recommendation on the terminology. In this regard we would like to propose an additional paragraph: "stressed the need to use agreed terminology, especially technical, in preparation of programmatic documents, thus the Programme of Work and Budget should be based on accepted terminology, including but not limited to regional perspectives, and have a sound scientific basis and should include clear reference to reliable sources".

CHAIRPERSON

I would also suggest that Members have their own comments but I would also like a reaction to what the Russian Federation has proposed.

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algérie)

Puis-je revenir s'il vous plaît au point 6c) sur la proposition de l'Australie? Je m'adresse directement au Secrétariat pour demander quelques orientations sur cette proposition parce que de notre point de vue, telle qu'elle était faite au début, elle répond à des critères juridiques.

Il existe, comme les juristes le savent, deux genres d'obligations: l'obligation de résultat et l'obligation de «faire l'effort». Peut-on, dans ce cas de figure, demander au Secrétariat de faire des «économies de coûts» sur cette question? Y a-t-il une possibilité de le faire ou faut-il se limiter à demander d'en «faire l'effort»?

Si le Secrétariat s'engageait à faire des gains d'efficacité dans sa gestion, on ne peut que s'aligner sur la proposition de l'Australie, mais de mon point de vue, la demande ne peut pas répondre à une obligation de résultat, mais plutôt à une obligation de «faire l'effort» dans le sens de cette «économie de coûts».

Sur le point 6d), je dirais que la proposition, telle qu'elle a été faite par le Secrétariat, répond exactement, de notre point de vue, à ce qui a été dit dans la résolution 9/89 ainsi qu'à ce qui a été exprimé aujourd'hui au Conseil.

La majorité des pays qui sont intervenus a évoqué effectivement cette possibilité de faire l'effort d'augmenter de 17 pour cent le montant affecté au Programme de coopération technique (PCT). Il ne s'agit pas là de décision, et l'on comprend ce qu'a dit le délégué des États-Unis d'Amérique, il s'agit du souhait, de faire l'effort de réaliser cet objectif.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Chair, frankly speaking, I cannot digest your summary there. It was done very quickly, it's too long and now there are all the amendments that the delegates made. So, I was wondering if it is possible if this text could be distributed and we can come and discuss it tomorrow morning?

Alternatively, if you don't accept it, then it is going to be a very long session for the Drafting Committee.

Sra. Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

México apoya lo comentado por Australia, particularmente en lo referente al fortalecimiento en aspectos de biodiversidad; asimismo apoyamos lo presentado por Chile respecto a los recursos extrapresupuestales.

Mr Hamid SID AHMED M. ALAMAIN (Sudan)

Thank you Chairperson for the conclusions.

Could you please go to point 6 (d)? Our concern on the TCP is not reflected. We requested that the full TCP allocation be used. So, after the "net budgetary appropriation", you can add this sentence "and asks the Management to fully use the allocated amount".

On another item, I would like to add another paragraph. "Requested to provide a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation review of TCP implementation in the next biennium".

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Quisiéramos, respecto a uno de los párrafos propuestos por la delegación de Rusia sobre el tema de las estadísticas, que se complementara con lo mencionado por la delegada de Chile, que hizo una referencia a las fuentes y a las estadísticas que nos parecía muy apropiada.

Creo que no hemos tomado nota de todo lo que manifestó la delegación de Chile, pero quisiéramos que constara que nosotros apoyamos ese comentario y que tal vez se puede mejorar el texto en el Comité de Redacción.

Igualmente, para no perder tanto tiempo ahora con respecto al numeral cinco que habíamos mencionado, como tampoco tenemos el texto, aquí dejamos el tema para reflexionar sobre si hacerle algún ajuste en el marco del Comité de Redacción. Pero sí todavía quedan pendientes las dos preguntas que le había hecho a la Secretaría sobre los consensos alcanzados en el marco del Comité del Programa.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Firstly, in regard to what was said by Argentina, we, disagree that any substantial discussion on any proposed text should be discussed in plenary and leave the Drafting Committee to do the fine-tuning and language adjustments, rather that if it is a matter that concerns all Members, we should discuss it in Council.

Secondly, the reason for asking for the floor was because several Members have made reference to the need for FAO to maintain its work on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and we believe that this should be reflected in your conclusions and, probably, the best place to do it would be under paragraph 7. So we can possibly add another sub-paragraph and say something along the lines “highlighted the importance of addressing AMR to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and stressed the need of continued work and resource allocation for addressing AMR in agriculture in all regions”.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to state here that we asked for the floor after the United States of America and you gave the floor to some other countries twice and we are last. I have to state this.

Secondly, I want to go to the paragraph dealing with TCPs because the language is not reflecting what has been discussed here, because a lot of countries, even the Chairperson of the G77, Egypt and a lot of developing countries, have stressed the importance of the TCP appropriation in achieving the SDGs and I want to propose something here. I want to start paragraph 6 (d) with “reaffirmed the importance of TCP appropriation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and welcomed...”. I also want to support the proposal made by my colleague from Sudan but, I think it is better to take this proposal while taking note of the Conference Resolutions. So, I just want to change the place of “requests the management to fully use” to be added after mentioning the Conference Resolutions and the recommendations.

Also, in this paragraph 6 (d), a lot of countries asked Management to seek innovative ways to allocate more financial resources for TCPs in the future biennium and I don’t see it here. So, if you want we can propose language here, after “the 39th Session” to add “and encouraged management to provide innovative ways to increase the share of TCPs of the net budgetary appropriations in the future biennium in line with Conference Resolution 9/89”.

CHAIRPERSON

Egypt, I must point out that when I give the floor, I look at the list which is on the screen and I went according to the order in which your name appeared.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Regarding paragraph 6 (d) – we can agree to the Egyptian changes up to the point where it is said the 39th Session of Conference, except for the inclusion “and encouraged management to provide innovative ways”. Let me explain my reasoning. Again, I don’t want to differ with my Algerian colleague but that phrase there is not a precise quote from the Conference Resolution from 1989, either

in its technical sense or in the sense of the phrase. We spent a lot of time talking about this in the Finance Committee, the language we came up with which would be reflected if we simply stopped that part of the phrase at the Conference at its 39th Session, was compromised language that we all agreed to and supported at the time.

I just want to stress that if you take a look at Resolution 6/89 it allows further discussion, it does not prohibit the types of discussions which this Council here has, but, colleagues, we clearly don't have consensus on this. We clearly are seeing an emerging split here on the Council on this point and it is mainly a language split. I think there is a consensus of having a discussion but the way this is being phrased risks a split here on the Council.

Again, I would plea that we go back to the language agreed to by members of the Finance Committee, which was a careful compromise, and indeed we could also then add to that language to reaffirm the importance of TCP appropriations in achieving the SDGs as offered by our Egyptian colleague because, again, it was in the spirit of that.

But, I want to stress that the language of taking note of the Conference Resolution and the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session does not preclude any discussions, but, trying to embroider language onto it now in Council risks an inability to reach consensus on this document moving forward and for not very good reasons.

I mean, we can all agree and have this discussion which we clearly need to have. But, again, we plea for colleagues to return to the compromised language that was agreed to in the Finance Committee.

I would like to go to 6 (b), where we talk about the reallocations and changes we've made in addition to everything we've talked about, one of the things we did miss, and this is an important point for FAO, is on the ethics and ombudsman function. It is a notable accomplishment, it brings FAO into accordance with all other UN Organizations and, therefore, we would have the following language addition after "sustainable food systems" at the end we would add: "and separation of the ethics officer and ombudsman functions".

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to make a proposal.

In fact, at this rate we will beat all records, past and present, of the Drafting Committee because there are certain aspects which are in the Programme and Finance Committees and our first paragraph says the Council endorsed the recommendations of the Programme Committee and some of the amendments I am hearing are exact reprints from the Programme Committee's report. If we endorse the report, why do we want to reproduce those paragraphs again? It should just be aspects which we have discussed today.

But, my proposal is, I would like to go forward with Afghanistan's proposal, if you all agree. At this rate it will be amendment after amendment, no agreement, that we distribute the text, but, it will only be in English and tomorrow we take it up like Afghanistan suggested and, perhaps, there will be agreement and we move forward quicker. I would also advise that we don't re-print exactly paragraphs from the Programme Committee. Some of the proposals, I have checked in the Programme Committee report, is exact wording of the paragraph. The whole paragraph has been shifted here. Now, if we have endorsed the report of the Programme Committee, why do we want to re-produce the paragraph in the Council's report?

My proposal is, like Afghanistan suggested, that we distribute the text in English only and tomorrow we have a look at it. And the text will contain the amendments you all have proposed.

What do you say to that?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

You can still include new text tomorrow, just to be clear?

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I am happy to proceed with that, but, may I beg your indulgence and the indulgence of colleagues today that by Council standards it is still quite early and I certainly don't want to be here until 10 o'clock tonight but, I think there are a couple of things, points of clarification that people have raised that, perhaps, we could continue with, so that we minimise the time we may spend on this later.

CHAIRPERSON

Australia we can do that.

Sra. María Christina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Dado que en el texto ya hay varias referencias a lo mencionado en los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas, nosotros queremos proponer que se incluya la recomendación del Comité del Programa, literales c) y d) en este texto, porque fueron temas que se intercambiaron hoy y porque hubo consenso de varios países de América Latina sobre ese punto, que para nosotros es vital.

Así que, por favor, en el texto que Usted va a distribuir, le agradeceríamos que incluyera los literales c) y d) de lo acordado en el marco del Comité del Programa.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I also asked for the floor before Brazil. I think there is a problem with the button because it was on but you did not give me the floor. So, I ask the management to check the button. I will raise my sign until it is fixed.

I support your proposal. I think it will take us a lot of time and it will become a Drafting Committee. I propose that we adjourn the meeting and distribute this report with your recommendations and come back tomorrow, to discuss it. Thank you very much.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We support the comments that the U.S. made on paragraph 6 (d).

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algeria)

Firstly, we agree with your proposal, based on what was proposed by my colleague from Afghanistan, to adjourn the discussion for tomorrow.

But, to help make a positive contribution we request clarification from the Secretariat, especially whether the amendments to paragraph 6 (c) proposed by Australia is feasible.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

The request, the way it is formulated now, to identify increased funding, if it only said "through efficiency savings and cost savings", that would be difficult for us because we cannot be sure that we could identify that at this point in time. But, since it also states, "or if necessary from the areas of technical de-emphasis", I believe that the wording could remain like this at this point in time.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We were going to propose this amendment tomorrow but, since Argentina mentioned it would like to support what is included in the recommendations from the Programme Committee, for paragraph 6 (c) and (d). In sub-paragraph (c), after "sustainable agriculture," I would like to include, "including agro-ecology," as I mentioned.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I have a question about AMR, but, could you just clarify where that point from Brazil was going? I think I missed it.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

First I'd like to support what was presented by Argentina, proposing to include paragraph 6 (c) and (d) from the Programme Committee, and in addition, in sub-paragraph (c), after "sustainable agriculture", to add "...including agro-ecology."

CHAIRPERSON

Australia, is that clear?

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Yes, thank you very much and thank you to Brazil for clarifying that.

I just wanted to see the wording proposed by Romania on AMR. I had a quick sidebar with my colleagues from Europe next to me. I just wanted to confirm that that drafting does not mean additional resources, it purely means continuation of existing ones. So, if my colleagues can confirm that is the intent, we could deal with drafting later.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Yes, that was our intent. We wanted to point out that Member states requested FAO to maintain its work on AMR. We made no mention of increased resources, but, rather that it needs to be maintained. That was pointed out by members.

CHAIRPERSON

We adjourn the meeting. We will distribute an amended text based on your interventions now. It will be only in English and first thing tomorrow morning we will take it up.

The meeting rose at 18:05 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 05

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.08

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
THIRD PLENARY SESSION TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
9 April 2019

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.43 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 43
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.43
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (continued)

Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021 (suite)

Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21 (continuación)

C 2019/3; C 2019/3-WA11

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Third Meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

As agreed at the close of our plenary meeting yesterday afternoon, my draft conclusions, with the proposed amendments by Council, were circulated to Council Members yesterday evening through the FAO Members Gateway. We will now resume our discussions on the draft conclusions for Item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21*, which are projected on the screen behind the podium.

I would suggest that we go through the draft conclusions from the top paragraph by paragraph, if this is agreeable to you and that way we would make progress.

Paragraphe one.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I found your summary to be quite good.

If you agree, the rest of the text could be fixed by the Drafting Committee, but the only paragraph that needs to be fixed here is 6 (f) regarding TCPs.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I did not ask for the floor, at least we know that the button is working today.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I put the suggestion of Afghanistan to Members? Would you all agree that we deal with the paragraph 6 (f) dealing with the TCP and adopt the rest of the conclusions?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We understand that the TCP is at the heart of this. Our views on TCP were made quite clear, but now that we had the opportunity to review the document, we actually have points in other paragraphs as well. So, having gone this far now, I agree with your original suggestion. Let us go paragraph by paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. So, let us go ahead paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1? Adopted.

Paragraph 2? Adopted.

Paragraph 3?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Could you please put “PWB” before “2018-19”?

CHAIRPERSON

That will be done. So, paragraph 3 is adopted.

Paragraph 4?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Although we agree with the message of the text, we do not believe it was actually applause when the Director-General made the statement regarding the efficiency savings. So, maybe we can reflect this by saying, “the Council expressed appreciation”, or something along those lines?

CHAIRPERSON

We borrowed the word “applauded” from the intervention of Australia yesterday in speaking about savings.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Maybe we could fix this by just saying, “lauded”, and not “applauded.”

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment? None? So we will change that word and the paragraph is adopted.

Paragraph 5? Adopted.

Paragraph 6 (a)?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

This is a proposed change for the last sentence in paragraph 6 (a). Colleagues, we note that the SDGs are agreed to and they are implemented by Member States. Not necessarily the UN agencies. And so our suggested alteration is after “pivotal role in” we would include the phrase, “supporting Member States’ efforts in”.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

My suggestion is to keep the first three lines up to “development”, and then put a full stop there and start a new sentence which will read: “The FAO’s Programme of Work and Budget should reflect its pivotal role in achieving SDG 2”.

CHAIRPERSON

US, would you have a reaction to that?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We can support Afghanistan's suggested change but we would ask that we maintain our “supporting Member State efforts in”. I think that all still works.

CHAIRPERSON

So, with those changes, paragraph 6 (a) is adopted.

Paragraph 6 (b)?

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Desearíamos sugerir una pequeña modificación en el párrafo b). Si mal no recordamos, cuando se conversó este tema se hablaba de combatir todas las formas de malnutrición y, por lo tanto, desearíamos destacar que el combate es a todas las formas de malnutrición a nivel de país - *at country level* -, “combatir todas las formas de malnutrición a nivel de país” y sugerimos eliminar el resto hasta donde dice “...separación de la Oficina de Ética de la Oficina del Ombudsman”.

Queremos enfatizar la importancia del enfoque en la malnutrición.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on Argentina's suggestion? Beth would you like to comment?

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

Maybe just to point out that the additional resource allocations were actually for the two things as described in, for example, paragraph 54 of the PWB. So it is to “increase activities to address all forms of malnutrition and to promote sustainable, resilient and diverse nutrition-sensitive food systems”.

Mr Piefrancesco SACCO (Italy)

In fact, the promotion of nutrition-sensitive and sustainable food systems is key to combatting all forms of malnutrition, so we would suggest to keep the text in the original form.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Just following on from the two interventions. I think in the discussion, the Finance Committee were made aware that the cost increases are directed really to this innovation of agricultural technologies and at the same time combating all forms of malnutrition that would be addressed, as mentioned by the Ambassador of Italy, through promotion of nutrition-sensitive and sustainable food systems. So, I would also recommend maintaining this.

With regard to the additional phrase by Argentina, I think this undertaking would be at all levels. Meaning, national, regional and global levels. But if we need to stress, or make an emphasis on the country level, perhaps we could place this after: “food systems, especially at the country level” or “particularly at the country level”. Because I think the efforts that will be put in by the institution will not just be “at the country level” but “especially at the country level”.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments?

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Le pedimos al Señor Presidente un segundo porque estamos tratando de ver el texto.

Tenemos una duda porque cuando hablamos de sistemas alimentarios sustentables estaríamos haciendo una pequeña innovación porque, en general, se hable de sustainable agriculture, entonces aquí se estaría introduciendo una innovación con respecto a los sistemas alimentarios y preferiríamos, entonces, dejar la frase en “malnutrición y en la promoción de una nutrición sustentable” y terminar en “*sensitive*”.

Es decir, eliminar “sustainable food system”. Poner un punto después de “sensitivo”.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on the new text?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We would support the language proposed by the Secretariat initially because we feel that, as explained by Ms Beth Crawford, as well as by the Chair of the Finance Committee, and looking at the language of the Programme Committee, that reflects what the recommendations were. Also, at the last PWB, we had already approved an increase for nutrition and food systems. The division has been renamed Nutrition and Food Systems, and the whole point was to increasingly highlight the linkages between nutrition and food systems.

So, I do feel that the language proposed by the Secretariat actually reflects the trends in the Organization, our discussions and it is agreed language.

Mme Delphine BORIONE (France)

Juste pour soutenir ce que vient de dire le Canada, et ce qu'avait proposé également le Président du Comité financier, donc la proposition initiale.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, are you okay with this? Thank you.

Para 6 (b) is adopted.

Para 6 (c)?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We note that the paragraph, as originally drafted, is language directly from the Programme Committee and we would ask that we stay with the Programme Committee’s language.

All approaches regarding sustainable agriculture covers all approaches. If we are not going to use the Programme Committee language and instead start to break out different forms of agriculture, we would have some suggestions to add to agroecology, such as innovation and biotechnology.

We could have that discussion, but our recommendation is to just stick to the Programme Committee language.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just to remind that what we are discussing are the recommendations coming from the committees and the discussions during the plenary in the Council.

We are open to discuss that. And as a reminder, Brazil and some other countries mentioned the importance of agroecology on this specific subject.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Mi Delegación desearía mantener el literal en las mismas condiciones en las que se acordó en el Comité del Programa.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would like to support the comments made by the US and Argentina. Some delegations did mention the importance of all approaches to sustainable agriculture. And while they did not necessarily mention them, it was implied in their comments. So, either I support the US view that we stick to the Programme Committee language, or we allow members the opportunity, including ourselves, to add other examples of sustainable agricultural approaches.

CHAIRPERSON

Brazil, in the interests of consensus, could we stay with the Programme Committee language?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Again, not only Brazil, but some other countries mentioned this, especially the subject of agroecology. So, I am not sticking to this, but I understand this has to reflect what has been discussed in the plenary and some other countries also mentioned that.

But if no other country, or region, is going to support this, we are not going to stick to this position.

Mr Piefrancesco SACCO (Italy)

We would like to second the proposal made by Brazil, to keep “including agroecology” in the text.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Yes we would like to also support the inclusion of agroecology here. Although of course, we need to reflect what was discussed in the Programme Committee where there has also been the discussion on the resolution for sustainable agricultural approaches including agroecology. So, maybe reference to agroecology is needed.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We would like to stick to the strict language of the Programme Committee noting that it stressed the need for considering all approaches. So, when we start “including”, then we must have an exhaustive list of all approaches, or else it defeats the purpose of the first part of the paragraph.

So, for the sake of time and practicality, it is better to stick to the Programme Committee language.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I put it to members that we stick to the Programme Committee wording? And as Canada suggested, “all approaches” would include agroecology and other approaches as well.

So, could we go ahead because we are, in fact, becoming like the Drafting Committee. We are arguing over one word or two words. The Chairperson's conclusions should be conceptual. I do not see the purpose of the Drafting Committee if we have to spend time on individual words.

So, may I appeal to members to stick to the wording of the Programme Committee in the interests of consensus and “all approaches” do include all approaches.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

The idea of the text is reflecting what was discussed in the plenary using as subsidies what was coming from the different committees. So, we agree with the idea of not wasting time here, but maybe we could leave it for the Drafting Committee the way it is now. Leaving brackets before and after, “including agroecology”.

CHAIRPERSON

So, would that be agreeable? We put these words in brackets and leave it to the Drafting Committee.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Realmente no me parece que es un tema para el Comité de redacción. Nosotros propusimos incluir este tema y si no hay consenso, solicitamos que se retire. Hay una resolución específica en la que se va a tratar más adelante sobre todo los sistemas sustentables, incluida la agroecología.

Entendemos que la agroecología tiene un espacio relevante en los trabajos de este Consejo y de la Conferencia, por eso cuando se trabajó sobre este párrafo era para hablar de los enfoques en general y no hacer una lista de todos los enfoques; si no, lo hubiéramos hecho en el Comité del Programa. Por eso, si no hay consenso, sugerimos que se retire el párrafo.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

If we understood Argentina's suggestion to completely delete paragraph (c), we would support that, given our inability to reach consensus on this.

Our second point would be to follow the Chair's suggestion and use the Programme Committee language, but if the sense is for this to go to a Drafting Committee or a small group to appoint this, we would ask that the word “and biotechnology” be added after “agroecology”.

CHAIRPERSON

So, we have got two options. First, the wording of the Programme Committee, and second, to keep “agroecology” and add what the USA suggested now.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We could agree with the US proposal, but not at all to removing the text of this paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we look at the revised text now, which includes the suggestion of the US?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nosotros compartimos lo señalado por Argentina y Canadá, en el sentido de que este es un tema que venimos discutiendo desde octubre probablemente. Y no ha habido consenso en tratar de relevar una forma de agricultura sostenible sobre otras. Y nos parece que lo más inclusivo y que debería generar consenso es que todos los *approaches* incluyan todos, incluyendo agroecología, biotecnología, porque además existen otros. No queremos realizar una lista extensa señalando todas las diferentes posibilidades de la agricultura sostenible.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we approve this text, which has “agroecology and biotechnology”?

In the interest of consensus, there are three aspects mentioned there. One is, “all approaches”. Now we have to give importance to the wording of all approaches. What would all approaches mean if we are being selective? And then we have put agroecology, biotechnology, and all approaches. This covers just about everything which the conclusion can have.

If you want to include other things, let it go to the Drafting Committee because the Drafting Committee is there to look at such aspects where there is a difference in emphasis, or difference in

wording, and the Drafting Committee has, not only members from each region, it also has the verbatim records, and it can agree on wording. That wording will come back to us in the Council. And if we are not happy, we can comment on it again. But let us not hold up the whole session on one word.

I mean, why are we not accepting that “all approaches” contains all approaches? So, could we adopt this and let the Drafting Committee refine it further?

Mme Delphine BORIONE (France)

Je crois que plus que des mots, il s’agit de substance ici. Il est important d’avoir cette discussion en plénière plutôt qu’en Comité de rédaction puisque ce ne sont pas là des détails. En vue d’un consensus, comme vous l’avez proposé peut-être dans ce cas effectivement, nous savons que l’on parle de toutes les approches, *all approaches*. Nous pourrions donc peut-être, pour avancer, supprimer les références, car nous avons beaucoup de travail encore pendant cette session. Je crois aussi que nous savons tous ce qu’il y a derrière les mots.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

In the spirit of consensus, and to move along, it is best if we drop the additional language and stick to the original text of the Programme Committee. That will include every forms of approach.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Just to support what France and Romania just expressed. We all agree that this is context specific. So, I feel that even substantively, while the language in brackets is something that we could live with, it is more useful guidance to keep it without, because at the end of the day it is context specific. And we need to move beyond this kind of opposition. You have options and it has to be tailored to the needs of the geographic location and the context.

Mr Piefrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy joins the consensus that has been reached.

But I would like to qualify my joining the consensus by saying that it would be better to take out, “including agroecology and biotechnology” for reasons of substance, not wording. Because agroecology and biotechnology can not possibly be put on an equal footing when it comes to promoting transformative approaches leading to sustainable agriculture in food systems. They are completely different in terms of quality and what they imply for agriculture and food systems.

That is why we would like to join the consensus and take them both out.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I already said that the idea is to reflect what was discussed in the plenary, and the discussion was not what is being referred to here.

We would accept joining the consensus with the understanding that we would reconsider this according to what is going to be discussed in the resolution that is going to mention agroecology.

CHAIRPERSON

So, I take it Brazil, that you will join the consensus and reserve your position when the other item comes on the Programme Committee?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

No, I reserve my position concerning this specific paragraph related to what is going to be discussed in the resolution about agroecology.

CHAIRPERSON

I take that you will take this issue up when the resolution is discussed?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

No. If the resolution about agroecology is not satisfactory, and does not reflect what was going to be discussed in the plenary, we would come back to discuss this item.

CHAIRPERSON

That resolution is under the item dealing with the Programme Committee. And you can raise these issues there. Why come back to a text which you have joined the consensus and has been agreed to re-open again?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Because many countries agreed here that this is an important item. The recognition of the importance of agroecology is going to be discussed under another item. So, if the discussion is not satisfactory, I reserve my right to come back to this item.

CHAIRPERSON

No, but if you have reservations you should raise it under that item rather than coming back.

Because other countries, which you say raised this issue, are willing to join the consensus at this time.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Yes, I am joining the consensus under a condition.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments from Members because I do not quite understand the logic of that because there is an item with the Programme Committee and there is a resolution. If you are not satisfied with the wording of the resolution, you take it up there and, as you say, this matter is also of importance to other countries, and I am sure those countries will join you in arguing your position.

But to re-open a text which has already been agreed would ...

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Mr Chairman, you have to recognise that theoretically the discussion could not be satisfactory to one country or a number of countries in the resolution.

So, you are starting from the hypothesis that everything is going to be accepted in the resolution concerning agroecology. Not necessarily.

CHAIRPERSON

But Brazil it is not accepted here either. Now we have reached a situation where you have a position, and the rest of the membership has another position. So, the same thing could happen there.

So, you are prepared to go through this, but not that.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

No, I am prepared to go for both ways.

CHAIRPERSON

I put it to Members because we cannot spend more time on this. Could we go ahead with the Programme Committee's wording? And the matter obviously goes to the Drafting Committee and comes back to us again. But we have spent enough time just on this paragraph and we need to move forward.

Ms Anne ONYANGO (Kenya)

I want to agree with you that we need to move forward so that we make progress in terms of this point.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I would also support moving forward by adopting the Programme Committee report language. And also, take into account the explanations made by members on their joining the consensus. Meaning that there are nuances, we understand, in accepting. But at least at this point in time, we have consensus on moving forward with the Programme Committee language. And so, if there is anything further, indeed we could come back based on the deliberations under the Programme Committee report, but I think we should move on.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

C'est avec beaucoup d'attention que nous suivons ce débat parce que nous l'avons eu au Comité du Programme. Voilà pourquoi nous nous sommes retenus de prendre la parole, mais nous avons passé pratiquement une journée sur cette question. Le texte que nous avons proposé et que le Président a bien présenté au Conseil, c'est le texte consensuel du Comité du Programme.

Je pense que pour avancer, j'inviterais les collègues du Conseil à ne pas s'étendre plus et à prendre le texte du Comité du Programme, qui était vraiment réfléchi, avec la représentation de tout le monde. J'appuie pleinement ce que les collègues ont soutenu tout à l'heure, le Président du Comité financier et vous-même, Monsieur le Président, pour que nous puissions aller de l'avant.

Mr Boumedienne MAHI (Algeria)

I think that indeed, what has been proposed is somehow not agreeable to all colleagues. And even our dear colleague from Argentina who initially proposed these words has accepted to go with the consensus.

Without, of course, what has been said, I agree with what has been said by my colleague from Kenya, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, asking that we leave the initial text that you proposed which is an agreed language and it will be a safe and wise decision.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

La Côte d'Ivoire appuie pleinement ce que le Congo vient de dire, il faut avancer et maintenir le texte du Comité du Programme.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Can we move forward by sending this text to the Drafting Committee on the understanding, of course this is obvious, that we are going to rediscuss this during the adoption of the report. And we reserve the right to reopen the discussion if we are not satisfied.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I do think that we really have to move forward. And I think, on one rule within the UN, is that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. And I think we have agreed language of the Programme Committee. And later on we will discuss the draft resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, which was also in front of the Programme Committee and we arrived at a consensus.

I think those are very much linked and I think if we reach consensus on both of them, I think we have a consensus on at least these items and let us move ahead.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We are not in agreement. We can not send this to the Drafting Committee as it is because there will be an hour discussion in the Drafting Committee on this and there will be no clear agreement. Something will come out of the Drafting Committee and then we will have to have one hour discussion in plenary during the adoption of the report.

While we initially supported the additional language in the spirit of consensus, we agree to stick to the language of the Programme Committee and I think that we should have a clear decision here and move along. And we are for moving along and having a consensus.

Mr Shri Sanjay AGARWAL (India)

Initially we mentioned that the Council agrees with the language of the Programme Committee. We can just copy and paste the language from the Programme Committee report and the controversy will go away.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We support India's observation. In fact, we could have saved a lot of time today by taking out everything except for paragraph 1 in our draft language, which basically reaffirmed the Finance and

Programme Committee language. Of course I would support India's suggestion that, noting that colleagues might want to keep the Programme Committee language and noting that Brazil does seem to be at an impasse for which we do have a procedural method. Brazil can simply enter in its own unilateral declaration to this language.

In other words, in conjunction with this report, Brazil can unilaterally note that it has problems with this language and append a declaration to the report and we can move forward.

CHAIRPERSON

So, we have got two options. One is the text of the Programme Committee which, as India has pointed out, the Council has endorsed that report. So, anything in that report the Council has agreed.

And if that is not acceptable we have the US suggestion.

Any comments on the US suggestion that Brazil can put a comment of its own? And we move forward because we can not spend more time on something which has been agreed to by the Programme Committee, and we have endorsed the report of the Programme Committee. But we are still arguing on a wording which we have endorsed.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just to remind that I had agreed with the text removing the brackets, removing the proposal “including agroecology and biotechnology” to be sent to the Drafting Committee. It was just referred to by the Chairman of the Programme Committee.

So, on our side, we could send this to the Draft Committee, removing the additional text to what was coming from the Programme Committee and reserve the right to discuss it in plenary which is the normal procedure.

CHAIRPERSON

So, with this, I think we have consensus and we can move forward to paragraph 6 (d). I see no comments. Paragraph 6 (d) is adopted.

Paragraph 6 (e)?

Mr Boumedienne MAHI (Algeria)

Coming back to what we said yesterday concerning this paragraph 6 (e), my delegation can live with what has been proposed by Australia and suggest rewording this paragraph by adding some words after “and cost saving”... adding “without impacting the delivery of the agreed Programme of Work”.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I just wanted to cross reference that language to some previously agreed language.

I do not want to hold up this conversation any longer. I agree with the concept because previously in other meetings we talked about savings without adversely impacting the technical capacity of the Organization which is slightly different to that wording.

So, if my colleague from Algeria is comfortable with that concept, and others on the floor, perhaps I could work with him to just agree to some language but I can not find it at my fingertips and I do not want to waste time.

CHAIRPERSON

Australia, the matter can be discussed in the Drafting Committee.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I am aware of that Chair, but I think it is important that I raise this question now, otherwise in the Drafting Committee I will be told that I did not raise it on the floor, so I can not discuss it.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

And the Drafting Committee could fix that.

Mr Boumedienne MAHI (Algeria)

Well now I am talking to my colleagues who are members of the Drafting Committee. My idea is very simple and it is very clear.

We agree on the idea to request the Organization to be efficient and save costs. But we do not want that to be done at all costs. We do not want that to impact the delivery of the agreed programme.

That is our idea and I would like to reword it in the Drafting Committee, my idea will be taken into account. And with my colleague from Australia, of course we can contribute to that.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

In the previous wordings we either use “without negatively impacting”, or “without adversely impacting”. Because we need to qualify this. Just saying “impacting” is very generic. So, I think it would be advisable to say something like “negatively”, or “adversely”.

CHAIRPERSON

So, with these interventions could we move forward adopting paragraph (e)?

Can we move on to paragraph 6 (f)?

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to bring to the attention of all the members of the Council that there are a lot of changes in the current situation in the world. There is an increasing number of hungry people and I want to also stress that TCP technical cooperation programmes are a very important tool for the Organization to respond or to address the basic needs of the developing countries, especially in this critical time.

I want to also bring the attention of the Members of the FAO Council that before in the last, in the biennium 1986-87, the TCP was 14.1 percent of the budget.

So, we are not inventing the wheel, we are asking for a reasonable and a practical proposal here to open the door for the new Director-General that will be elected in next June to consider to increasing the share of the TCP in this biennium or in even in the future.

And I think this is a very reasonable proposal and I would like to ask all the Members of the FAO Council to accept. I can live with the original proposal of the independent Chairperson of the Council about increasing, or asking management, or the new Director-General, if possible, to increase the TCP in the future.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

This is of course, a very controversial paragraph (f). Afghanistan has a suggestion to make.

But before making the suggestion I would like to emphasise the following: from the discussion yesterday on TCP, four points became clear.

One, TCP has proved to be a valuable programme of the Organization.

Two, the demand for TCP assistance is on the rise.

Three, TCP projects have good follow up responses from the donor community as was demonstrated by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States and the distinguished spokesperson from the EU.

Four, every Member Nation of the Council has supported the allocation of TCP at 14 percent of net appropriations.

We feel that paragraph 5(b) of the Programme Committee report and paragraph 21(f) of the Finance Committee report attest to these four points. However, some Members of the Council are sensitive to the figure of 17 percent. So, we need to reach a consensus.

To go forward we propose the following: paragraph (f) of your summary could stop at line four, that is before the brackets. After the stop, we start with a new paragraph. And I will read this new paragraph slowly.

“While acknowledging the 17 percent figure as inspirational, any future upward shift in the share of TCP in total net budgetary appropriation will be based on three key findings. One, the recommendations emerging from the impact evaluation of the TCP implementation as proposed in paragraph 5(b) of the Programme Committee report; two, projected demand for TCP assistance by regions filtered by the Regional Conferences of FAO; and three, fitness of TCP assistance to emerging funding initiatives such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)”.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Can we go up to the top of paragraph 6(f), please?

First, I would like to bracket every part of that paragraph starting with “while acknowledging” to the end of the paragraph.

Second, a correction for my Afghan colleague, I am not the Ambassador, I am the Chargé d'affaires. You sir, will be dealing with an American Ambassador soon enough.

I would like to emphasize the importance – we understand that support – the importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme. We look forward to the report that is going to be discussed in paragraph (g) following on this. We can support the language, the compromised language that was agreed in the Finance Committee.

We find it regrettable that colleagues cannot support language they agreed to, particularly when a member of the Finance Committee cannot support and defend language that he agreed to as a member of that Finance Committee.

Colleagues, it is this kind of behaviour that causes my country to have the suspicions of the United Nations that it does. And when you wonder why my country is suspicious of this Organization you can think about today.

The United States disassociates itself from any language in paragraph 6(f) that does not track exactly with the Finance Committee Report. That would be paragraph 21(f) of document CL 161/4.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We would like to support the language proposed up until the purple abstract for various reasons. The ones stated by the US delegation, but as well because as the responsible Governing Body, I do not think that we can provide guidance on something that is upcoming. We have asked in the Programme Committee for an impact evaluation in June and already the purple abstract is trying to prejudge what the findings could be, especially in (ii), and those recommendations have not been discussed.

I feel that this is something we should do to get the proper guidance. We talk about evidence based policy making and decision-making and I think we should apply it to our Governing Bodies. It is an important issue of course, but we have asked for more information to be able to have an informed discussion.

So my proposal would be to stop at “39th Session”, the rest will be considered when we have an impact evaluation and the report that was mentioned will be produced in June about what is the actual expenditure of all the projects of the TCP. I would also like to note that it is true, as Egypt said, the 14.1 percent was achieved in 1986-87 and then it went down. That is why the resolution said it should be back to 14 percent. It did not say more than 14 percent.

After that, it said “if possible”. The recommendation was to bring it back to 14 percent, the risk was if possible. We need to know in the future recommendations even about if there was any increase.

We would like to maybe add other guidance about what the TCP would be so we do not agree with making a recommendation about a figure without any qualifier or any other guidance about the TCP and without further information.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Basically we agree with what Canada just said, and with the observation by US regarding the text that was proposed by Afghanistan. And further, we would like to seek the opinion of the Finance and

Programme Committees and the Chairs of the Programme and Finance Committees on what was proposed and see what they think of it.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We still insist on increasing the percentage of TCP up to 17 percent based on the observations that were made during the Joint Meeting of the Programme and the Finance Committees. In addition to these suggestions made by Afghanistan, Egypt and some other developing countries, we have the same orientation with regard to the coming budgets. We would like to have a base in the future on which we rely, especially for the countries that asked for the increase to 17 percent.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to just remind my colleagues from the United States of America, Canada and Romania that we are now in Council and I think the recommendations of each individual person here should reflect discussions here in the Council and also take into consideration the recommendations of the Finance and the Programme Committees.

Of course, Egypt is one of the Members of the Finance Committee and we agreed on some language. But we are here in the FAO Council and the Programme and Finance Committees are committees of the Council.

So I think if you only stick to recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees, we cannot join the work of the FAO Council and we just adopt the recommendations of the Finance and Programme Committees and do not come here to discuss.

So once again, I want to invite my colleagues to read the language of Resolution 9/89, paragraph 3, “invites the Director-General to make every effort in order to restore the resources available to TCP to the former level of 14 percent” – and thank God we achieved this in the last biennium – “of the total regular programme budget and, if possible, to raise it to 17 percent”. We are not inventing new language. We just stick to the language of the resolution.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We are not going to repeat the long discussion we had yesterday. The United States disassociates from consensus on paragraph (f) and we will submit a declaration for the report on lines of the footnote 8 of the report of the 160th Session of the Council. We do not need to have this conversation anymore. So again, we disassociate from consensus. We will submit language and a declaration to be included for the report and we can move on.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Je vais commencer par un premier point, par une observation d'ordre général et je pense, Monsieur le Président, que les résumés que vous nous présentez relatent des débats que nous avons eus dans cette salle. Pour certains d'entre nous, nous les avons déjà eu lors de la Réunion conjointe des Comités du Programme et financier. Nous ne sommes pas en train de prendre de décision, mais de rapporter les débats qui ont eu lieu.

Il faut évidemment retrouver dans ce résumé ce que les uns et les autres ont dit ici et, d'une manière générale, l'essentiel. Voilà pourquoi je pense que le collègue de l'Afghanistan a bien résumé les débats que nous avons eus sur ce point en ce qui concerne le Programme de coopération technique (PCT).

C'est le même débat que celui qui a eu lieu pendant la Réunion conjointe. Tout ce que je trouve dans le tableau a été dit. N'a-t-on pas mentionné les 17 pour cent, n'a-t-on pas parlé de l'évaluation? Tout cela a été dit dans la salle. Et je reste un peu dubitatif... comme si on ne voulait pas faire figurer dans le résumé ce qui a été dit dans la salle. C'est ce que je constate.

Je pense que lorsqu'il y a débat contradictoire, il faut accepter ce que les autres expriment et ne pas rejeter leurs propos, sinon il devient très compliqué de trouver un consensus. Je pense que ce qui est résumé dans le tableau figure bel et bien dans les procès verbaux. On ne peut rejeter les idées exprimées en salle et il convient de les inclure dans le résumé. Sinon, au moment de prendre la décision, cela voudrait dire qu'un seul point de vue doit passer et pas les autres. Nous sommes dans

une Organisation où, je pense, le consensus est le maître mot, le fil conducteur, sinon la clé de nos décisions.

Nous devrions regarder avec lucidité que les pays, notamment ceux qui ont bénéficié du PCT, ont parlé d'une augmentation et nous devrions équilibrer les interventions qui ont eu lieu afin de trouver un consensus. Le texte que le collègue de l'Afghanistan a proposé résume très bien les débats et ne représente pas seulement la résolution 9/89.

Nous devrions donc analyser ce qui a été dit et le répéter dans les résumés du Président, pour qu'ensuite le Comité de rédaction l'examine et trouve des textes consensuels.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

From the Finance Committee point of view, we understand how important or how critical this issue is, especially to many Members, if not all of the Members. It is so important that sometimes we can be emotional about this and this was also noted during the discussions of the Finance Committee because of extensive discussions that we had, of course, in order for us to go back to being objective in this matter we will try to seek all of the angles.

In the first place, we are discussing this issue in the context of the proposed PWB and MTP. At this point the proposal was to give 14 percent of the budget to the TCP, that was maintained but of course we heard a lot about that it does not stop there. That there should be room to at least explore or as mentioned that is why we have this taking note of the Conference Resolution 9/89 and the 39th Conference Session.

We do appreciate, because you know the language that was proposed by Egypt, by Afghanistan, I think they will be very useful in the discussions in this regard. But I am making an appeal because we are approving the PWB for 2020-21 with the proposed budget of 14 percent.

As I earlier mentioned, I appeal that we build around consensus at the Finance Committee language. So again, I would reiterate that appeal. And that while we also take into account the suggestions, especially because, like what Afghanistan has mentioned there are useful inputs and information when, for example, discussing even the next paragraph. But it is just the timing.

For me, in the Finance Committee we have lived with that language until the 39th Session because, with the understanding that there is still that latitude for discussing the increase even the 17 percent figure. It does not stop there. It does not preclude anything, it is still open.

Now, for the purpose of gaining consensus again we appeal that if Members could accept the Finance Committee language, that is the agreed language, I think we will work on that then we can proceed.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to ask for guidance from you or from the Secretariat. I just want to know if this is the first draft of the PWB or the final draft, and if this is the first review of the PWB that has been presented to us as a proposal, or as a proposal from the the current Director-General.

So I think after that there will be a lot of adjustments to this PWB, we will also take into consideration the views of the new Director-General and the recommendations of the Council. After that, the Finance Committee will discuss this PWB again and another Council in next December.

I found that there is a lot of sensitivity from a lot of members about mentioning 17 percent. So also in order to reach a compromise in this I would like also to propose a new language. Maybe it will meet the interests of other countries. After "39th Session" I propose to add "and call upon the newly elected Director-General to make efforts, if possible, to raise resources available to TCP in the future biennium".

So I am not asking to increase this right now, maybe he will increase it by 1 percent, or he will not be able to increase it, but I will take from the Chair of the Finance Committee and I will open the door for the new Director-General to make his own adjustments on PWB.

Ms Anne ONYANGO (Kenya)

Kenya would like to add a voice to some of the issues that are coming up in the Council. Enhancing the percentage of TCP is something the members have anticipated since the 39th Conference Session a number of years ago. Going by the three reasons already well articulated by the distinguished delegate of Afghanistan, we do ask that the Council agree to this proposal.

In any case, he has said that 17 percent is inspirational, but I think the principal is enhancing the percentage that would go to TCP and be able to address the new and emerging areas that we did talk about, of nutrition, technology and innovation, and also the issues of climate change, which we are all aware about.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Again, we will just summarise our arguments from yesterday so that everything colleagues have talked about wanting to accomplish today in further discussions with the new Director-General can be accomplished using the language from the Finance Committee.

Further discussions are taking this into a completely different direction, but everything you have asked to do today can be accomplished in the language that the Finance Committee agreed to. And again, I do not want to stall as we have other things to move to. The United States only repeats that we disassociate from consensus on this paragraph. We will offer up a declaration and we just recommend moving forward.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We do not see a path for consensus on additional language, so our take is that we should stick to the language that was agreed in the Finance Committee, which already met consensus and so it is a good example of consensus. We do not think there is going to be any consensus on other proposed language.

CHAIRPERSON

It is 11 o'clock and we have not made much progress. I would like to propose that we hold this paragraph and move on and we will come back. In the meantime, we will take the opportunity to have informal discussions during lunch break. So would Members agree to hold this paragraph and we move on to the rest of the document and we will later come back to this paragraph?

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

In order to save time and also to move on we can accept your proposals.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comments? I see none so I take it that we are all agree that we will move on and come back to this paragraph later.

So we can move to paragraph (g). Any members requesting the floor? I see none. Paragraph (g) is adopted.

Paragraph (h)? I see no members requesting the floor. Paragraph (h) is adopted.

Paragraph (i)? Paragraph (i) is adopted.

Paragraph (j)?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Could we please say the use of voluntary contributions “for the past three biennia”?

CHAIRPERSON

Any comment? I see none.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to get a clarification about your intention here at the end of this paragraph, where it says “the implementation of the programme of work at the next session”. You mean the next session of FAO Council? If so, I propose to mention the next Council session.

CHAIRPERSON

It probably would be the December 2019 session because the Council session immediately after the conference is a one-day session dealing with administrative type of issues.

Paragraph (k)? Adopted.

Paragraph (l)? Paragraph (l) is adopted.

Paragraph (m)? Paragraph (m) is adopted.

Paragraph 7?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I just wanted to come back to paragraph (m). I am sorry I was not able to have the text in front of us, but we would like to just reserve a bit more time just to look at the wording because we do feel the explanations of FAO and the work on resilience and on the Nexus and how it contributes to the UN Secretary-General's call for all UN agencies to contribute to peace are relevant and important.

And it does not mean that FAO is doing peace building per se, but that it does contribute through the management of sustainable land and water resources. So, the fact that it is about peace building issues and it is quite large, means that I would like to have the opportunity to reflect a bit more on the wording.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Programmes)

I hope this clarification could be helpful as this issue, as many of you will recall, has come up in the past. There is often confusion around the meaning of peace building per se, which may be confused with peacekeeping conducted by other bodies of the UN. So the language that we had used, what was in the text before was language on sustaining peace which seemed to be accepted at the time.

And I think the issue of FAO's contributions, as Canada has mentioned, in building trust and social cohesion, and maintaining or sustaining peace I recognise. And I think it is in this case, as we have seen in the past, a stumbling block on the definition of peace building, which I think if there was other language along the lines of sustaining peace, if precedent would hold, that this may be a way forward.

Mr Piefrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy would like to ask the Secretariat to follow what has been just suggested by Canada and the observation made by Mr Gustafson. We do not think that FAO is running any risk of becoming engaged in any areas outside of its mandate. So this paragraph (m) would sound really as something harsh and not reasonable.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

In our opinion, the FAO does not have a mandate for peace building. The principle of division of labour and responsibility within the UN system must remain the foundation of our work. This includes avoiding reductions in our efficiency. We feel that each structure of the UN must focus on its own work.

In our proposal, which is now reflected in paragraph (m), we are talking about the concrete term peace building. We are not casting any doubt on the fact that the FAO makes a contribution to supporting peace in the context of the 2030 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. However, when it comes to the term peace building, we are in favour of avoiding any such formulations that are not in the programme of work and budget, which is what we are examining now. These links exist in the current version.

Mme Delphine BORIONE (France)

Il me semble que nous avons là un débat pas sur le mandat, car, je crois que tout le monde est d'accord sur le mandat de la FAO et aussi sur le fait que les objectifs de développement durable sont tous interdépendants. C'est bien le principe du Programme 2030.

Peut-être que la question pourrait se résoudre de la façon suivante: puisque la délégation de la Fédération de Russie vient juste de dire qu'ils sont d'accord sur le fait que la FAO contribue à la paix, ce qu'il faut peut-être revoir ce sont les termes de «peace-building», le «maintien de la paix», qui est une terminologie effectivement du Département des opérations de maintien de la paix (DPKO/DOMP). Nous pourrions peut-être dire simplement «sa contribution à la paix», car c'est bien ce que nous faisons en remédiant aux causes profondes des situations de conflits.

La FAO contribue à la paix et l'on pourrait éviter le mot «peace-building» qui est peut-être, au sein des Nations Unies, plus lié au mandat effectivement des opérations de maintien de la paix. Mais je crois que nous sommes tous d'accord sur ce que nous faisons ensemble avec la FAO.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I think that I would like to support what France has just said. I believe it corroborates some of the views expressed by Russia. So I wonder if we could, just try to look at the right formula. Maybe we can “recognise the contribution of FAO’s work to promote peace while acknowledging that peacekeeping is not FAO’s mandate” or something like that, if it can help clarify. However, it is hard to caution against something while there are linkages and contributions to peace. Therefore, I think we need to revert the formula to make it positive rather than a caution, because then it becomes a difficult paragraph to work with.

CHAIRPERSON

May I propose we add this paragraph to our TCP paragraph and come back to it, because we have to move on and we are almost reaching our lunch break. We are still on items we should have finished yesterday. So we will come back to this paragraph after lunch with the other one.

So we can move on to paragraph 7(a).

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

I fully agree with your approach to come back to this issue at a later stage.

Yet, I kindly ask my colleagues to prepare the text they would like to present for our consideration, otherwise we will not be prepared.

CHAIRPERSON

So we will have a text then we will come back to it. So we can go to paragraph 7(a). I see no comment. Adopted.

Paragraph 7(b)? Adopted.

Paragraph 7(c)? I see no comment. Adopted.

Paragraph 7(d)? Adopted.

Paragraph 7(e)? .

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

While we are highlighting “the importance of addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR)”, we think that it is better here to reflect and propose to add “insecticide, pest resistance” also after AMR. In fact, this is very important for all developing countries, including Egypt. .

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan)

I think here is relevant not only insecticide, but all pesticides. If you want to add you have to add it like that.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Con respecto a este párrafo, nosotros entendemos que el tema de Resistencia Antimicrobiana es un tema muy técnico y específico. Nosotros hicimos la consulta a nuestro país sobre el párrafo y podríamos acompañarlo, pero no nos parece prudente incorporar otros elementos sobre los que no tenemos la capacidad técnica para opinar en este momento.

O sea que, nos inclinamos a mantener el párrafo tal cual estaba porque no sabemos cuál es el nivel del trabajo de la FAO sobre este tema. No tenemos la capacidad técnica para evaluarlo.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We basically have the same opinion as our distinguished colleague from Argentina. We consider this is something new that was not discussed here. It is something highly technical that has to do mostly with the work of the IPPC and should not be mixed up together with another topic such as AMR.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I might be mistaken, but I do not remember any country mentioned specifically this added text that is being proposed.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

In seeking compromise and also saving time, we can accept to withdraw it.

CHAIRPERSON

So with this we can adopt paragraph (e).

We go to paragraph (f). I see no comments. Therefore paragraph (f) is adopted.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

With regard to paragraph 8, basically we agree with the idea of the text. I would only have one comment on the third line starting with “including, but not limited to regional perspectives”. We would propose to take out that part starting with “including” an ending with “perspectives” because it is not very clear if it reflects language that is agreed within FAO. The language is very ambiguous, “regional perspective”, it is not necessary FAO agreed language. So, we propose to delete that.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We do not understand the essence of this paragraph.

As well as paragraph 4(e) of the Programme Committee report from which it was taken. So could the Chair of the Programme Committee explain what is meant by this paragraph 4(e)?

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I would like to thank the distinguished delegate of Afghanistan for asking this question. We had a discussion in the Programme Committee. When you go through the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget, and when you look to the explanation, one finds that sometimes terminology is slightly different from agreed language.

And sometimes reports are used or referred to, which are not specified in the PWB. Therefore, this is why we said, when it comes to the PWB, let us stick to agreed language within the UN, and if we make a reference to the report, it is essential to clearly indicate where the report is coming from. I would say, that is a credible report and it has a sound scientific basis. This is the background of this remark.

We discussed it in the Programme Committee. I believe the Members of the Programme Committee thought it would be wise to give this guidance for future PWBs to stick to an agreed language to avoid discussions. This will give a sound scientific base to the PWB and a clear and credible reporting, which will be referred to in the PWB.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

We appreciate the explanation provided by the Chairperson on the Programme Committee. We fully support the ideas expressed and we also fully approve this recommendation, which was made by the Programme Committee. So we would like to have this recommendation reflected in our report.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Quisiéramos apoyar lo solicitado por Rumania en nombre de la Unión Europea, con el fin de eliminar la frase: “included but not limited to regional perspectives”.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we leave this wording to the Drafting Committee? I see no response, so that means Members agree that this amendment, the editorial ones... I see Romania.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We do not think this is something to be left to the Drafting Committee. This is because it is a matter of whether we consider “regional” as accepted language in FAO terminology, which we clearly do not. So besides that, we take it from the rest of the Members of the Council that they are in agreement with what we asked to be deleted. So I think we should be very clear and precise about this right here.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

We would like to agree there is no need to leave it for the Drafting Committee. I think we already agreed on the text, so we can move forward.

CHAIRPERSON

If there is agreement with the deletion of those words, so that is good. Paragraph 8 is adopted.

So except for two paragraphs under this item, the rest of the text is agreed. We will come back to those two paragraphs after lunch. Now we move to the next item.

Item 5. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee and 175th Session of the Finance Committee (March 2019)**Point 5. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent vingt-sixième session) et du Comité financier (cent soixante-cinquième session) (mars 2019)****Tema 5. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 126.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 175.º período de sesiones (marzo de 2019)**

CL 161/5

CHAIRPERSON

We go to Item 5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee and the 175th Session of the Finance Committee*, held on 18 and 21 March. The document before Council is CL 161/5.

I now invite to Mr Lupiño Lazaro, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, who also chaired the Joint Meeting, to introduce the Report.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Members of Council, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have been enthusiastically waiting to present the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee and the 175th Session of the Finance Committee. This Report, as mentioned by the Independent Chair, is contained in document CL 161/5.

As agreed also with Chair, I shall now present to you salient highlights of the report of the Joint Meeting in relation to the updated corporate action plan to tackle harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse. The Joint Meeting’s consideration of matters referring to the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, were covered separately under Item 3 of the Agenda of this Council which we have tentatively concluded pending two issues.

In reviewing the updated corporate action plan, the Joint Meeting emphasized the importance of raising awareness and instilling a culture of zero tolerance that prevents work place harassment and prohibited conduct, with a strong tone from the top.

The Joint Meeting noted the actions implemented in the areas of reporting, investigation and decision-making, and outreach and support, and the introduction of a new policy on prevention of sexual harassment in February 2019.

The Joint Meeting emphasized the importance of immediately addressing the issues highlighted in the UN System survey on Sexual Harassment in our Workplace and recommended a further survey in

coordination with the Rome-based Agencies, with an improved methodology and response rate at headquarters and decentralized offices.

The Joint Meeting also requested that a section on sexual harassment and authority abuse be included in the staff satisfaction survey to be undertaken in the second semester of 2019 and annually thereafter.

The Joint Meeting encouraged FAO in its implementation of agreed actions and in particular on the priority areas identified in 2019 and recommended that one or more Key Performance Indicators be established within the results framework to monitor and report on harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse.

Finally, Members of the Council, the Joint Meeting requested that the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report and FAO's revised document pertaining to the Whistleblower policies and practices be considered at the next session of the Finance Committee in November 2019.

In conclusion, I would like to once again express my appreciation to the inputs and flexibilities extended by the Programme Committee Chair and the Members of the Programme and Finance Committees, as well as the views and responses provided by the FAO management and the Secretariat which made it possible for the discussions of the Joint Meeting to be efficient and productive.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 member states. The EU and its Member States welcome the report of the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee and the 175th Session of the Finance Committee. We endorse the report findings and recommendations.

We note that the DG's proposal for FAO's Programme of Work and Budget has already been discussed. This statement will focus on FAO's work to prevent harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse. We welcome the seminar on the outcome of the UN's system staff survey on sexual harassment at FAO and the update to FAO's action plan.

We note that 23 percent of the 1898 FAO respondents to the survey reported that they had experienced sexual harassment. This is shockingly high. It represents 436 of the FAO staff members who responded to the survey. Zero tolerance means that FAO cannot tolerate this situation. We urge management to encourage staff to report their concerns.

We recognise that the anonymity of FAO's staff members in our determination to prevent harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse at FAO. We agree with the Joint Meeting that installing cultural change is a priority. Staff both at headquarters and in the decentralised offices and FAO's external stakeholders should feel confident that they can raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

We look forward to FAO's revised whistleblower policy. Staff should believe that any concerns they raise will be treated fairly, seriously, and confidentially and dealt with promptly. We support the Joint Meeting's recommendation of establishing one or more key performance indicators to monitor the reporting and investigation of cases of harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse.

We strongly support the Joint Meeting's recommendation for annual staff surveys. We believe that those surveys will both monitor progress and support the culture change that is needed. We look forward to hearing from the Director-General candidates about how they will drive forward the culture change that we will agree is important for FAO.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

The United States reiterates its position that sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment in all of its forms are unacceptable, as they undermine the ability of international actors to work effectively, threaten the scope of organisations to carry out their missions, and compromise the well-being of staff members.

The United States supports the objectives of the UN Safe Space Survey as it provided a better understanding of the breadth of this issue UN system-wide. These results show that the entire UN system has a long way to go to address sexual harassment and the organizations' leadership should "set the tone from the top".

We appreciate FAO undertaking a revision of its Whistleblower Protection Policy, which was last updated back in 2011. We look forward to the promulgation of that policy in May. We believe that effective implementation of strong whistleblower protection policies that meet UN system-wide best practice and are in line with the recent Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) recommendations, will encourage staff to report incidents of misconduct, including harassment and sexual exploitation, as well as abuse of power.

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

I am making this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries. The European Union countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden align themselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Sexual harassment and abuse of power is a critical issue for the credibility of the Organization and the UN system as a whole. We appreciate that FAO Management says they take this matter seriously. For the advancement of this issue, the results from the UN led survey is an important piece. The fact that numerous staff and other employees of the Organization have replied that they have been subject to or observed incidents of sexual harassment is alarming. If Management is committed to the Zero Tolerance Policy all positive replies from the survey must be deemed unacceptable and firm action taken.

Besides policy action, serious training is necessary. So is vigilance of senior managers, in terms of what and how they express themselves to staff. It is a matter of workplace culture and supporting and encouraging good behaviour as much as acting forcefully on inappropriate behaviour. We look forward to continuous efforts from FAO in this regard.

We would like to take this occasion to draw the attention to a request of the UN Secretary-General issued last year that each organization reports to its governing body on the measures taken to counteract sexual exploitation and abuse in 2018. The Secretary-General also requested the heads of the specialised agencies and programmes to provide him with an update on this.

We have been informed that FAO has replied to the Secretary-General, in a letter dated 17 January 2019. However, and as opposed to the other UN organizations, FAO has chosen not to disclose this letter to the Membership.

This kind of lack of transparency is worrisome and unique in the UN family. Increased transparency will foster a healthier working environment. To support such a development we endorse proposals to include key performance indicators to provide for systematic follow-up of reports of harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of power.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We would like to support all the previous statements made on this very important issue. We would also like to welcome the informal seminar that was held with Members and with the participation of the Director-General on the results of the UN survey, including as it relates to FAO.

We do note, there were some points made by Finland and would encourage increased transparency. That was a first step in terms of disclosing other information and action support taken by FAO. And in this context as well, we would like to strongly support the recommendations made by the Joint Meeting, including a call for strong leadership at the highest level to implement a culture of zero tolerance across the Organization.

On building on the results of the UN survey, and the FAO results that show that there is more than zero cases so all of them have to be taken seriously and undertake a new survey with the RBA's with an improved response rate. As well, including key performance indicators in the results framework to track progress and review the JIU report on whistleblower protection at the next Finance Committee.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would also like to join my voice to those who have spoken before me. The Australian Government has a steadfast and ongoing commitment to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and

girls, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. We place a high priority on gender equality and women's empowerment across our foreign policy, economic diplomacy and development efforts.

We support the key recommendations from the Report of the Joint Meeting regarding FAO's corporate action plan to tackle harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse. We echo the call for strong leadership at the highest level to implement a culture of zero tolerance across the Organization and to raise awareness. And we also call for strong leadership, for transparency in reports of incidences and their handling.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

I thank the Secretariat. Firstly, we would like to give the floor to the delegate in Indonesia to speak on behalf of the Asian Group, then we will make a national statement.

Ms Dian Ratri ASTUTI (Observer for Indonesia)

On behalf of the Asia group, the Asia group highly appreciates the presentation by the Secretariat, as well as the Chairpersons of the Programme, and Finance Committees on this agenda item. In this regard, the Regional Group would like to highlight the following points.

On the corporate policy precis and measure on the prevention and harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse, we welcome the introduction of our new policy on sexual harassment in February this year. We also commend the FAO for being one of the first UN agencies to adopt the UN Reference Model, incorporating the uniform definition on sexual harassment.

We continue to fully support the UN Secretary General and the zero tolerance approach. We appreciate the briefing on this issue organised by the Secretariat. We noted with concern the FAO low response rate to the UN system survey on sexual harassment. We therefore strongly recommend a further survey in correlation with the Rome-based Agencies.

We also request that the section on sexual harassment in authority abuse be included in the staff satisfaction survey, to be undertaken in 2019. We encourage FAO to make maximum efforts to raise awareness amongst staff, and raise response rate at headquarters and their decentralized offices. With this command, the Asia Regional Group endorses the report, and congratulates the Chairs, and Members of the Programme and Finance Committee for their guidance and recommendation.

Mr Mohd Sallehuddin HASSAN (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of Asia Regional Group. We would like to make additional comments on the Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Authority Abuse.

Creating a safe working environment for all staff, including from any form of harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, is a responsibility that FAO should give utmost priority. While mechanisms to address occurring cases must be strengthened, equal emphasis should be given on preventing these from happening. This can be achieved by creating an organizational culture that promotes respect, fairness and non-discrimination.

We noted that FAO has introduced a policy dedicated to the prevention of sexual harassment in February 2019, making it one of the first UN agencies to adopt the UN Reference Model incorporating the uniform definition of sexual harassment. While this is very much welcomed, a policy of such nature is not new to FAO, where in January 2015 the Organization already circulated its "Policy on the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse".

As such, we call for FAO to strengthen its internal mechanisms to address this issue to create an organizational culture of zero tolerance to any forms of harassment and abuse.

On the new policy, we noted the status of implementation of the action plan, and emphasize the importance of regular monitoring and reporting, increasing investigative capacity and further alignment to the UN System, in particular, the Whistleblower Protection Policy.

With these comments, we endorse the report and thank the Joint Meeting for its recommendations.

Mr Yubo XU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to make four comments.

First, China agrees with the joint statement by the Asia Regional Group, and we also agree with the adoption of the Report.

Second, we appreciate the action plan on the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse. FAO should be consistent with the principles and values of the UN system on harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse, by speaking to the principles of zero tolerance.

Third, we recommend that FAO set up mechanisms on prevention and response to create a safe working environment.

Fourth, we recommend that the FAO include any record of harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse, as a key indicator in any report, and in the appointment, in any appointments to be made.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

The Kingdom of Jordan welcomes the policy adopted by the Organization to combat sexual harassment and abuse of power. We welcome what has been said by the Director-General, when he said that 43 percent of the people working in FAO are women. For Jordan, equality amongst sexes is very important.

And we are working, personally, on this issue. We think that 25 percent of the Members of the Council of Government in Jordan were women, last year. And so this is a great achievement for Jordan. We have a particular interest in rural development, and the place of women in sustainable development.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Again, my appreciation to the Council members, as we hear an overwhelming endorsement and support to the guidance and recommendations that were presented by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

There is also a general welcoming of the corporate Action Plan by the Institution, by FAO. And also, noting that it has adopted the UN Reference Model. And also, the review of the whistle-blower policy, and looking forward to that promulgation.

And we, aside from this, Members are looking forward to the continuous efforts by the FAO, and the actions to be taken in instilling the culture of zero tolerance against sexual abuse, harassment, and sexual harassment. And also, increased transparency. That would include also additional, or follow-up reports, encouraging Members or staff to also increase reporting, and also additional KPI.

Now, we are also grateful that two members have mentioned about the informal seminar that preceded the Joint Meeting. And I think this was useful in the first discussions, particularly on the results of the UN Survey.

That is why we also had a very extensive discussion, which was facilitated during the Joint Meeting on this matter, and views were clarified, also provided by the FAO management and the Secretariat.

Finally, as mentioned by a Member, I think this could be an interesting topic in the upcoming interview of Director-General candidates, come this Thursday. I think we also look forward to getting their views on this particular topic.

Ms Dilek MACIT (Assistant Director-General Corporate Services Department)

As mentioned by the Chair of the Finance Committee, I would like to echo those comments. We really welcome the feedback we have received from the permanent representatives, and in the Finance Committee, as well as the Informal Committee.

FAO is very committed to this issue. Zero tolerance, from the top, has been mentioned, and the tone from the top of not accepting abuse, including sexual harassment and authority abuse, has been mentioned in various iterations.

We are the first one to adopt the new policy of the UN. At the same time, we have designed the various training courses in four languages, which means that any culture change which requires self-awareness, can be conveyed to the staff undertaking those training courses, in their own language. This is a very subtle subject of knowing how to behave, and what behaviours are wrong.

So, in terms of whistle-blower policy, we are updating the policy. I continue to participate in the CEB task force, and we have had recent meetings on that, taking the whole subject to the next iteration, which is to extend the investigative powers. Which means that we will be able to follow up on the reported cases, and conclude those investigations more swiftly. As well as, generally, creating that safe space for our staff to work in.

In summary, I can say that the Organization is fully committed in all the different forms and measures that it has to undertake in order to tackle this issue. It is an issue that will take time, it is not going to go overnight. And you have all mentioned the survey.

We have delved into the survey quite deeply, both our own specific results, as well as within the whole UN. Regardless of the numbers, any of the cases are not acceptable. So full commitment, and the tone from the top, is set on this agenda.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Any further comments from members? I see no requests for the floor, so I can conclude on Item 5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee, and 175th Session of the Finance Committee*.

1. The Council endorsed the guidance provided by the Joint Meeting of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee and the 175th Session of the Finance Committee, in relation to the updated corporate action plan to tackle harassment, sexual harassment, and authority abuse.
2. In particular, the Council:
 - (a) stressed the need of raising awareness and instilling a culture of zero tolerance, in particular the importance for strong leadership, attention to workplace culture, and relevant employee training;
 - (b) noted the outcome of the UN System survey on sexual harassment in the workplace and appreciated the informal seminar held by the Director-General during which the outcomes of the survey were shared with Members, and looked forward to a further survey, in coordination with the Rome-based Agencies;
 - (c) noted the importance of key performance indicators within the Results Framework to monitor and report on harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, in line with the UN wide principles and the request by the UN Secretary-General.
 - (d) welcomed the FAO's revised whistle-blower protection policy would be considered at the session of the Finance Committee in November 2019.
 - (e) looked forward to the inclusion on this matter in the declarations by the candidates for the post of Director-General.

Any comments?

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

We mentioned, and some of the other colleagues also mentioned, the need for transparency in this sensitive issue. In all respects, we mentioned this reporting to the Secretary General of the UN, the letter on that has been shared with the membership. I would like to add a sentence, or a new paragraph, that the Council stress the importance of complete transparency in this important and sensitive matter.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would like to strongly support this addition made by Finland. As well as to add at the end of (b) where it says "and look forward to a further survey in coordination with the Rome-based Agencies" to add "with an improved response rate". That is in line with the Joint Meeting recommendations, and this was something that was extensively discussed.

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

We have a general observation. Once, actually, sexual harassment is mentioned, it is inevitable to be linked to the abuse of authority.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Sudan, do you have any wording to propose?

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan)

Later on, yes.

CHAIRPERSON

We are on the point of adopting this item, if you have a suggestion?

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

As mentioned before, I have general observations relating to all the items. Once sexual harassment is mentioned, it is inevitably linked to abuse of authority.

CHAIRPERSON

I think that this has been included in the text, I see it is in the first para, and authority abuse in para (c) as well.

Any other comment? I see none. So this item is adopted.

Item 6. Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee (18-22 March 2019)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent vingt-sixième session du Comité du Programme (18-22 mars 2019)

Tema 6. Informe del 126.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (18-22 de marzo de 2019)

CL 161/3; CL 161/3-WA2

CHAIRPERSON

We can go to the next item, which is Item 6, the *Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee*. The document before Council, are CL 161/3 and CL 161/3 Web Annex 2. I now invite the Chair of the Programme Committee to introduce the report.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

Again, it's an honour and pleasure for me to present to you the outcome of the discussions on the 126th Session of the Programme Committee. We already dealt with some of the conclusions of the Programme Committee.

Let me start by extending my sincere thanks to my colleagues of the Programme Committee, and congratulate them for the hard and excellent work done, for their careful and thorough advice and discussions, and most of all for their excellent spirit of collaboration, the friendly atmosphere, and always intense and interesting discussions. It was really a teamwork effort, and sometimes we could even laugh, which is of course, very important these days.

In relation to the *Evaluation of the strategy and vision of FAO's work on nutrition*, the Programme Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the evaluation and management acceptance of its recommendations and appreciated that some action to implement the recommendations was already underway;
- (b) Looked forward to reviewing an updated and upgraded Nutrition Strategy, with comprehensive perspectives on nutrition spanning from sustainable agriculture and food systems and health to addressing all forms of malnutrition.
- (c) Stressed the need to include FAO's work on nutrition in corporate resource mobilization efforts and to building capacities;
- (d) Stressed the importance of collaboration amongst Rome-based Agencies, the Committee on World Food Security, the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, and within the UN system, and the need for

strengthening partnerships with relevant actors at global, regional, and country level, and encouraged the development of common approaches and concepts.

Regarding the *Evaluation of FAO's work on gender*, the Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the evaluation and the management response, and agreed with the recommendations and conclusions;
- (b) Appreciated confirmation of the relevance and validity of FAO's policy on gender equality as an overarching framework to guide the general work of the Organization, while stressing the need to update FAO's policy on gender equality;
- (c) Stressed the importance of regular monitoring and reporting;
- (d) Supported the recommendation to develop an Action Plan, and welcomed that FAO's minimum standard on gender equality will be updated in line with the UN System Wide Action Plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN-SWAP 2.0);
- (e) Stressed the need to enhance partnerships with key actors working on addressing gender issues in agriculture, especially with Rome-based Agencies, and through South-South Cooperation, and to strengthen capacity building;
- (f) Stressed the importance of national ownership of the gender policy, taking into account all dimensions needed for an appropriate national contextualization of gender policies; and
- (g) Emphasized the importance of strengthening indicators of targets on gender in all strategic objectives.

The Committee welcomed the *Synthesis of findings and lessons learned from the strategic objectives evaluations* and it appreciated the efforts made by the Secretariat in transforming the Organization, geared towards addressing Strategic Objectives agreed by the Members, notwithstanding challenges therein.

The Committee noted that many of the challenges identified in the Synthesis may not be the direct result of the move to strategic planning but nevertheless need to be overcome, and looked forward to some concrete suggestions in the upcoming evaluation of the Strategic Results Framework which the Programme Committee would review in November 2019.

The Committee also stressed the need to strengthen the strategic synergies and partnerships, especially with Rome-based Agencies, and other UN system organizations, as well as with other private sector partners.

And looked forward to the discussion on the future direction of the Organization in the broader context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the repositioning of the UN Development System.

Concerning the *Follow-up report to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to the reduction in rural poverty (SO3)*, the Committee noted the relevance of FAO's work on rural poverty reduction and its overarching goal as a Strategic Objective of the Organization.

The Committee welcomed the progress report under the six recommendations.

The Committee noted with concern that rural poverty is highly impacted by conflicts and several countries are confronted with many constraints by these conflicts and distress migration because of conflicts.

The Committee stressed the importance of capacity building within the Organization on poverty-related areas of work, resource mobilization, and strategic coordination and partnerships with other UN Agencies.

And the Programme Committee requested to review at the session in November 2019, a report on the progress on the United Nations Development Assessment Assistance Framework arrangements and Country Programme Framework (CPF) formulation in the context of repositioning of the UN Development System.

We had a very heavy agenda, so the Committee reviewed, also, the *Progress report on the development of an FAO strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming across agriculture sectors*, and a draft Strategy was subsequently circulated to Members for comments and is presented as an Annex 2.

Because we did not have the strategy yet in front of us, we discussed some of the highlights, but now we have received it, and of course, it is circulated for membership input, so that the membership view can be incorporated in the strategy.

- (a) The Committee highlighted that biodiversity being the basis for all agricultural sectors, is key to achieving food security and nutrition within the context of the SDGs;
- (b) Provided guidance on the development of the Strategy, and for it to take into account FAO's existing governance framework for biodiversity, including the Commission for Plant and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and focus strictly on aspects falling under FAO's mandate on food and agriculture, as well as its linkage with other FAO policies, programmes and activities where FAO has a comparative advantage and a global role;
- (c) Stressed that further development of the Strategy should be in line with international frameworks, such as the WTO, the Convention of Biological Diversity, the Nagoya Protocol, the International Treaty on Plant and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the International Plant Protection Convention.

Given the fact that we were not able, as a Committee, to review the draft Strategy, the Committee made proposals regarding the timing and process for endorsement of the strategy.

The Committee recommended the Council to request the Conference to mandate the Council to endorse the Strategy before 2020. The original idea was, of course, to send a draft already to the Conference for adoption, but the time was too short for the Membership to give an input to the draft Strategy.

And at the same time, because of the year 2020 is very important for other strategic frameworks, such as, for example, the CBD, it is necessary that we ask the FAO Members conclude on a Strategy before 2020. For that reason, we made the exceptional proposal that we ask Conference to mandate the next Council, probably in December, to endorse the draft Strategy based on the input from the Members.

On the *COAG Draft Resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology*, as was already mentioned this morning, the Committee thoroughly reviewed and appreciated the work done by the COAG Bureau in developing the Draft Resolution.

Only minor changes have been put forward to the Council, in its submission to the Conference. I do hope that we can agree on this Draft and send it to the Conference as soon as possible, and hopefully without further long discussions.

Based on discussions during an informal Programme Committee, the Committee recognized the importance of addressing the growing Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and especially it welcomed the continued work of FAO in addressing AMR in agriculture, of course, within the context of the One Health approach, taking into account work being done in international fora.

If needed, I think Ms Maria Helena Semedo could give information to the Members of the Council about the work which is done by FAO in countries of all regions of the world on AMR. She has the specific information, if needed.

The Committee noted the World Health Organization Executive Board draft resolution on AMR of February 2019 and, after long discussion, recommended the Council explore the need and feasibility of a Conference Resolution in this regard. And it became clear that it could only succeed if it is by a step approach involving, I would say, the members, membership, certainly, but also I think looking to a general and high level, and more general resolution, supporting the work of FAO in this field.

And also, place it on the same footing as other organizations within the tripartite partnership. Therefore, based also on the informal consultations done by the Independent Chair of the Council last week, we tried to seek whether or not the Council could give guidance through informal consultations

for drafting a resolution for the next Conference, based on an informal process involving the whole membership, and seeking whether or not we could arrive at a Conference Resolution in the next Conference.

Of course, it will be an informal process, I think it has to be based on, as I said before, the condition that it is a general resolution, at high-level, but stipulating the continued work of FAO. And I hope that the Council could give this guidance to an informal process, and if needed, of course, we can provide a draft text for Council decision in this regard.

In addition, the Committee welcomed the *Progress on the implementation of the action plan of the Office of Evaluation* and requested the Office of Evaluation to apply a rating system and prioritize its recommendations in evaluation reports.

The Programme Committee also welcomed a *Progress report on the implementation of the Programme Committee recommendations* and suggested the inclusion of delivery dates, when feasible.

And, last but not least, the Programme Committee agreed on items for discussion at its next informal, and formal sessions in November of this year.

To conclude, the Programme Committee had a very productive, intensive, and long session. And we could discuss a huge number of crucial issues for the future work of the Organization. And I would like, again, to thank my colleagues on the Programme Committee for their hard and excellent work done during that week.

But I also would like to thank the management, especially Ms Maria Helena Semedo and Mr Dan Gustafson, and their teams, for the hard work done, their openness and frankness, and their input in the discussions, their willingness to take on board many of the suggestions made by the Members of the Programme Committee, in order to arrive at a successful conclusion of this session.

And of course, last but not least, I really would like to thank the Secretariat of the Programme Committee for their hard work, their support, and also, for their sweets during difficult times of the discussions in the Programme Committee.

M. Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun prend la parole sur ce point de l'ordre du jour au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

Nous accueillons favorablement la présentation de ce rapport au Conseil, qui traite de plusieurs questions, y compris celles relatives aux évaluations de divers programmes et activités, mais aussi qui rend compte de la mise en œuvre de certaines opérations stratégiques, telles que l'intégration de la biodiversité dans tous les secteurs de l'agriculture ou les questions de parité hommes-femmes et de résistance aux antimicrobiens, pour ne citer que celles-là.

Nous félicitons le Comité du Programme de l'examen de toutes ces questions et des orientations données au Conseil pour faciliter la prise de décision. Nous prenons acte, par conséquent, de ses commentaires.

S'agissant de l'Évaluation de la stratégie et de la vision de la FAO relatives aux activités en matière de nutrition, le Groupe Afrique prend note de la réponse de la Direction aux recommandations et attend avec intérêt le rapport sur leur mise en œuvre, ainsi que le développement d'une stratégie actualisée et renforcée dans le domaine de la nutrition.

Concernant l'Évaluation des activités de la FAO en matière de parité hommes-femmes, nous entérinons les recommandations du Comité du Programme, notamment en ce qui concerne:

i) l'actualisation de la stratégie de la FAO en matière de parité hommes-femmes; ii) l'élaboration d'un plan d'action d'ici à novembre 2020 sur la question de la parité hommes-femmes; iii) le développement des partenariats dans le cadre de la coopération Sud-Sud et triangulaire sur la question de la parité hommes-femmes; et iv) le renforcement des capacités, aussi bien internes que dans les pays, pour la prise en compte de la parité hommes-femmes.

S'agissant du Rapport de suivi sur l'évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à la réduction de la pauvreté rurale (Objectif stratégique (OS) 3) et ayant en perspective la mise en œuvre de l'Objectif de développement durable numéro 1, nous soulignons qu'il est important de conduire régulièrement des

analyses concernant les déterminants de la pauvreté rurale et l'efficacité des politiques et des interventions programmatiques, et de fournir un appui technique en la matière, compte tenu du contexte complexe lié aux conflits, aux migrations, au changement climatique et aux inégalités entre les sexes. Les cadres de programmation pays (CPP) devraient désormais être développés avec, comme orientation majeure, la réduction de la pauvreté rurale. Dans ce contexte, nous attendons de discuter, en toute transparence, la contribution de la FAO sur la proposition du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies relative au repositionnement du système des Nations Unies pour le développement.

En ce qui concerne le Rapport d'activité sur la mise au point d'une stratégie de la FAO relative à l'intégration de la biodiversité dans tous les secteurs de l'agriculture, le Groupe Afrique s'accorde sur le fait que la biodiversité est essentielle pour la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition, dans le cadre des objectifs de développement durable. Et pour cela, la mise en place d'une stratégie s'impose. Nous restons, par conséquent, disposés à continuer les consultations, y compris avec d'autres partenaires, pour finaliser le développement de ladite stratégie et sommes favorables à la proposition que la Conférence donne mandat au Conseil de l'approuver en 2020.

Nous avons, par ailleurs, examiné dans les détails le projet de résolution du Comité de l'agriculture sur le renforcement de l'intégration des approches de l'agriculture durable, y compris l'agroécologie, et convions le Conseil à le transmettre à la Conférence pour adoption.

Considérant le rôle négatif que jouerait la résistance croissante aux antimicrobiens dans la réalisation du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030, nous sommes favorables à l'action de la FAO dans ce domaine pour le secteur de l'agriculture, dans le cadre d'une approche «Un monde, une santé», en tenant compte des travaux menés dans d'autres instances internationales. Ce d'autant plus que la FAO, avec l'appui financier de certains autres pays, soutient des programmes de résistance aux antimicrobiens dans notre continent. Nous sommes tout aussi conscients des financements limités dans le cadre des travaux du Codex Alimentarius et de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE), et en appelons à un accroissement substantiel des ressources pour lutter contre ce phénomène. Nous sommes disposés à discuter de toute résolution à soumettre à la Conférence sur cette question.

Avec ces commentaires, nous invitons le Conseil à adopter le rapport du Comité du Programme.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We thank the Chairman of the Programme Committee for presenting the Report of the 126th of the Programme Committee.

Afghanistan wishes to thank the Office of Evaluation for producing excellent evaluation work. Secondly, we wish to make a few brief observations on three of the evaluation reports as reviewed by the Programme Committee. The first Report is: *Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work on Nutrition*. The eight points listed in Paragraph 7 of the Programme Committee's Report reflect the gist of the six conclusions and the seven recommendations of the Evaluation Report on Nutrition. However, for implementation purposes, the paragraph does not attempt at prioritization of the seven recommendations. This prioritization is important because Management concludes that the implementation of 4 of the 7 recommendations will require additional resources, and that is recommendations 1, 2, 5 and 7.

Second Report: *Evaluation of FAO's work on gender*. The ten points listed in paragraph 8 of the Programme Committee's Report pretty much reflect the Gender Equality Policy (GEP) of the Organization as currently practiced. The Committee's Report underscores the 13 findings, the four conclusions and the four recommendations of the Evaluation Report. Management response to the recommendations is positive but it does not indicate the resources that may be required for Recommendation 1, and for suggested actions 3 and 5 of Recommendation 3 and suggested action 2 of Recommendation 4.

Third Report: *Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective evaluations*. We wish to thank the Office of Evaluation for preparing this synthesis based on the individual evaluations of the five Strategic Objectives. The 18 findings of the Synthesis Report, presented under three main headings (conceptualization, operationalization and results) are well articulated. In particular, we welcome the nine findings under operationalization, which we consider to be the core of the Synthesis.

There are several good ideas contained in the Synthesis Report which the new Director-General can take advantage of by streamlining the five Strategic Objectives of FAO, in line with section 3 (Lessons learned) and section 4 (Looking ahead) of the Synthesis Report. After all in the next biennium, 51.2 percent of Net Appropriation is tied to the five Strategic Objectives and 98.5 percent of the expected extra-budgetary resources. So there is a major stake in making the five Strategic Objectives of FAO more coherent and streamlined.

CHAIRPERSON

We have reached the end of this morning's plenary meeting. We will resume our debate at 14.30 with the list as it appears on the screen.

Before we adjourn, I wish to remind Members of the side event "One Health approach to address a global health challenge", which will take place in the Sheikh Zayed Centre during the lunch break from 13.00 to 14.30 hours.

We will resume our work this afternoon at 14.30 hours.

The meeting rose at 12:30 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 30

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.30

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
FOURTH PLENARY SESSION QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
9 April 2019

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.44 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 44
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.44
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- Item 6. Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee (18-22 March 2019) (continued)**
- Point 6. Rapport de la cent vingt-sixième session du Comité du Programme (18-22 mars 2019) (suite)**
- Tema 6. Informe del 126.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (18-22 de marzo de 2019) (continuación)**
- CL 161/3; CL 161/3-WA2*

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the fourth meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

We will continue on Item 6, *Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee*, and take the list of speakers where we left it before lunch.

Sra. Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

México desea reconocer el trabajo del Secretariado en la preparación de una estrategia que permita reforzar la integración estructurada y coherente de la biodiversidad en los trabajo de la FAO, a fin de promover la conservación, el uso sostenible, la gestión y la restauración de la biodiversidad biológica en todos sus programas, políticas e instrumentos.

Como quedó de manifiesto en el informe de la FAO sobre el estado de la biodiversidad para la alimentación y la agricultura en el mundo, muchos componentes clave de la biodiversidad en este ámbito están disminuyendo de forma preocupante. Frente a este reto, la FAO tiene la gran responsabilidad de abordar este tema de forma coordinada para cumplir su objetivo fundamental de contribuir a reducir el hambre y la malnutrición ya que sin biodiversidad no se podrá alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria ni puede haber desarrollo sostenible.

La estrategia de la FAO sobre biodiversidad responde a esa apremiante necesidad. En ese sentido, consideramos que los elementos presentados como base de la estrategia de la FAO son adecuados al considerar el uso sostenible de la biodiversidad, su conservación, mejoramiento y restauración. La promoción de sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios sostenibles, así como la importancia de tomar en cuenta los conocimientos autóctonos y locales. Consideramos importante que esta estrategia retome también la promoción de sinergias entre los sectores agrícolas, a través de la incorporación de la biodiversidad en todos ellos, a fin de potenciar los impactos positivos en la producción y la productividad e impulsar el desarrollo sostenible de las comunidades.

Otro elemento que podría retomar esta estrategia es la necesidad de generar una mayor conciencia y participación de los sectores privados y financieros para fomentar sistemas sostenibles de producción agrícola bajo esquemas que respeten la biodiversidad.

Finalmente, apoyamos la propuesta formulada por el comité del programa para actualizar los plazos y el proceso de elaboración de esta estrategia, así como la recomendación a la Conferencia para que este consejo la considere y apruebe antes de 2020. Este trabajo es imperativo, no solo para llegar a ese año clave con una estrategia, sino también para atender de forma estructurada un reto urgente.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

I would like to request your permission to give the floor to Bangladesh in order to deliver the statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. I may request the floor again later for our additional comments.

Mr Manash MITRA (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh is pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Asia Group highly appreciates the presentation by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee on this agenda item. In this regard, we would like to highlight the following points.

On evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's work on nutrition, considering the double, triple burden of malnutrition has been increasingly prominent globally, we fully concur with the

recommendation one of the evaluation, necessity of updating and upgrading nutrition strategy and vision to take stock of ICN2, the 2030 Agenda and the broadened focus on all forms of malnutrition.

We also highlight the importance of strengthening capacity, especially in decentralised offices. To promote the use of FAO's knowledge products on nutrition at the country level, we recommend FAO explore the use of language that is accessible to the broader public.

On evaluation of FAO's work on gender, we once again concur with the recommendation of the evaluation updating FAO's policy on gender equality and developing an action plan based on updated policy. To achieve this, we encourage FAO to learn from other international organizations including the Rome-based Agencies. We concur with the Committee's call for FAO to strengthen indicators and targets on gender in all Strategic Objectives and the recommendation to introduce a rating system in FAO's future evaluations.

Finally, we recognise the need for addressing the anti-microbial resistance (AMR). In Asia and the Pacific, AMR has been identified as one of the priority issues in our regional initiative of One Health, as such we support FAO's continued efforts on this issue using a One Health approach in close collaboration with the tri-patriate partners and other UN partners. In this light, we support the Committee's request for the Secretariat to provide a progress review on AMR for continuous and inclusive discussions by the Committee and the Member States as well.

With these comments, we endorse the report and congratulate the Chair and members of the Programme Committee for their guidance and recommendations.

Mr Joseph KATEMA (Zambia)

Zambia would like to align itself to the statement made by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group.

My country recognizes the Public Health threat of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and its impact on morbidity and mortality, as well as the subsequent adverse economic consequences.

It has therefore adopted the One Health approach as proposed in the Global Action Plan (GAP) on AMR.

We are, grateful to FAO and the government of the United Kingdom for the technical and financial support that they grant to this programme in our country and we are of the way that the programme should continue.

We support the AMR recommendations in the Report.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

First of all, let me take this opportunity to thank the Programme Committee for their work over the past two years.

The EU and its Member States welcome the Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee. We support its findings and the recommendations made in the Report. Given that we have already spoken about the Programme of Work and the Budget, we would like to focus our comments on the following points.

Firstly, we support the recommendation that additional resources be allocated from within the flat nominal budget for 2020 and 2021 to the joint FAO/WHO scientific advice programme on food safety, to the IPPC and to biodiversity. In this regard, we would like to recall that the need for additional funding for the IPPC was re-emphasised just last week by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures here in Rome.

Secondly, we would like underline the importance of FAO's work on One Health, in particular FAO's work to support its Members to manage transboundary pests and diseases. We urge the Council to agree on a process to develop a Resolution on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) for adoption at the FAO Conference in June 2019, building on previously agreed recommendations and resolutions. We would like to recall that the Interagency Coordination Group (IACG) which was tasked to recommend practical action to address AMR, has now made its recommendations. FAO members should

acknowledge our role in implementing those recommendations, just as WHO members will do in a Resolution of the World Health Assembly next month.

Thirdly, we would like to express our support for the COAG Resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology. This Resolution is an important step in recognizing the need to develop and promote approaches towards more sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Fourthly, we fully support the PC recommendations on the evaluation of FAO's work on gender and the related management response, in particular as regards the need to update FAO's policy on gender equality and to develop an action plan by November 2020 at the latest.

Finally, we would like to underline the importance of transparent consultation on FAO's biodiversity strategy. We note that a complete draft of the strategy has now been issued, but only an outline of this was made available to the Programme Committee. We recognize that the Conference will not now be able to endorse the strategy and we support the Programme Committee's recommendation that Council seek a mandate from the Conference to adopt the strategy at its next session in December.

We look forward to discussing the strategy and the related action plan, both being a coherent response to the needs identified in the recently published State of the World's Biodiversity in Food and Agriculture.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank the members of the Programme Committee for the recommendations on several issues considered during this session in relation to several of the recommendations, I would like to make the following comments.

We support the proposal on the need to adopt at the upcoming Conference Session, a Resolution on Antimicrobial Resistance. (AMR) We welcome the inclusion in the draft Resolution of text on Strengthening National Monitoring Systems and creating new tools to replace the need to use anti-biotics. We also support the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination group on AMR.

We would like to note separately that global livestock farming suffers greatly due to the resistance of pathogens to anti-biotics. The global cost of which is estimated to be in the tens of millions of dollars. In this connection, we are ready and prepared to participate in agreeing on the draft resolution.

We have several specific comments in relation to the text and in this regard we have a question primarily to the FAO Secretariat. What is the proposed format for agreeing on the text of the document?

Secondly, on the whole, we agree with the recommendation to establish an FAO strategy on biodiversity in agriculture at one of the upcoming Sessions of the FAO Council between now and 2020 and not at the FAO Conference in June this year, as originally foreseen. The draft document which was only presented a week ago, requires careful examination. Its content is currently being worked through by relevant Russian government ministries. We believe that the preparation of this document must be undertaken openly with the participation of all interested Member States.

Thirdly, regarding the recommendations on the evaluation of FAO's contribution to reducing rural poverty, this is Strategic Objective 3, we note the utmost importance of the continuation of this work.

We draw attention to the conclusion of the Programme Committee that conflicts seriously undermine the ability to reduce poverty, paragraph 10(d). We generally agree with this assertion, however, we would like to underscore the fact that rural poverty is not always and everywhere linked to conflicts. The causes can be quite varied and must be addressed in FAO in a balanced manner.

Fourthly, we would like to call on the members of the Programme Committee, the Council and the FAO Secretariat to adopt a more careful approach to the drafting of recommendations in relation to ongoing global processes such as, the agreement of the new UNDS Funding Compact. This is paragraph 4(g) in document CL 161/3. We believe it to be premature to adopt any decisions on this before this document is approved in May 2019 at the Session of ECOSOC.

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

I give this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and, my own country, Finland. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align themselves with the EU statement. On behalf of the Nordics I have three points to make.

First, the Nordic countries urge FAO to pay close attention to reported challenges that still persist in developing a fully integrated, results based, management culture within FAO. The report clearly states that “FAO’s corporate results framework has limitations in both targets and indicators for outcomes and performance measures remain vague towards the organizations activities rather than achievements.”

Noting that the report also states that FAO has now progressed towards having a strong basis for tackling such challenges with its strategic focus and operational management in both operational and normative work, we fully expect the agency to provide stronger evidence of success in the future by managing and measuring by results.

Second, the Nordic Group supports the preparation of a Resolution on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) for the upcoming Conference in June, as referred to in paragraph 20 of the report of the Programme Committee. We were able to attend an interesting side event during the lunch hour on this topic and I would like to extend my thanks to those who organised this side event.

Combating AMR should be a high priority and a core activity for FAO as the central global organization for food security and nutrition. FAO must ensure a significant technical capacity with expertise of the highest international standard. Combating AMR requires a One Health approach, in which all relevant sectors cooperate, especially health, agriculture and aquaculture.

The challenge with AMR resistance can only be solved through coordinated global action. We welcome and actively support the work done by the FAO, WHO, OIE and UNEP, jointly as well as individually. The Nordics support an increase in the global capacity to monitor the use of antibiotics and growing resistance to antibiotics as well as assistance to strengthening national capacities to development, implement and enforce regulations.

We welcome the proposal for FAO to develop an AMR indicator to measure progress in this regard. We share the view that prevention is better than cure and that healthy animals do not need medication.

Third, we welcome the evaluation of FAO’s work on gender. It rightly acknowledges that over the past five years FAO has made an important contribution to the development of gender sensitive policies and rural sector strategies. Yet, some gaps and challenges persist. The evaluation highlights the importance of updating the gender policy and action plan.

We would like to see FAO giving high priority to this issue as well as to their strengthening of monitoring and reporting on gender and measuring progress and performance. The evaluation points out that FAO, with its privileged relationship with National Ministries of Agriculture is in an excellent position to advocate for gender mainstreaming in agriculture.

We would like to encourage FAO to fully explore this important potential. We also encourage FAO to further strengthen its partnerships with UN Women and with other actors working on gender and rural women. The SDG’s cannot be achieved without gender equality. We all know that the poor subsistence farmer is often a woman.

Agriculture as a sector is underperforming because of undermining women, lack of equal access to land, credit and other productive resources. We all need to make bolder efforts to close the gender gaps in agriculture. FAO has a key role to play here.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

The United States thanks the Secretariat and the Programme Committee for their report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee. While we appreciate the Committee’s acknowledgement of the standard setting work done by the joint WHO/FAO Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme and the IPPC, we are disappointed that FAO did not follow guidance from the Technical Committees and

increase funding in support of international standards in the PWB. We look forward to this being rectified soon.

Regarding the draft strategy to mainstream biodiversity across agricultural sectors, the United States supports the need for further consultation and time to improve the draft strategy. We underline the importance that further development on the strategy be in line with existing international frameworks. Like Russia, we seek clarification on the timeline for consultations prior to the December 2019 Council and in addition we request more information on how comments from the 1 April draft will be considered.

On Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), the United States welcomes the discussion on the need and feasibility of a Resolution on AMR under the One Health multi-sectoral approach. We believe that any resolution on AMR should support continued momentum to implement the existing and incomplete work under the FAO action plan which we think is in line with the WHO global action plan on AMR. We look forward to a way ahead before the Conference, based on the Resolution currently being considered at the WHO.

The United States also thanks the COAG Bureau and the Programme Committee for their efforts on the Resolution on sustainable agricultural approaches including agroecology. We firmly believe that biotechnology is another sustainable agricultural approach albeit not one heard of very often here discussed in the hallways of FAO. I was talking, recently with a colleague whose son is an undergraduate in college where he is using CRISPR Gene-Editing technology.

It is clear that the world is moving ahead on biotechnology. The question is how FAO and the UN will continue to remain relevant if they do not catch up with the rest of the world. We encourage increased focus on biotechnology here at FAO and we are prepared to help raise awareness of this sustainable agricultural approach.

On the proposed Resolution on sustainable agricultural approaches, we think this is an example of being able to work through a difficult issue and we believe that consensus is near. On the text of the resolution itself we have one small proposed edit and that is on page 13 of CL161/3, we suggest a reordering of the language of paragraph (e) (i) to read: strengthening science and evidence based normative work.

Currently it reads: strengthening normative science and evidence based work. We suggest changing the word order of normative to ensure that all normative work done by FAO is based on science and evidence.

As written, the paragraph is open to different interpretations and can be read to imply that science and evidence based work be based on different norms.

Mr Juergen DREXLER (Austria)

Austria fully aligns itself with the Statement of the European Union, held by Romania.

Austria welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Programme Committee.

In this regard we would like to express our support to scale up FAO's financial contribution to the standard setting bodies like IPPC and Codex Alimentarius within the framework of the proposed zero growth budget for 2020-21.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We were pleased to participate in the very productive discussions of the Programme Committee and are pleased today to support their recommendations. First, we very much, again, would like to express, as well, our disappointment for the lack of reflection of the guidance that was provided on allocation of resources to the Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and Standard Setting bodies and we continue to call on sustainable funding for these organizations such as Codex and IPPC.

Second, we would like to highlight the discussions on the evaluation of FAO's work on gender. This is an evaluation that has been long awaited, we asked three years ago and it was recognized among all the Members of the Programme Committee and across all Regional Groups that it was a very important evaluation; in particular because the value lay not only in its main findings and recommendation, but

also in the collection of all the gender related data for the covered period of March 2012 to December 2017. This exercise enabled a reconstruction of FAO's gender portfolio and the development of a theory of change and, I think, it provides a wealth of information that will be useful for FAO management and staff and to give a baseline.

We also appreciated that the evaluation team undertook a benchmark study of selected UN agencies including WFP and IFAD and, like others, we would encourage FAO to look at good practices in other organizations as they are updating the gender equality policy and, also developing an action plan, which we find is very important. We look forward to a progress report on this draft update at the next Programme Committee and Council.

We also strongly believe that annual progress reports are important and that was noted in the evaluation that the lack of reporting makes it hard after for us, as well, for strategic planning. We would also like to note, like Finland did, the fact that the evaluation did highlight the opportunity for FAO in this area, it could leverage its good relationships with Ministries of Agriculture to make a difference in rural development and women and girls in terms of food security.

For Canada, women and girls are game changers. So, as we talk about a negative trend on SDG 2, we feel that investing in this area would make a huge difference in putting us back in the right direction.

Thirdly, with respect to the issue of AMR, we are supportive of the work to further combat AMR. We are very cognizant that there is a lot of work being done in this area including within the tri-partite collaboration and we would encourage FAO to continue to focus on its mandate and comparative advantage. On the resolution, like others, we have questions about the timeline.

We feel that it is a very technical issue and that any Resolution shall have a text that reflects the time available, the technical complexity of the subject, the need to focus on FAO's advantages and the existing work and text of other initiatives on AMR. So, we would welcome an answer from the Secretariat on the timelines.

Mme Delphine BORIONE (France)

La France s'aligne avec la déclaration de l'Union européenne et de ses États membres prononcée par la Roumanie.

Elle souhaite saluer l'évaluation de qualité réalisée sur la synthèse des cinq objectifs stratégiques de la FAO, qui propose des recommandations très intéressantes. Nous aimerions savoir quelles suites le Secrétariat compte donner à ce travail.

La France souhaite renforcer les activités menées par la FAO sur les cinq objectifs stratégiques, qui permettent d'aller au-delà d'une approche uniquement sectorielle, de décloisonner les différents services et les faire mieux travailler ensemble afin de répondre aux nouveaux défis transversaux: le changement climatique, la nutrition, la durabilité des systèmes de production, la biodiversité, thèmes dont nous avons beaucoup parlé ces jours-ci. Je voudrais aussi souligner l'importance des questions sur l'égalité des sexes et la promotion du rôle des femmes, comme vient de le mentionner le Canada.

Nous avons donc décidé de contribuer dans ce cadre au financement du FMM, «Multipartner Programme Support Mechanism», le Mécanisme d'appui aux programmes multidonateurs, un fonds non fléché, à hauteur de un million d'euro. Ce fonds permet d'optimiser les financements et de mieux coordonner les actions des bailleurs autour de programmes prioritaires de la FAO en total alignement avec la réforme des Nations Unies et avec l'atteinte des ODD.

Par ailleurs, la France se félicite de l'esprit d'écoute et de dialogue grâce auquel les pays membres ont pu aboutir à un accord sur le projet de résolution relative au renforcement de l'intégration des approches de l'agriculture durable, y compris l'agroécologie, et nous espérons que la résolution sera approuvée telle quelle.

Enfin, comme l'a souligné la Roumanie dans son intervention au nom de l'Union européenne et de ses États membres, nous attachons une importance particulière aux travaux de la FAO sur les questions sanitaires, de lutte contre l'antibiorésistance (AMR), et de lutte contre les maladies transfrontalières. C'est pourquoi la France apporte une contribution volontaire additionnelle à ce que nous avons déjà versé, de un million d'euro pour appuyer les travaux sur la peste des petits ruminants (PPR), la lutte

contre la fièvre aphteuse, ainsi que les activités du Codex Alimentarius et de la Convention internationale pour la protection des végétaux (CIPV).

Enfin, la France a décidé d'apporter deux millions d'euro supplémentaire en faveur du continent africain pour soutenir son développement rural et contribuer à la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable, notamment à travers le Fonds fiduciaire africain de solidarité.

M. Kouame KANGA (Côte d'Ivoire)

La Côte d'Ivoire passe la parole au Nigéria qui va parler au nom du Groupe Afrique.

Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

We are making it too serious, life is not hard, except we make it hard for ourselves and I think we are dealing with issues that concern billions of people here, the voiceless people out there working very hard. We need to be in the right frame of mind and cordiality to achieve that.

Let me thank the honourable Minister from Cameroon, His Excellency Mbairrobe, who has presented the African point on this item that we are discussing. Nigeria supports all that has been said and our colleagues from Africa have also explained how they have been impacted by the work that FAO is doing with AMR, being sponsored by partners. The key issue here is that this work should not be allowed to stall because it is helping millions of smallholder farmers that you call our friends.

Allow me, also, to thank the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, my dear friend Hans, for a thorough job, measured reporting and recommendations that can make us go forward. But, especially, how the AMR exposition has been presented.

It is important that we keep track of what everyone is doing as we have three important organizations dealing with this matter and if we go by the popular African saying, a three-string cord is not easily broken. So, we have the scientific knowledge, know-how. What is required here is the political willingness to turn it into what benefits the poor. I do not know why you like using that word, the hard working, needy people, out there. So that their lives can be improved.

This afternoon there was a side event on AMR, which involved the mother of one of the presenters and the way it was put, it is clear that AMR is not only affecting us now. It may ruin the future generation and that is why Nigeria will appeal with all its force to be flexible, to find a resolution to what has been presented. I am sure we have a common understanding on the importance of preventing people dying as a result of microbes being resistant and creating untold hardship for people.

Ms Anne ONYANGO (Kenya)

Kenya aligns itself to the statement presented by Cameroon on AMR on behalf of Africa Regional Group.

Chairman, on behalf of the Kenya delegation, we would like to add the following comments: antimicrobial resistance is a global public health concern that has threatened the very core of modern medicine and effective treatment of infectious diseases. Yet effective antimicrobial drugs are vital for both preventive and curative measures, for both human and animal health.

In response to this, Kenya government through the Ministries responsible for Health and Agriculture, has recognized the looming crisis, and prioritized the prevention and containment of AMR, through a One Health approach and launched the National Policy and Action Plan on prevention and containment of Antimicrobial Resistance.

The implementation of the policy is proceeding well with the following achievements realized, like establishment of an AMR coordination structure with an Inter-agency committee (the National Antimicrobial Stewardship Interagency Committee). This was constituted and launched during the world antibiotic awareness week in November 2017.

Currently we are also in the process of carrying out capacity building in the regional blocks on antimicrobial stewardship.

A Communication strategy was completed and launched in November 2018 targeting various primary and secondary audiences

The AMR surveillance plan was completed and launched in November 2018. We acknowledge the support from the Fleming fund through UN- FAO, the World Bank through Regional Pastoral Livestock resilience program, World Animal Protection (WAP), Diamond V, OIE, and REACT Africa among others towards implementation of the AMR policy.

As we continue to tackle this challenge with the support of various partners, we realize that the problem requires additional concerted efforts to be adequately addressed.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would also like to add our thanks to the Chair of the Programme Committee and all of the Members. It was clearly a very full agenda with lots of substantial issues and, I think, we can agree that they did a tremendous job in bringing us what they have.

I would like to highlight three points. The first is gender. We support the key recommendations from the report regarding the evaluation of FAO's work on gender. We wish to underline the need for an updated gender equality policy and the need to strengthen indicators and targets on gender in all FAO Strategic Objectives. Systematic reporting is key to enable monitoring of results and better planning as highlighted in paragraph 82 of the evaluation of FAO's work on gender, which found there are fewer incentives to include gender at the planning stage when there is less emphasis placed on gender at the reporting.

The second issue I would like to highlight is the Resolution on sustainable agriculture, including agroecology. As the South-West Pacific's representative on the COAG Bureau, I am only well aware what a long and vigorous negotiation it was to reach this point. But, our view is that it reflects a good compromise and a true spirit of consensus amongst members and it highlights the importance of all approaches to sustainable agriculture and we certainly support the draft.

On the proposal for a resolution for Conference's consideration on AMR, we do have to note that we wish we had had this conversation at the Committee of Agriculture last year when we first discussed the Resolution on sustainable agriculture. We did talk about AMR there and this talk about a resolution would have been well placed.

Nevertheless, we are now talking about it today. It is certainly a very important issue and we are open to a resolution for Conference to consider. I think it is important to recall the words of the Chair of the Programme Committee when he introduced this item to say that given the timeframe we have before us, which is very very short, it took us nearly six months to negotiate the sustainable agriculture Resolution.

So, given that we have about ten weeks or so before Conference, I think it is very realistic and wise to advise us to focus on a short high-level Resolution that re-affirms FAO's commitment to combatting AMR. I would caution against any Resolution that calls on FAO to do more than it is already doing, or that calls on FAO to re-direct existing resources to this work. I think if we stray into that territory it would become harder to reach consensus on what is a very important issue for all of us.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I am sure you all agree, is we share the disappointment expressed by other members now on the lack of sustainable funding for the International Plant Protection Convention and the joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and, like others, we look forward to this being rectified very soon.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I had the honour of being present during the last session of the Programme Committee and I would like to express an opinion in that regard.

I would like also to talk about the initiatives of FAO when it comes to poverty. In paragraph 10(d), it is said that rural poverty is heavily impacted by conflicts and several countries are confronted with many constraints by these conflicts and distress migration because of conflicts. This was a direct quotation of the report and if we are to achieve the sustainable development goal in that regard, I would suggest the following.

First of all, the three initiatives launched by FAO in the various regions should be thorough and we need to get access to the rural families and the poorest families. We would be really grateful if all those initiatives would reach smallholder farmers in rural areas because they are in need of it.

Second, FAO needs to contribute by helping countries to conduct surveys so as to know where the poor are located inside countries, because many countries lack this kind of information. Statistics are vital if we are to take enlightened decisions.

Third, we believe that it is very important to have structures for national financing. We believe that coordination is needed if we are to fight, with success, against poverty in rural areas. Perhaps small projects and middle sized projects would be a solution for smallholder farmers in this regard.

With regard to AMR, we support the work of FAO in that regard and we support the One Health Initiative. AMR is an important topic to be worked on with the collaboration of WHO. However, we cannot support a resolution at the Conference in the upcoming month because there will, simply, not be enough time.

There is not enough time to talk with the various organizations and the various parties at stake and it is not possible to substitute official consultation with mere corridor diplomacy. Therefore, I would suggest to have consultations between regional groups, the ICC and all others. We believe that this kind of resolution would require further collaboration and further dialogue, official dialogue, between the various parties at stake.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I start by thanking the Chairperson of the Programme Committee and the Members for the work and the efforts done.

Brazil would like to comment on four subjects addressed by the Programme Committee: nutrition; sustainable agriculture approaches; Antimicrobial Resistance and biodiversity.

On nutrition, we welcome the evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition, undertaken by the Office of Evaluation (OED), the first since its adoption in 2012. Brazil awaits with expectation the updated and upgraded Nutrition Strategy currently under development, encompassing all forms of malnutrition and the perspectives of sustainable agriculture and food systems and healthy diets.

On sustainable agricultural approaches, we are glad to see how far we have come on the draft resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, in the future planning of activities of FAO. We believe it strikes a good balance by recognizing the existence of a broad range of sustainable agricultural approaches. We also consider important that, at the same, it recognizes agroecology as an approach that contributes to feeding sustainably a growing population. We, therefore, welcome the current text and recommend its approval.

As for antimicrobial resistance (AMR), Brazil follows discussions on this topic with great interest and always seek to align national efforts with international guidelines in this area. The Brazilian Government recently launched a National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Control of Resistance to Antimicrobials in Agriculture, to be implemented over the course of the next five years. The Plan seeks to meet the objectives defined by the FAO, WHO and OIE in the Global Plan of Action on antimicrobial resistance.

Reacting to some comments made before, I would like to remind that we are still waiting for the approval of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Interagency Coordinating Group on this subject. We also would like to wait the answers provided by the Secretariat to the questions presented by Canada and we share the concerns anticipated by Australia and Jordan concerning this subject.

Being aware of the intricacies of this matter, we regret not having the possibility of discussing the merits on the need and feasibility of a Conference Resolution on AMR in the Technical Committees. Furthermore, whilst recognizing the importance of this subject, we do hope this initiative, if adopted, will not steer the Organization away from its core mandate, especially in light of recent reports pointing to alarming signs of increasing food insecurity and high levels of different forms of malnutrition in the world.

Concerning biodiversity, its relevance to all agricultural sectors and food systems cannot be overstated. Brazil has always been, and continues to be, actively engaged in multilateral debates on the conservation, sustainable use, access to and sharing of benefits arising from the use of biodiversity.

In line with recommendations of the Convention on Biological Diversity and several FAO Governing Bodies, we are fully supportive of the development of a FAO Strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors.

Nevertheless, we also acknowledge the complexity of this theme, which demands for multidisciplinary analysis and careful negotiation. In this regard, Brazil supports the recommendations of the Programme Committee contained in paragraph 12, on the need for further consultations and postponing the endorsement of the Strategy. Regarding the recommendation on paragraph 12 (a), we believe the Council should establish a deadline for the submission of written inputs on the Strategy, not before one month from the end of this meeting.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by Bangladesh. In addition to that, we have several comments.

With regard to AMR we, of course, understand the importance of AMR and we support the work done by FAO and other international organizations. As previous speakers pointed out, concerning the limited timeframe, we are a bit afraid about developing the resolution before the Conference.

We would also like to ask the Secretariat about the timeframe of developing the resolution. In developing the resolution, Japan asks the Secretariat to avoid overlapping with, and contradicting, current FAO Resolutions and other international arrangements.

Last, but not least. As many members expressed, we are a bit disappointed to see the lack of sustainable funding for the IPPC and the joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme for Codex. We are looking forward to discussing it toward the end of this year.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

La Delegación de Chile agradece el trabajo realizado por los Miembros del Comité del Programa, así como el Informe presentado para la consideración de los Estados Miembros. Al respecto, quisiéramos destacar los siguientes aspectos. Acordamos sobre la necesidad de actualizar la estrategia y visión de la FAO en materia de nutrición, y agradecemos el trabajo que se está realizando en este sentido. Para Chile es de crucial importancia abordar todas las formas de malnutrición, incluidas la obesidad y el sobrepeso, así como la necesidad de avanzar en sistemas alimentarios y agriculturas sostenibles, promoviendo dietas saludables que incluyan un mayor consumo de frutas y verduras, por los innumerables beneficios que esto significa.

En relación al desarrollo de la estrategia sobre biodiversidad, consideramos que se debe tener en cuenta que no solo los efectos del cambio climático repercuten en la biodiversidad, otras actividades también afectan la biodiversidad y los servicios ecosistémicos. En particular, el párrafo 11 c) del Informe, debería mencionar las repercusiones del cambio climático y de otras actividades, no solo del cambio climático, en la biodiversidad.

Finalmente, como ha sido mencionado por otros Estados Miembros, estimamos necesaria una mayor consideración de la propuesta de la estrategia sobre biodiversidad previa a su aprobación. En el párrafo 11 e) referido a los otros marcos internacionales, quisiéramos solicitar que se incluya a la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual por la intervención de dicho organismo en el establecimiento de marcos internacionales.

En relación al proyecto de resolución del Comité de Agricultura sobre la mayor integración de enfoques agrícolas sostenibles, incluida la agrilogía, quisiéramos indicar en el texto de la resolución en el numeral e) del anexo iii, destacamos que la innovación no solo es tecnología por lo que sugerimos el siguiente lenguaje para ampliar su espectro: reemplazar la palabra “tecnología” en la segunda línea por “herramientas pertinentes y adaptadas al contexto”.

En relación a RAM, Chile quisiera destacar la importancia de no duplicar los esfuerzos que se están realizando en otros foros, incluyendo el Codex Alimentarius así como la relevancia de actuar de forma coordinada con la OMS y la OIE, con miras a un uso prudente y responsable de los antimicrobianos. Es importante que FAO en su trabajo de RAM tome en cuenta el nuevo conocimiento científico y el trabajo realizado por otros organismos internacionales y foros, de manera de evitar duplicidades y realizar un trabajo coordinado en RAM.

Con estos comentarios, endosamos el Informe del Comité del Programa.

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan) (Original Language Arabic)

Sudan acknowledges the important work of FAO on the One Health approach, in particular on AMR in conjunction with WHO and other partners. However, we draw the attention of the Members of Council to the Conference Resolution on AMR from 2015. More importantly, there is simply not enough time to consult with important Governing Bodies such as the Regional Conferences or the Technical Committees.

Like other countries, my country benefited from the AMR project implemented by FAO.

Therefore we urge the Organization to fully engage with other similar organizations to seek the possible means to make the maximum use of its technical capacity.

Sra. Silvina KATCHERIAN (Argentina)

En primer lugar, la Delegación de Argentina quisiera destacar y apreciar la gran labor que realizó el Presidente del Comité del Programa en la elaboración de este Informe y agradecer por favorecer un ambiente que permitió discusiones muy productivas y constructivas. En este sentido, la Argentina apoya el Informe del Comité del Programa y al respecto quisiéramos destacar ciertos puntos.

En primer lugar, la Argentina se complace con el Informe sobre los progresos realizados en la elaboración de una estrategia de la FAO para la integración de la biodiversidad en los distintos sectores agrícolas, y pensamos que es muy productivo que se incluya el tema del acceso y distribución de beneficios derivados del uso de los recursos genéticos, tal como se menciona en el párrafo 11 f) del documento. Cabe recordar que, tanto en el Convenio sobre Biodiversidad como sus Protocolos, existe un balance entre conservación, uso sostenible y distribución de beneficios derivados del uso de dichos recursos. Por otro lado, sobre el Proyecto de Biodiversidad remitido la semana pasada a consideración de los Estados, la delegación de Argentina remitirá oportunamente sus comentarios.

En segundo lugar, respecto al tema de la resistencia antimicrobiana a la que varias delegaciones han hecho referencia, quisiéramos expresar que esta temática es abordada en la Argentina desde una perspectiva interdisciplinaria en sintonía con el enfoque *One Health*. De hecho, desde hace varios años los Ministerios de Salud y Agricultura trabajan mancomunadamente en la implementación de la estrategia nacional para el control de la resistencia antimicrobiana. Se ha establecido también un programa nacional de vigilancia de la resistencia antimicrobiana en animales de consumo con el objetivo de determinar y monitorear de manera sostenida en el tiempo, la prevalencia, la resistencia de bacterias comensales y zoonóticas a diferentes antimicrobianos de importancia en la salud humana.

Por otro lado, organismos nacionales promueven la difusión de información sobre el uso responsable de los antimicrobianos, así como buenas prácticas agropecuarias con la finalidad de reducir la utilización de estos sin comprometer la salud de los animales o las actividades pecuarias.

En el ámbito internacional, la Argentina se hizo eco del pedido de los líderes del G-20 en la Cumbre de Hamburgo de 2017 de hacer frente a la expansión de la Resistencia Antimicrobiana en seres humanos, animales y medio ambiente. Y ese compromiso se sostuvo y fue reflejado en la Declaración de ministros de Agricultura del G-20 durante la presidencia de la Argentina del año 2018.

Por todo lo expuesto, la Argentina estima importante que la FAO continúe abordando esta temática. Ahora bien, en caso que se llegue a un proyecto de resolución sobre resistencia antimicrobiana, la Argentina se pregunta igual que otras delegaciones que han elevado este tema a consideración de la Secretaría, en primer lugar, ¿cuál sería la vía más adecuada que quiere la Conferencia para que un proyecto de resolución sobre resistencia antimicrobiana pueda ser analizado con la seriedad que merita un tema tan importante para la salud humana, animal y vegetal? Y, en segundo lugar, ¿cuál sería el

mejor mecanismo para garantizar una amplia participación y una eficiente participación de los Estados Miembros de la FAO?

Con respecto a este último punto, nosotros señalamos y sugerimos que, tal vez, podría llevarse adelante el proceso de negociación del Proyecto de Resolución en caso de que se arribe a un consenso a través de, por ejemplo, los miembros de distintos grupos regionales. Sin más comentarios, refrendamos el Informe del Comité del Programa.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Observer for Zimbabwe)

Let me begin by congratulating my very good friend, the Chairperson of the Programme Committee and his Committee for a job well done. Chairperson, Zimbabwe associates itself with the statement delivered by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

I have taken the floor to speak on one aspect of what Cameroon said, the issue of Antimicrobial Resistance.

FAO, with funding from the UK and the US, is supporting AMR in eight African countries. Some of the countries are here and they have spoken for themselves, others – Tanzania, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone – are not here.

On behalf of my own country and on behalf of these three other countries, I would like to thank FAO, the UK and the US for supporting work on AMR in our countries. The UK and the US have not only highlighted the dangers of AMR, they have put their money where their mouths are.

In my own country, with technical and financial support from FAO and the UK, we have developed a One Health National AMR Action Plan which is now guiding our activities in combating the problem.

The sectors that are participating in this action plan are agriculture, health and environment. Over the past two years we have directed action towards building public and stakeholder awareness and capacity assessments of our laboratory and capacity and capability, which is instrumental in conducting surveillance on the emergence and the extent of AMR and antimicrobial use patterns.

We are involved in discussions by the tripartite Secretariat comprised of WHO, OIE and FAO in perfecting the monitoring and evaluation tools and with the Codex Alimentarius in updating the surveillance and code of practice for AMR in connection with food safety.

We are also examining the legal provisions for what may need to be improved. We therefore look forward to joining others in discussing a resolution for submission to Conference.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia Group.

We highly appreciate the work done by the Secretariat and the Programme Committee.

Thailand would like to focus on the issue of AMR and its linkages to agriculture, food safety, and environment.

We recognize the urgent need to address the threat of AMR to human, animal, and environmental health which has an impact on the achievement of SDGs.

By 2050, life threatening infections are projected to reach the highest levels and the global economy is projected to lose more than 6 trillion dollars per year due to AMR.

Thailand has already committed to tackle AMR some years ago. The burden of AMR was calculated to result in approximately 3.24 million days of hospitalization and 38 thousand deaths per annum, with an estimated cost of 0.6 percent of the national GDP (2010 data).

Two years ago, the Thai Government endorsed the five-year National Strategic Plan for 2017-2021 based on One Health approach and taking into account the strategic objectives of the WHO/FAO global action plans on AMR.

The solution to the problem posed by AMR requires a holistic and multisectoral approach.

We, therefore, support FAO in continuing its efforts in the tripartite partnership and collaboration with intergovernmental organizations and other relevant partners including CFS, for combatting antimicrobial resistance in the spirit of the One Health approach and based on the existing Resolution of the FAO Conference 4/2015.

We encourage the Secretariat to seek ways to promote the achievement of a common vision among member countries and to ensure that the Organization runs at the same pace with other partners – WHO and OIE.

With this regard, we encourage FAO's work in building the capacity of Members to implement collective actions that enhance public policy and awareness and minimize the emergence and spread of AMR in the food and agriculture sectors. We also welcome FAO to start an inclusive process of discussion and negotiation on a new draft resolution on AMR which will strengthen and facilitate further works of the organization.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Observer for Eritrea)

At the outset, Eritrea appreciates and thanks the Council for preparing a comprehensive report on the 161st Session of the FAO Council.

Eritrea aligns itself with the statement presented by Cameroon on behalf of the African Regional Group. Therefore Eritrea expresses its deepest concern about the rise of the negative impact of antimicrobial resistance. Hence Eritrea would like to request FAO to work on the AMR programme and continue supporting countries like Eritrea and others to strengthen their AMR work establishment.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I really would like to thank all the Members of the Council and those who spoke for the recognition they have given to the hard work of the Programme Committee. I do think with a heavy agenda that we achieved a lot and have given clear direction and recommendations for the future work of the Organization for many important items. Of course, it was already mentioned, I think.

The Strategic Objective evaluations give a clear signal on how we can improve the work of the Organization, how we can learn lessons from the work done to improve it and to get better results on the ground. I think the reflection on gender is crucial for the work of the Organization because we all know that in agriculture women are in the lead and last week we attended the launch of the Global Food Clients Report and it was said we have a manmade crisis and women made solutions, and perhaps that signals the important role of women in this respect. But I think it is important to update the gender policy of FAO to get even better results on the ground.

Mainstreaming biodiversity, it is easy to support but I think it is crucially important to really mainstream biodiversity in all the work and the sectors of FAO, and I am very positive and glad that you are supporting the recommendation of the Programme Committee that we give more time for an inclusive process where the Membership can provide more inputs to the draft resolution. I think we have a very good firm basis but that we need to give more input as Membership to mentioning biodiversity so that we can arrive at a very good and well-supported strategy at the end of this year.

Then, on AMR, I think it is clear that many of you support the hard work being done on AMR by FAO and that this work should continue by FAO in its current form. And there was a reference made to a draft resolution but that was only a draft resolution, which is not tabled by the Programme Committee at this moment.

It was a reference document for the discussion within the Programme Committee because if we want to give a clear signal during the Conference on AMR supporting the current work of FAO, I think we only have about eight weeks left, of course ten weeks between now and the Conference, but it also has to be translated in all languages.

We have eight weeks left and that means that if we can arrive, and hopefully we can arrive, but if we want to give guidance and arrive at a resolution, as I said before, it can only be high-level.

It can only be, I would say, general. It should be based on work already underway. It should not duplicate work which is already being done. I think that is also, I would say, the conditions for, hopefully, informal consultations.

It should not interfere with the current Programme of Work and Budget because that's what we agreed already on today. And it is clear that it should very much focus on added value and not repetition of a resolution which was already adopted by the FAO or a political declaration which was adopted by our Heads of State. It has to be added value.

I think that there are the conditions for a general, concise resolution, if we want to take it that far. But I think underlining the importance of the role of AMR, besides, I would say, other priorities which were reflected in the report of the Programme Committee, is crucial.

Then, coming to the resolution on the further integration of sustainable agriculture approaches, including agroecology, I think it is an excellent resolution. It has the support of the Programme Committee and I see broad support now in the Council. And when it comes to perhaps, I would say, technical error which was reflected by the United States, when it gives lead to misinterpretation, I think we should correct that error because it was not meant how it was interpreted. I think that flexibility we should take.

Last but not least, I would also like to reflect to what was said by my dear friend from Afghanistan who reflected on prioritizing the recommendations of the August evaluation. I think at this moment it is not being done in the recommendations of the Office of Evaluation or in the recommendations of the Programme Committee but the Programme Committee clearly stated that there is a need for prioritization for recommendations coming out of evaluations.

And that is why there were one or two conclusions of the Programme Committee reflected to ask the Office of Evaluation, when they give recommendations, to also give priority to recommendations because that will facilitate our work and also the implementation of the recommendations.

With that I, again, thank the Members of the Council for their support, for the positive reactions of the work of the Programme Committee and, again, I would like to thank both the Management as well as the Secretariat for supporting us in arriving in this report and arriving on your broad support.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General Climate and Natural Resources)

I would like to start by thanking all the Groups, all the Member Countries who have given their support. I am referring to the proposal to have a resolution on AMR, to work on the biodiversity strategy and also the resolution on sustainable agriculture.

Maybe I will start with the resolution on AMR, why we consider it is important to have a resolution on AMR.

Indeed, we had a resolution approved by the Conference in 2015. This resolution was approved before the approval of the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. If we do not tackle AMR, it will not be possible for us to achieve several of the goals.

We cannot eradicate poverty, we cannot achieve sustainable food security and also we cannot have health for all, to mention of some of them.

And if you look at the perspective, today or this year, every year, several hundred thousand people are dying caused by AMR and if we do not take any action, in 2050 it will be ten million per year. It is showing us that it is important.

And 60 percent of the pathogens affecting humans are coming from the animals, showing that food security, the way we are dealing with food security, our food chain is affecting also human health, and this is the reason why we work in the framework of the tripartite where human, animal and environment are tackled together.

Because we are dealing with a complex issue, we need a synergetic action and also global governance. And if, in the resolution in 2015, we did not integrate what was coming from the Sustainable Development Agenda, in our view it will be important that we have a new resolution.

On top of that, in 2016, in a high-level event, the Intergovernment Action Group was established, which will be presenting a report to the Secretary-General this week. It is true that we do not know if the Secretary-General will accept or not all the recommendations but one of the recommendations is to create a global leadership on AMR, and the global leadership on AMR will come from the tripartite.

Having this resolution will reinforce what FAO is doing. We are now working in more than 34 countries on AMR. You can ask me to continue to work without a resolution, it is true, but if we are in equal footing, us and our partners – WHO, OIE – which will be having a resolution this year, I think this will empower all of us and particularly FAO in moving our work on AMR forward.

I think everybody agrees on the importance of having a new resolution reinforcing what is new coming from the previous resolution.

Now, what is the extent? How far we should go in the resolution? To me, I could see we have some recommendations coming from Brazil, coming from the US, Chile, Australia and what I could see, it was proposed by Argentina, to have a discussion under the regional group leadership because we see it as a Members-driven resolution which will be supported by the Secretariat, and we are willing to support in a way that in a very short timeframe we can come up with a resolution.

But I would leave the process maybe under a proposal coming from the Chairperson of the Council who is more experienced in how to move forward on those kinds of negotiated resolutions.

As I said, we are willing to contribute, we are willing to provide the support and receiving guidance on how far we should go in the resolution on AMR. But we consider it is timely, it is important and we, FAO as an Organization, as a Secretariat, will be feeling empowered when our Members will be supporting us in the Conference with such a resolution.

Sure, in the field of food and agriculture, where FAO has a comparative advantage, working with UNEP on environment issues, because it is not only crops. We are talking about fish, we are talking about agriculture and all of this is very complex. We are talking about water and it is really complex and interlinked.

Regarding the biodiversity strategy, maybe let me go back to what came from the technical meetings. The COFI, the COFO, they all requested FAO to work on a biodiversity strategy, bringing the sectoral parts of biodiversity.

And COAG in October requested FAO to prepare a strategy on biodiversity and recommended, if possible, a link to available resources to undertake regional discussions.

Due to the timeframe we had, we were not able to develop a strategy and we considered it important to share with the members in the Programme Committee what could be an outline and the principal actions coming from the strategy on biodiversity.

We showed that it was impossible to have an inclusive process to prepare a strategy on biodiversity to be presented to the Conference in June and we consider if you want to have a document where all the countries and all the sectors feel they are priorities expressed and interpreted in the strategy, we will need more time.

This is the reason why the Programme Committee made this proposal. We share with the Members of the Council a draft proposal. It is a draft.

We are proposing that the consultation be until 10 May. It will be given 40 days since when it was published. We consider this enough time. Not to come to edit what is there but to come up with what every country wishes to see expressed in the biodiversity strategy and giving guidance to the Secretariat.

After that, we will be integrating the comments. It will be impossible, from May, to have a document to be presented to the Conference but afterwards, as we have resources financed by Switzerland and the Netherlands, we envisage to undertake regional consultations on the document, integrating the comments received from the Members until 10 May.

And then we will follow the normal process: it will be submitted to the Programme Committee in November and later on to the Council in December. This is how we see the timeframe. But, again, we

want to have a consultative process. We would like to integrate as much as possible all the comments coming from the countries, from the regions, and also the sectors, because we have the same request from the COFI and the COFO and it has to integrate the fisheries, the forestry and also the biodiversity for agriculture sectors and how we have an integration of all of those comments.

We would also like to have this document handy for FAO contributions to the post-2020 process. You know that China will be organizing the CBD meeting where the post-2020 will be discussed, and we hope that this strategy will empower FAO, will give guidance to FAO on how we can be contributing to this process.

Regarding the resolution on sustainable agriculture, I think we can integrate the comments we received here. They are not fundamental comments. It will improve the resolution and, if all the Members agree, the Secretariat will be willing to integrate all of those comments.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

I would like to react briefly on the comment from the delegate of the Russian Federation regarding the Funding Compact. Indeed the Funding Compact, a very important element of the UN Development System Reform, will be endorsed only in May in the ECOSOC operational segment.

This is true for the Funding Compact, this is true also for the other important components of the UN Reform, amongst them there is a new UNDAF, the multicountry office reviews, the system-wide strategic document, the question of the levy, the regional review. All these components of the UN Reform are aspects that FAO is very intensively involved in the formulation.

Regarding the Funding Compact, one important point. The Members of the Council may know that the dialogue has been concluded on this in New York after the fourth round of consultations and we believe that we have a document that is now ready for a good discussion at ECOSOC.

The Compact is guided by the following parameters: national ownership and leadership, mutual accountability, transparency, diversity, results focus. This should help countries to step up resource mobilisation for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 at country level.

And we believe in FAO that the final version of the document to be reviewed by ECOSOC is a good document that we support.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings us to the end of our discussion on this item I can now conclude and share my conclusions with Members.

So, it is Item 6 *Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee*

1. The Council endorsed the Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee, and in particular:

a) welcomed the evaluation of the strategy and vision for FAO's work on nutrition, and management support to the recommendations presented in the evaluation; and looked forward to reviewing an updated and upgraded Nutrition Strategy at its December 2019 session with an expanded scope, which would give consideration to nutrition from the perspective of sustainable agriculture and food systems and healthy diets, and addressing all forms of malnutrition;

b) welcomed the evaluation of FAO's work on gender and appreciated the relevance and validity of FAO's Policy on Gender Equality as an overarching framework to guide the gender work of the Organization; and recognized the opportunity to update FAO's Policy on Gender Equality, in alignment with the UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women;

c) appreciated the synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective evaluations, recognizing the strategic direction and efforts undertaken in transforming of the Organization towards addressing Strategic Objectives agreed by the Members; and looked forward to discussions on the future direction of the Organization in the broader context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Repositioning of the United Nations Development System;

d) welcomed the follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Reduction in Rural poverty (SO3) and the relevance of FAO's work on rural poverty reduction and its overarching goal, and as a Strategic Objective of the Organization;

e) noted guidance on the further development of the strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors had been included in the document CL 161/3 Web Annex 2; stressed the need for further consultation with other relevant stakeholders and noting that inputs from FAO Members were still being collected. In consideration of the above, the Council recommended the Conference mandate the Council to endorse the Strategy before 2020;

f) recommended submission to the FAO Conference of the COAG Draft Resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, as included in Annex 1 of document CL 161/3 and CL 161/LIM/;

g) welcomed the continued work of FAO in addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in agriculture, within the context of the "One Health" approach; agreed on the need for further support, through extrabudgetary resources, for the Tripartite collaboration between FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for combatting AMR; and supported a process of informal consultation led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council, in collaboration with the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, with the Regional Groups with a view to preparing a draft Conference Resolution which may be adopted by the Conference at its 41st Session in June 2019; and

h) welcomed the progress report on the Action Plan of the Office of Evaluation and on the implementation of Programme Committee recommendations; and took note of arrangements for the November 2019 session of the Programme Committee.

These are my conclusions and the floor is opened for any remarks or comments.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

On paragraph (g), which I think was about AMR, it is more of a question perhaps for the Chair of the Programme Committee. When you introduced this item and when you were just responding to our comments from the floor, you mentioned that, given the time constraints, a high-level resolution reaffirming FAO's commitment to combat AMR is the most feasible in the timeframe we have, also picking up the points from our Deputy Director-General about what might be included.

My inclination is to include something in the decision that reflects that, "a draft high level resolution reaffirming FAO's commitment," so that any negotiations that occur have a clear parameter within which we are negotiating but I am happy to take advice from you on whether you think that is necessary or not.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

Of course, as Chair I am in your hands but, having set the timeframe available, about eight weeks, it has to be a high-level and concise resolution, otherwise we will never arrive at a consensus. And my concern is if you are going to add now things to the text, before you know we have five new lines where we fight about these words or trying to already define the content of the resolution.

And when you were sitting here, I saw a lot of nodding when we spoke about a high-level general focussed resolution, not duplicating the work. I think that is the basis and that is the understanding, I think, if you can agree to this resolution.

And I think to avoid lengthy negotiations, what should go in and not should go in, I think we could stick to this because you are part of the process.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

With regard to this paragraph on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), before we conclude we would highly appreciate it if you could explain to us the process of informal consultations which we are going to agree on. Would it be possible for Member States to be part of this process in order to prepare and agree on the draft text of this resolution?

And I also would like to draw your attention to the paragraph (f), what is the document CL 161/LIM/? We understood that the draft resolution is included in the first document, CL 161/3. What is the second document? It is not clear.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Could you please go a bit up to the sub-paragraph on the evaluation of FAO's work on gender? Yes, I think that the discussions also highlighted the importance of an action plan and of monitoring and reporting, including regular annual progress reports.

I would like this idea to be reflected in the language. Perhaps we could just add at the end "and to develop an action plan by November 2020 at the latest, stressing the importance of regular monitoring and reporting on an annual basis".

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Several Members, including our group, have made reference to the recommendations of the Programme Committee for the need of additional resources to be allocated from the flat nominal budget for the Joint of FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme on food safety for the IPPC and for biodiversity, and we believe that this recommendation of the Programme Committee should be reflected here, probably on the item under Report of the Programme Committee.

And, if not, then under your conclusion on item 3 which is still open, for the sake of not prolonging discussions, we come back to it in the conclusion of item 3. We can add it here and then we can have another small paragraph indicating the Council's support for the recommendation of the Programme Committee in this regard. So, we propose to add another paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Just one comment, Romania. I think we agreed on this paragraph under item 3. It has already been agreed. It is under paragraph 6(e).

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

In order not to have to come back to it, would you kindly read it now, that paragraph?

CHAIRPERSON

The Council further requested that FAO increase the funding in the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 through efficiencies and cost savings without negatively impacting the delivery of the agreed Programme of Work or, if necessary, from the areas of technical de-emphasis to the extent feasible for (i) FAO's work on the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and on WHO/FAO's Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme, and (ii) mainstreaming biodiversity at FAO.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We were under the wrong impression on this one, so thank you, it is clear now.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

First of all, we support the suggestion made by Canada on evaluation of gender.

Could you go up to paragraph (a) on evaluation on nutrition?

From our original perspective, we think it is important to strengthen capacity in this area, so could you add at the end of this paragraph something like "stressed the importance of strengthening capacity, especially in decentralised offices".

Sra Silvina KATCHERIAN (Argentina)

¿Podríamos ir al inciso c), sobre la estrategia de biodiversidad? En ese inciso se hace referencia a todas las partes interesadas y, si no me equivoco, en este foro se discutió circular los documentos para que los Estados Miembros pudieran brindar sus comentarios.

No se hizo referencia a todas las partes interesadas sino que se ofreció a los Miembros que pudieran dar sus comentarios sobre el Proyecto de Estrategia sobre Biodiversidad. En ese sentido, quisiéramos

que se hiciera referencia a Estados Miembros y no a “other relevant stakeholders”, o sea, “Consultation with Member States.”

¿Podríamos ir al párrafo g) sobre el proyecto de resolución sobre resistencia antimicrobiana? La Delegación de Argentina quisiera hacer mención a que nos gustaría que, cuando se hace referencia a los Grupos Regionales, que se aclare que sean Miembros de Grupos Regionales y no un solo Miembro de Grupos Regionales, para que la participación de los Estados sea bastante inclusiva.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nosotros queríamos expresar que compartimos la duda expresada por la Federación de Rusia respecto a la referencia a la Resolución sobre agricultura sostenible. Nos gustaría ver de nuevo el párrafo y, además, queríamos saber porque hubo alguna sugerencia, incluyendo de mi país, sobre algunas pequeñas modificaciones al texto de la resolución. Queríamos saber en qué minuto se va a ver.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We would be more comfortable with the proposal made by the Chairman of the Programme Committee, specifically mentioning generic objectives and concise resolution.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Brazil. Chile, I did not quite catch your point about your suggestion. Could you repeat those?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

En el punto f) se hace referencia a dos documentos. Rusia planteó una pregunta, ¿Por qué hay dos documentos mencionados?

En la intervención, nosotros hicimos una proposición acerca de cambio de texto en la Resolución, una palabra. Y nos interesaría saber cuándo vamos a ver la posibilidad de cambiar ese texto.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, on the question of two documents, I think one had been deleted. So, it is just one document now. As for the question by the Russian Federation on the process of consultation with regional groups, my suggestion would be that each regional group could be represented by the Chair and Vice-Chair and by an agreed number of representatives from that region of other Members, and that would be a reasonably group, as it were, to have a focussed discussion. Because, as the Chairman of the Programme Committee pointed out, there is not much time left for these consultations to come up with a Resolution by the Conference. Does that answer your question, Chile?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Mi pregunta tiene que ver con que sugerimos un cambio en el texto de la Resolución sobre agricultura sostenible. Queremos saber si eso lo vamos a revisar ahora.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we have your proposal?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

La sugerencia es en el literal e), romanito iii). En que solicitamos cambiar la palabra “tecnología” por “herramientas”. Quedaría, entonces: “Mediante la utilización de herramientas pertinentes y adaptadas al contexto”.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I understand now much better what the distinguished Representative of Chile was aiming at. I think when you read the point (iii) we refer to technology and also to a tool because ICT is much more a tool than a technology.

So, perhaps we could say “adapted technology or tool” because then you reflect both specificities following. Because biotechnology is a technology and the ICT is much more a tool. So, if you refer to technology or tool, then you reflect both.

Because then it would read “and context adapted technology or tool – including ICT and biotechnology – as it can offer” and the rest of the text. Then you have both. I think then you solve the issue.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

In the continuation of what you explained to us with regard to the informal consultative process, we kindly ask you not to set strict rules in terms of number of Member States who could participate in this process, taking into account that we have different Regional Groups composition and in our Regional Group we are more than 50 members. Some Regional Groups only have two members. So, please do not make strict rules in this issue.

CHAIRPERSON

I was not going to set a number. It is up to the Region. So, they will decide on that.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Back to the draft resolution on sustainable agricultural approaches, since we were just talking about that with the Chileans. And while we were talking about paragraph (e), I would like, again, if we could just emphasize that our suggested edit was in paragraph (e), then subparagraph (i), which was, again, moving the word “normative” from its current location instead to “work”. So, I know that you have already indicated you are going to make that change. I just wanted to confirm.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Solamente quisiera señalar que hemos visto algunos problemas en la traducción del inglés al español en el proyecto de resolución y nos gustaría después poder hacer las observaciones necesarias.

Mr Mohd Sallehuddin HASSAN (Malaysia)

On the AMR resolution, in sub-paragraph (g), I would like to support the proposal made by the Chair of the Programme Committee, which was spotted by Australia and Brazil, on the inclusion of parameters to provide clearer guidance to the process of developing the resolution.

The resolution should be high-level, reaffirming the existing resolution, while focussing new elements that add value to the existing resolution.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just coming back to my proposal, I have not seen recognising the paragraph. So, I think we almost all agreed that the proposal presented by the Chairman of the Programme Committee could be acceptable for a generic, objective and concise resolution. So, I would very much like that this could be reflected in the text.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Brazil. Would you have a specific wording?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

“Preparing a generic, objective and concise draft Conference Resolution”.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Regarding the proposal by the United States to exclude ‘normative’ from the resolution on sustainable agriculture approaches, we have difficulties understanding the reason behind the request. So, maybe we can kindly ask the US to elaborate a little on the reason they might have for wanting to exclude ‘normative’ from the resolution.

CHAIRPERSON

US, would you like to comment on that?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

It might be because I speak so quickly, I am sorry. We do not want to remove 'normative', we simply want to shift its location on the paragraph. So that the first part of that paragraph would read 'strengthening science and evidence-based normative work' rather than its current point.

Again, our goal is that all that normative work should be science-based. So, we fully support the European Union in wanting to maintain 'normative' in the structure and our recommendation is putting it right before the word 'work'.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

We have some questions with regard to the proposal of the distinguished delegate of Brazil. With regard to these three definitions, "generic, objective and concise", probably I would ask through you the Brazilian delegate to explain to us what it means in practical terms. What does generic and objective mean? We think all the resolutions should be objective. We understand the term "concise", but it will probably need more clarification on generic and objective.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

(no microphone)...of the Programme Committee. In fact, it was not my proposal. If we look back, and not long ago, we can find many resolutions that are not so objective, many resolutions that are not so concise and many resolutions that are not so generic and I do not want to be specific. But about this same issue, there was a very detailed proposal for a resolution presented to the Programme Committee and this is the kind of document I understand should not be very helpful for our discussion.

CHAIRPERSON

Chair of the Programme Committee could you assist?

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

Actually, what was said by Australia, the moment we are going to define how general and how concise and how focussed the resolution will be, we are probably already drafting the resolution, which I think we could do but I do not think we have the time for it.

But also in response to the remarks made by the distinguished delegate of Brazil, indeed there was a resolution tabled based on the discussion in an informal meeting of the Programme Committee. That was discussed but that was not the idea of the resolution which we should develop.

Therefore, it is not tabled, not brought forward by the Programme Committee to the Council, because that was too detailed, not general enough, sometimes duplicating the work of others. So, that is exactly what we do not want to see.

We want to see the opposite. It is a much more general resolution, focussed, added value, not duplicating work, not redirecting funding, etc. That is the resolution we are focussing on and that can be caught by these three words, it can be caught by, I would say, high level, general, objective, concise, focussed and we can add six other words but I think we should try not to add too many words to this conclusion.

CHAIRPERSON

Ambassador, I entirely agree, I think we should move on from this and see what the wording of the resolution is and the Chair of the Programme Committee has explained quite well what the objective would be to draw up what type of resolution. So my suggestion is let's have this consultation and see the wording, it has to be what the Chair of the Programme just explained, and go from there, rather than trying to pre-empt what the resolution should be. So if everybody agrees on that, we can move forward from the AMR Resolution.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

Mr Chairman, could you explain again? Does it mean that the Drafting Committee will solve the issue with the use of "generic, concise", and probably other definitions or we agree on the text as it is now?

CHAIRPERSON

The Drafting Committee would have, what the Chairperson of the Programme Committee explained, like I said, not only the conclusions before it, it also has the Verbatims and the Chairperson of the Programme Committee has explained, I think twice, what type of Resolution is envisaged considering the timeframe available to.

So yes, the Drafting Committee can look at the text together with the conclusions of the Chairperson and the Verbatim Records and it will come back to plenary, their report.

I see no further request for the floor so we can conclude this item and move to the next one.

Item 7. Reports of the 174th (6 February 2019) and 175th (18-22 March 2019) Sessions of the Finance Committee

Point 7. Rapports des cent soixante-douzième et cent soixante-treizième sessions du Comité financier (5-6 et 12-16 novembre 2018, respectivement)

Tema 7. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 174.º (6 de febrero de 2019) y 175.º (18-22 de marzo de 2019) del Comité de Finanzas

CL 161/4; CL 161/8

Item 7.1 Status of Contributions and Arrears

Point 7.1 État des contributions et des arriérés

Tema 7.1 Estado de las contribuciones y los atrasos

CL 161/LIM/2

Item 7.2 Scale of Contributions 2020-21

Point 7.2 Barème des contributions 2020-2021

Tema 7.2 Escala de cuotas para 2020-21

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 7, *Reports of the 174th and 175th Sessions of the Finance Committee*. This item has two sub-items namely: sub-item 7.1, *Status of Contributions and Arrears*, and sub-item 7.2, *Scale of Contributions*.

I draw your attention to document CL 161/LIM/2 that sets out the Status of Contributions and Arrears as at 1 April 2019.

Member Nations currently owe FAO USD 282.49 million and EUR 173.35 million for 2019 and prior years, which represents 98.09 percent of current assessments and complicates FAO's liquidity management.

As of 1 April 2019, the Organization had collected USD 64.58 million and EUR 56.87 million in respect of 2019 assessments. This represents 23.57 percent of US dollar assessments and 30.22 percent of Euro assessments (26.60 percent consolidated).

During 2019, USD 1.75 million and EUR 0.39 million was received from Members in full settlement of arrears and USD 3.75 million and EUR 3.56 million was received for partial payment of arrears.

As of 1 April 2019, 73.40 percent of 2019 assessed contributions still needed to be settled. This is lower as compared to the same period last year (75.53 percent).

Based on the latest information from Members about their expected payment dates, the Regular Programme cash level for 2019 is expected to be sufficient to cover operational needs until the end of December 2019.

72 Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 2018 and previous years and 30 owed arrears in such amounts as would prejudice their right to vote at the next Session of the Conference in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution.

I now give the floor to Mr Lupiño Lazaro, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, to introduce the item.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to present the reports of the 174th and 175th Sessions of the Finance Committee. These reports are submitted to the Council in documents CL 161/4 and CL 161/8. The 174th Session was convened to deal with WFP matters and has been submitted to the WFP Executive Board for its consideration.

As agreed with the Independent Chairperson of the Council, I shall now present to you salient highlights of the report of the 175th Meeting of the Finance Committee except the MTP and PWB. I am aware that it is already late afternoon, which is conducive to relaxation after that vigorous discussion on the Programme Committee. However, please bear with me since I will be presenting a bit of a lengthy report, since, similar to the Programme Committee, we had a heavy agenda, which I will report in four main sections.

The first main section is monitoring of the financial position. The Committee reviewed the Financial Position of the Organization (FC 175/2) as at 31 December 2018 and welcomed the information provided that the Organization's liquidity was expected to be sufficient to cover operational needs through December 31, 2019. Recognizing that the Organization's ongoing cash flow health was dependent on the timely payment of assessed contributions, the Committee urged Member Nations to make payments of assessed contributions on-time and in full. The Committee noted that the general fund deficit had decreased as of 31 December 2018 as compared with the end of 2017.

The Committee noted the decrease and the TCP expenditure during 2018 and requested the Secretariat to maintain TCP expenditures at a level that ensured full implementation of the TCP appropriation as approved by the Conference, and requested further information on TCP expenditures at its Session in November 2019.

The Committee reviewed and endorsed the proposed scale of contributions for the biennium 2020-2021 set out in the Annex of Document CL161/4 and transmitted to the Council a draft resolution for adoption of the scale by the Conference. This draft resolution is presented in paragraph 14 of Document CL161/4.

The Committee noted the information presented in document FC 175/6 Rev.1 regarding Measures to Improve Timely Payment of Assessed Contributions, and further noted the recommendations of the 108th Session of the CCLM to the Council.

The second section is on budgetary matters. The Committee took note of the forecasted 2018-19 budgetary performances arising from implementation of the Program of Work and authorized forecasted budgetary transfers in favour of Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 from Chapters 6 and 8 through 11.

The Committee took note of the use of the 2016-17 unspent balance, through replenishment of the Special Fund for Development Finance Activities (SFDFA) and noted Management's confirmation that the full amount of USD 3.9 million had been allocated to support countries in the formulation of and preparation for technically sound Green Climate Fund projects and requested the Secretariat to provide information on expenditure to date of their SFDFA.

The Committee requested the Secretariat provide options to fully fund the Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) at the same time when the next update on forecasted budgetary performance and budgetary transfers is presented at the November 2018-19 Session of the Finance Committee for consideration and approval.

The third section is on human resources in its review of HR Management, the Committee welcomed the additional information and statistical data provided in response to earlier requests of the Committee and the Council.

The Committee emphasized the importance of addressing the issues identified in the review by the Office of the Inspector General on "Recruitment and Onboarding of Professional Staff" and ensuring full implementation of the recommendations presented. The Committee welcomed the indication that the Office of the Inspector General would carry out a review of the staff mobility programme and looked forward to receiving information on the recommendations arising from the review at a future session.

The Committee underlined its previous guidance that the efforts to improve the geographic balance of consultants and geographic representation of staff should retain merit as the primary criterion for recruitment and encouraged the Secretariat in its efforts towards gender parity of the workforce and in its outreach efforts for FAO's Global Internship, Volunteers and Fellows Programme (IVF Programme).

The fourth section is oversight. The Committee took note of the FAO Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2018, acknowledging the important role of the FAO Audit Committee in providing independent assurance and advice in the mandated areas under its terms of reference and welcoming the positive assessment on the operation of the Office of the Inspector General.

The Committee appreciated the Committee's advice on accountability, internal control policies and related areas of work, and looked forward to a comprehensive status report from Management on the implementation of the Audit Committee's recommendations at its next session, in November 2019.

The Committee reviewed and supported the Director-General's proposals that Ms Anjana Das of India and Mr Fayezul Choudhury of the United States of America be appointed as members of the FAO Audit Committee for an initial period of three years. The Committee agreed to submit the recommendation to the Council with the appointments to be effective from 1 July 2019.

The Committee acknowledged the additional clarifications provided by the Secretariat that the selection process included the participation of an independent external member who is an expert in oversight matters and urged the inclusion of independent expertise in the future selection of audit committee members, taking into account the practices of other organizations to ensure an independent selection process and proper geographic and gender representation.

The Committee reviewed the 2018 Annual Report of the Inspector General, appreciating the quality of the Report and the analysis of issues presented, and welcoming and encouraging the good cooperation and convergence of views on internal control issues, between the Office of the Inspector General and Management, and efforts to promote implementation of control improvements.

The Committee noted with concern the challenges faced by the Office of the Inspector General to achieve its work plan. The Committee reiterated the importance of continued attention by Management to strengthening internal control, in particular in high-risk areas and decentralized offices.

As agreed at its 170th Session in May 2018, a Working Group of Finance Committee Members had met to review the proposals received for the provision of external audit services to the Organization and had drawn up a shortlist of two candidates, which were France and India, to make oral presentations at the 175th Session of the Finance Committee.

Members observed that the presentation by the shortlisted bidders were both of high quality and expressed their appreciation to both candidates for the proposals submitted.

The Committee acknowledged the statement of the Legal Counsel that there was no legal impediment to the External Auditor being appointed from the same country as a candidate for the position of Director-General. Following careful consideration of their presentations and proposals, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Council the resolution set out in paragraph 36 of CL161/4 for the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, as external auditor of the Organization for the six-year period 2020-2025.

The Committee also appreciated the excellent work and reports provided by the incumbent External Auditor, the Commission on Audit of the Philippines during its term of office.

The Committee noted the information provided by the Secretariat in response to a request made at its 173rd Session to undertake a review of the independence of the ethics and ombudsman function.

The Committee supported the proposals to enhance the ombudsman and ethics functions by establishing separate arrangements through the appointment of an Ethics Officer reporting to the Director-General, allocation of adequate resources at headquarters and in Regional Offices to cover the ombudsman function, and the annual reporting of the Ethics Officer to the Finance Committee.

The Committee recommended that the Terms of Reference of the Ethics Officer be reviewed by the Audit Committee, prior to issuance of a vacancy announcement. The Committee supported the proposal for the application of term limits for the Inspector General with a fixed term of up to seven years, subject to further consultation with the Audit Committee, and agreed to examine proposals regarding term limits for senior staff of the OIG.

The Committee concurred with the proposed changes to the Secretariat of the Audit Committee and agreed to submit the amended text of Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee to the Council for its endorsement. The amended text is presented in paragraph 38 (f) of CL161/4.

The Committee also requested that the UN Joint Inspection Unit's report on the "Review of Whistle-blower Policies and Practices in the UN System Organizations" be included in the agenda of the November 2019 Session of the Committee along with an update from the Secretariat on the implementation of outstanding recommendations.

The Committee reviewed the mechanism for setting the level of representation allowances for Deputy Directors-General and Assistant Directors-General, as well as proposals related to the representation allowance and housing arrangements of the Director-General.

As regards the representation allowance for Deputy Directors-General and Assistant Directors-General, the Committee recommended that the Council set new levels of representation allowances at USD 4 000 per annum for DDGs and USD 3 000 per annum for ADGs to come into effect on 1 August 2019.

Perhaps it could be one of the more unpopular recommendations made by the Finance Committee. As regards to representation allowance and housing arrangements for the Director-General, the Committee advised that changed to the current arrangements were not warranted.

In conclusion, Members of the Council, Mr Chair overall the sessions of the Committee were very productive and I believe that it was possible to address a number of important issues the Organization is facing.

At this juncture, I wish to express outmost appreciation to each Member of the Committee who are representatives from the following countries: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, Germany, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Sudan, and the United States of America, the Vice-Chair who we can count on in keeping the Committee discussions alive and interesting.

On behalf of these members, I would like to extend our gratitude to the FAO Management led by the Deputy Director-General, Operations, Mr Laurent Thomas, and the Secretariat, in particular, Mr David McSherry and their staff for their engagement and efficient assistance in our deliberations.

And, finally, many thanks to all of you, the Members of FAO for providing us this opportunity to help progress the important work of this Organization.

Now, to avoid confusion I will not ask the Council Members to adopt the Finance Committee's Report en bloc but would be pleased to listen to your comments and provide any further explanations you may require.

M. Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun prend la parole sur ce point de l'ordre du jour au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

Cependant, avant de prononcer mon intervention, je voudrais signaler que les questions financières, y compris celles touchant aux arriérés de contributions, aux contributions mises en recouvrement et au barème des contributions proposé pour 2020-2021, feront l'objet d'une déclaration de la Zambie.

Nous félicitons le Comité financier pour les débats fructueux lors de l'examen des questions qui lui étaient soumises au cours des deux sessions de février et mars 2019. Nous apprécions les orientations techniques fournies au Conseil pour décision.

Dans un premier temps, nous prenons acte de la décision du Comité financier, conformément à ses prérogatives, d'approuver les virements prévus entre les chapitres du budget découlant de la mise en œuvre du Programme de travail 2018-2019 de la FAO.

En matière de gestion des ressources humaines, nous faisons nôtres les avis du Comité financier, notamment en ce qui concerne l'application des recommandations du Bureau de l'Inspecteur général relatif au recrutement du personnel du cadre organique. Nous attendons par ailleurs de recevoir du Comité financier, son avis sur l'examen que conduira, cette année, le Bureau de l'Inspecteur général en rapport avec le programme de mobilité du personnel.

Pour ce qui concerne le Comité de vérification de la FAO, nous prenons acte des propositions du Directeur général sur la composition de ce Comité et convions le Conseil à entériner les nominations proposées. Ayant pris note des déclarations du Conseiller juridique et de l'Inspecteur général indiquant qu'il n'y avait pas d'obstacle juridique à l'indépendance d'un membre du Comité de vérification lorsqu'il est de la même nationalité que le Directeur général en exercice, nous pensons que sur le plan de l'éthique, il serait souhaitable qu'une telle situation soit évitée.

Revenant sur le Rapport de l'Inspecteur général pour l'année 2018, le Groupe Afrique se félicite des commentaires du Comité financier faisant état de la pertinence des activités du Bureau de l'Inspecteur général en vue de l'amélioration de la gestion et de la gouvernance de l'Organisation. Nous restons convaincus que ce rapport d'activités est un outil essentiel qui stimule les convergences de vue en matière de contrôle interne entre la Direction et les Membres. Il nous paraît évident que l'indépendance du Bureau de l'Inspecteur général est intimement liée au niveau des ressources financières et humaines qui sont mises à sa disposition pour conduire ses activités.

S'agissant maintenant de la sélection et de la nomination du Commissaire aux comptes pour la période 2020-2025, nous approuvons la recommandation du Comité financier relative à la nomination du Contrôleur et Vérificateur général des comptes de l'Inde en tant que Commissaire aux comptes de l'Organisation et invitons le Conseil à décider de cette nomination en approuvant le projet de résolution qui lui est soumis.

Le Groupe Afrique a aussi reçu favorablement les recommandations du Comité financier sur l'Examen de l'indépendance du Bureau de l'Inspecteur général et des fonctions de chargé des questions d'éthique et de médiateur. Nous attendons le résultat de la consultation, au sein du Comité de vérification de la FAO, sur la durée du mandat de l'Inspecteur général. En même temps, nous convions le Conseil à entériner la proposition relative à la modification du paragraphe 5 du mandat du Comité de vérification.

Pour ce qui est des questions relatives au Programme alimentaire mondial, nous nous en tenons à la décision du Conseil d'administration de février 2019 sur le Plan de gestion du PAM 2019-2021.

Avec ces commentaires, nous invitons le Conseil à adopter les deux rapports du Comité financier.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

Japan has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group on the Reports of the 174th Session of the Finance Committee on WFP matters held on 6 February 2019 and the 175th Session of the Finance Committee on FAO matters held from 18 to 22 March 2019.

First and foremost, we would like to express our appreciation to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee Mr Lupiño Lazaro for his outstanding leadership in conducting the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and also the Finance Committee efficiently with a very balanced approach. We would also like to thank FAO Management and Secretariat for the information and support they provided.

The Asia Regional Group appreciates the Committee's observation on the WFP's Management Plan with regard to the proposed new organizational structure and supports the proposal to wait for the views of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) before finalizing this in the next session of the Executive Board.

The Asia Regional Group notes the views and recommendations reflected in the Report of 175th Session of the Finance Committee on FAO matters and would like to highlight the following points:

With regard to the Organization's financial position, we are satisfied that the liquidity of the Organization is sufficient to cover the operational needs through 31 December 2019 and encourage all Member Nations to continue the timely payment of assessed contribution to maintain a sound financial

health. We also note the decrease in the General Fund deficit from USD 899.3 million as at 31 December 2017 to a USD 851.8 million on 31 December 2018 but would like to stress our concern on the underfunding of the Staff related liabilities and agree, with the Finance Committee, to defer the incremental funding of the After-service Medical Coverage past service liability. We request the Secretariat to continue to participate in the UN working group in order to find unified solution on this issue. We welcome the FAO Scale of Contributions for 2020-21 to follow the United Nations Scale of Assessments and endorse the Resolution for its adoption by the 41st Session of the Conference.

We note with appreciation that there are improvements with increased efficiency in Human Resources processes and procedures, as well as geographic and gender balance in Human Resources management. The Asia Regional Group welcomes the new policy in recruitment of the consultants while encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts to achieve equitable geographic representation and gender balance in the Organization, including through flexible approaches, considering the different practical needs from headquarters and decentralized offices.

The Asia Regional Group acknowledges the significant reduction in the number of non, under and over represented countries and the increased number of equitably represented countries, and encourages the Secretariat to pursue an equitable representation efforts at the senior positions of the Organization. We would also like to encourage management to give due emphasis in its outreach efforts in specific regions for the FAO's Global Internship, Volunteers and Fellowship (IVF) Programme, including the indigenous community to train the youth as the change maker to their respective societies.

The Asia Regional Group welcomes the recommendation made by the Finance Committee to appoint the Comptroller and Auditor General of India as External Auditor of FAO for 2020-25. We join the Committee in appreciating the excellent work by the incumbent External Auditor, the Commission on Audit of the Philippines.

We appreciate the 2018 Annual Report of the Audit Committee and their recommendations regarding accountability and internal control policies, fraud and corrupt practices, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, and request the Secretariat to pay high attention to the conclusions as well as to take timely actions on the Implementation of the Audit Committee Recommendations.

With these comments, the Asia Regional Group endorses the reports of the Finance Committee.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. Let me start by thanking the Finance Committee for their work over the past two years.

Let me also commend the work of the Finance Committee at its 175th session. We welcome the advice to the Council as contained in the Report on this session and we would like to limit our comments to some of the points made in that Report.

We are satisfied that FAO's liquidity position is expected to be sufficient to cover operational needs through the end of 2019. At the same time, we urge members to make payments of assessed contributions on time and in full, and to pay their outstanding contributions from previous years.

We endorse the proposed Scale of Contributions for the biennium 2020-21.

Regarding the Programme and Budgetary Transfers for the current biennium, we fully support the FC's request for the Secretariat to explore options to fully fund the Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and the IPPC and to present them at the November 2019 session of the Finance Committee for consideration and approval.

Regarding the Adjustment to the PWB 2020-21 that will be submitted for consideration by the Council in December 2019, we would like to underline the request by the FC for further review of opportunities for savings and efficiency measures, as well as areas of emphasis and de-emphasis; and for continued monitoring and reporting of cost increase assumptions.

On Human Resources Management, we would like to highlight the Office of the Inspector General's audit on 'Recruitment and Onboarding of Professional Staff', which has revealed numerous deficiencies in the recruitment process, especially in regard of appointments through a roster.

Unfortunately, there is evidence that, in a great number of cases, the candidate hired was not the most qualified to perform the job. We have continually urged Management to make sure that when selecting candidates, paramount importance is given to their technical competence. The OIG audit shows that there is a lot of room for improvement here. We urge Management to draw the required lessons from this audit. In this regard, it is all the more important to retain merit as the primary criterion of recruitment, also in light of the fact that FAO is outperforming the Key Performance Indicator on geographic distribution of staff.

We are pleased that the Office of the Inspector General will carry out a review of the staff mobility programme, during 2019, as requested by the Council.

Moreover, we remain concerned about the persistently high vacancy rate of almost 15%, which should be brought down considerably.

Many of the problems in the area of Human Resources Management are also highlighted in the recently published MOPAN 2017-18 Report on FAO. Given the long persistence of many of these problems, we are, at this point, looking to the incoming leadership to constructively address them without further delay.

We endorse the FAO recommendation to appoint Ms Anjana Das and Mr Fayeul Choudhury as members of the FAO Audit Committee. Likewise, we support the FC's recommendation to appoint the Comptroller and Auditor of India as External Auditor of the Organization.

We share the concerns expressed in the 2018 Annual Reports of both the Audit Committee and the Inspector General that the OIG workplans cannot be implemented within the proposed period due to the lack of resources. We therefore ask Management to increase the level of resources for the Office of the Inspector General in accordance with the recommendations of the Audit Committee.

We strongly support the proposals to separate the two functions of the Ethics Officer and Ombudsman.

Last but not least, we endorse the FC's recommendation regarding the new levels of representation allowances for Deputy Directors-General and Assistant Directors-General.

CHAIRPERSON

I have still got about seven speakers on this item. I would like to make a suggestion. It is nearly 17:30 now. We need to have an evening session, a late evening session to deal with some other items since we need to complete the agenda, and there are two paragraphs left from item 3, which we need to agree on.

So, my suggestion would be that we break for about fifteen minutes and reconvene. In the meantime, we'll also arrange for interpretation, etc., to continue the session until we finish the items which are on our timetable today.

So, for fifteen minutes. Please be back in fifteen minutes, thank you.

The meeting was suspended from 17.26 to 18.08 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 26 à 18 h 08

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.26 a las 18.08

CHAIRPERSON

We will carry on where we left off with the speakers, so I give the floor to Equatorial Guinea.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial suscribe la declaración pronunciada por Su Excelencia Sr. Don Gabriel Mbairrobe, Ministro de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural de la hermana República de Camerún, y la declaración que pronunciará la representante de Zambia en nombre de los países del Grupo Africano.

Felicitamos al Sr. Lupiño Lazaro, Presidente del Comité de Finanzas por su brillante presentación de los informes del 174.º y 175.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas, al propio tiempo que le

congratulamos por su liderazgo en la conducción de los debates en los dos años que ha durado su mandato al frente del Comité de Finanzas.

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial desea presentar sus sinceras disculpas a los compañeros del Comité de Finanzas y a los de la Reunión Conjunta por su ausencia durante el 175.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas de la FAO, ya que su representante, la humilde persona que os dirige la palabra, por mandato de su Gobierno tuvo que acompañar a una alta Delegación de la FAO en la capital.

Congratulamos a los Miembros del Comité de Finanzas por el excelente trabajo que han realizado para llegar a las conclusiones que figuran en estos informes que estamos adoptando;

Manifestamos nuestra satisfacción porque la FAO tiene suficiente liquidez para hacer frente a los gastos del Programa ordinario y a las necesidades operacionales hasta final de este año; esto nos parece una excelente noticia.

Sin embargo, no podemos escatimar en exhortar a todos los Países Miembros de la FAO a que paguen a tiempo sus contribuciones para que nuestra Organización pueda ejecutar sus operaciones, programas y planes de acciones con total normalidad.

Valoramos los esfuerzos del Director General por haber mantenido el mismo presupuesto sin variación nominal y sin cambio en las cuantías de las cuotas asignadas y las consignaciones presupuestarias netas para este ejercicio económico, así como su política de ahorro por eficiencia y eficacia.

Manifestamos nuestro apoyo al proyecto de resolución sobre la escala de cuotas de la FAO correspondiente al 2019-21, ya que están alineadas con la escala de cuotas fijadas por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas para dicho período.

Concerniente al Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA), manifestamos nuestra satisfacción en el sentido de que, la actualización que han realizado sobre su Plan de Gestión para 2019-21, no conlleva alguna carga adicional al presupuesto administrativo de dicha Organización.

Por otra parte, reconocemos la importancia de que, los cambios propuestos en la estructura orgánica del PMA permitirán que dicha organización pueda mejorar sus servicios de asistencia humanitaria, asistencia para el desarrollo y la consolidación de la paz.

Con estos comentarios, la República de Guinea Ecuatorial adopta los informes del 174.º y 175.º períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas de la FAO.

Mr Joseph KATEMA (Zambia)

With regard to Agenda items 7.1 and 7.2, Zambia would like, on behalf of the Africa Group, to thank FAO Secretariat for a well-presented document on the state of current assessment and arrears as of 1 April 2019. The Africa Group notes that FAO's efforts to flag out the collection rate of current assessment, which is at 26.6 percent and the arrears for 30 Member Nations that could jeopardize their rights to vote.

We also acknowledge the fact that Member States are making payments of the assessed contributions late. That is affecting the way of the Organization and therefore encourages timely payments of assessed contributions and increase on the voluntary contributions.

Sr. Benito JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)

Gracias a Lupiño por la efectiva y eficiente Presidencia del Comité de Finanzas.

En aras del tiempo, iré directamente a los puntos principales.

Respecto a la escala de cuotas para 2020-21 examinada por el Comité, apoyamos que se transmita a la Conferencia para su aprobación, así como el proyecto de resolución contenido en el informe del Comité de Finanzas.

En cuanto a las medidas para aumentar la puntualidad en el pago de cuotas asignadas, coincidimos con lo expresado en el Informe del Comité de Finanzas al mantener los procedimientos existentes.

En materia de recursos humanos, enfatizamos que al incorporar nuevo personal los méritos deben seguir siendo el criterio primordial, pero también continuar los esfuerzos para alcanzar una distribución

geográfica equilibrada. Asimismo, alentamos a la Administración a lograr la paridad entre género en la plantilla, en particular al número de mujeres en puestos superiores.

Respecto al Auditor Externo de la FAO para el período 2020-25, respaldamos la elección hecha en el Comité de Finanzas al recomendar al Interventor y Auditor General de la India como el Auditor Externo de la Organización, y apoyamos la Resolución contenida en el párrafo 36 del Informe del Comité de Finanzas.

En cuanto al Examen de la independencia de las funciones de ética y de Ombudsman, apoyamos que sus funciones se separen, así como la asignación de recursos suficientes en la sede y en las oficinas regionales para cubrir la función de Ombudsman.

Al examinar la ejecución del presupuesto y las transferencias en el Programa, apoyamos las transferencias autorizadas, al mismo tiempo que reiteramos nuestro llamado para destinar mayores recursos a las labores de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF), al Programa de asesoramiento científico sobre inocuidad alimentaria de la FAO-OMS y, muy en particular, a la integración de la biodiversidad en los trabajos de la FAO.

También apoyamos la reducción de gastos de representación para Directores Generales Adjuntos y los Subdirectores Generales y para la vivienda del Director General.

Finalmente, si bien este no es un tema del Informe del Comité de Finanzas, consideramos que sería útil hablar de los saldos no utilizados del bienio 2018-19 con cierta anticipación a la Conferencia para evitar las discusiones de último momento que tuvimos hace un par de años.

Con estos comentarios endosamos los informes del Comité de Finanzas.

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

I am making this statement on behalf of the Group of Nordic Countries, the EU Countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align themselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

In my intervention, I will focus on Human Resources Management only.

We appreciate the continuing increase of the level and usefulness on the information on Human Resource Management provided by the Secretariat, including the supplementary data pack.

This provides an improved basis for Members to assess the current state of human resources in the Organization. This also increases the Membership's possibility to perform its tasks in holding Management accountable for its performance. Notwithstanding these improvements, we still are of the firm opinion that there is still room for significant improvements when it comes to how the organization deals with Human Resources Management and how they treat staff.

We are glad that the report of the Inspector General on recruitment processes of FAO has been released for Members to read. This report contains worrying information and clearly shows that the positive picture painted in the document for the Finance Committee is not entirely correct. On the basis of the Audit Report we underscore that FAO must improve recruitment procedures and strengthen the influence of line managers if the Organization shall be able to attract and retain qualified experts within its mandate in the future.

We look forward to receiving updates at future meetings on how FAO will work to address all recommendations of the Inspector General, as well as how they insure competency-based recruitment process where merit prevails in selection and how a mobility scheme for staff can better serve the needs of the Organization.

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan)

First of all, I would like to extend thanks to the Secretariat for this good presentation of the document. We extend thanks to Mr Lazaro, Chairman of the Finance Committee, for his significant efforts.

We have the following observations: We express our satisfaction regarding the Financial Position of FAO, which is capable of covering the operational needs up until the end of December 2019, in

addition to the increase of the number of trust funds and voluntary contributions in comparison with last year.

As you all know, FAO depends entirely on the contributions of its Members and needless to say that all Members should pay their contributions in a timely and full manner. We know that the four schemes liabilities have reached USD 1.364.5 millions. This figure is lower than last year. The ASMC represents 93 percent unfunded liabilities. We understand that this is a long-term liability, however this also is concerning to all of us, as the lack of funding of this liability represents the major feature in the deficit in FAO accounts.

We also note with appreciation the improvements in the vacancy rate as well as in the geographical and gender balance in the Human Resources Management in the Organization. We welcome the new policies in recruiting consultants. We urge the Secretariat to continue its efforts for better fair geographical representation and gender balance in its staff.

By adopting flexible approaches and by taking into consideration the various needs that differ between Headquarter on one side and the Decentralized Offices on the other side, we call FAO to give special attention and to continue to deal with the recruitment of the consultants in the Regional Offices with a flexible approach, without compromising the merit principle. We are fully aware that locally recruited consultants have good knowledge of local contexts. We note, however, that the Near East comes at the bottom of the list of the locally recruited consultants.

We understand that TCP requires further improvements in order to be able to meet the needs of the developing countries. These countries ask for an increase in its share to reach 17 percent. On the other hand, we do note with concern the low monthly expenditure of TCP in 2018 in comparison with previous years. We note that the unspent allocations of TCP in 2018 have reached USD 85.9 millions. This is the highest figure since 2006. And this is a steep increase in comparison with the previous years and, therefore, we call on FAO to take this into consideration and to ensure for the improvements as relevant.

Finally, my delegation extends its thanks to the Working Group of the Finance Committee, which after thorough studies of the bids and proposals, have narrowed down the number of candidates to two. After hearing the presentations from France and from India, the Finance Committee approved the bid from the Financial Comptroller and the External Auditor of India for the period 2020-2025. We would like in the same vain to extend deep thanks to the Philippines for providing the services of External Auditor in the previous biennium.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We would like to start by expressing our appreciation to the Chair of the Finance Committee Mr Lupiño Lazaro, for his steady and wise leadership of our Committee, we thank you.

The United States applauds, and let the record show that I am physically applauding, FAO for managing within its means and taking a prudent and responsible approach to ensuring proper financial and governance oversight, and again I will physically applaud FAO for that.

We look forward to the updated policy on Whistle-blower protection. As discussed during the Finance Committee deliberations, we encourage the Secretariat to include comments on the implementation status of the outstanding recommendations of the JIU Review of Whistle-blower policies and practices in the UN System during our November 2019 Finance Committee session.

We note, as others have, there is still work to be done on recruitment policies and practices as identified in the OIG report.

We thank the Secretariat for its commitment to the value of accountability to ensure the effectiveness of the FAO and welcome the Organization's efforts in implementing reforms.

We join Mexico's points on the unspent balance and express our appreciation for bringing it up earlier in this cycle and look forward to working with them on this.

With those comments the United States reiterates its support for the report of the Finance Committee.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan wishes to speak on Agenda item 7.1 the *Status of Contributions and Arrears* and Agenda item 7.2 *Scale of Contributions 2020-21*. But before that, we wish to congratulate the Chairman of the Finance Committee for presenting the Finance Committee's Report with such clarity and precision.

I will start with item 7.1. Afghanistan supports paragraph 8 b) of the 175th Session of the Finance Committee which urges Member Nations to make payments of assessed contributions on time and in full. Far too many countries are in arrears. As of 28 February, 149 Member countries are in arrears with respect to the 2019 assessment. Only 43 of the 194 Member Nations had no arrears, and 24 of these countries are Members of the European Region. Thank you, Europe. Then the Near East region consists of 21 Member Nations, 12 of them are in arrears. One country is in arrears because of economic sanctions imposed on it. It cannot transfer money to the FAO bank account, so that is a serious problem.

Now, my second comment is on the Scale of Contributions 2020-21. The share of developing countries in the UN Scale of Contributions continues to rise. This is, indeed, a healthy development. In 2020-21, out of the 74 Member countries that are expected to earn an increase in the Scale of Contributions, 59 on 80 percent are developing countries.

The distribution of 2020-21 Scale of Contributions by regions shows minor falls for all regions except Asia. The share of Asia in total Scale of Contributions rises from 22.6 percent in 2018-19 to 26.1 percent in 2020. That is a difference of 3.5 percentage points. Sixteen of the 25 countries of Asia show a percentage of increase in the Scale of Contribution. Assuming net appropriation of 1 billion 5.6 million for 2021, Asia's share of the contribution will be USD 262.5 millions. That is USD 35.2 million more than its share in 2018-19. If we exclude Japan and Korea of this figure, because they belong to the OECD, then the share of Asia in 2020 will be 40 percent more than it was in 2018-19.

On the other hand, the share of the 35 OECD countries in total contribution falls from 74.5 percent in 2018-19 to 71.9 percent in 2020-21, a fall of 2.6 percentage points. Out of the 28 countries of the EU contributions will fall by 2 percentage points, and no change in net appropriation. The OECD share of the assessed budget will decline for USD 749.2 million in 2018-19 to USD 743.1 million in 2020-21, a reduction of USD 26.1 million.

By taking this factor into account, the zero nominal growth budget comes into question.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to thank the Members of the Finance Committee for the efforts that they made. The Director-General of the FAO asked a very important question yesterday, namely regarding contributions from the private sector. I think that as Members of the Council, we ought to reflect on this subject. I do not know who would be directly affected by this, the Finance Committee or other bodies. Will this question be asked at the next session?

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

If you see me smiling widely at this late time of the afternoon, it is because I am grateful for all the kind words and praises that we received through the Chair and acknowledging and recognizing the hard work that was put in by the Finance Committee.

And also, by the outset we would just like to apologize to Equatorial Guinea because when I was calling out the names of the countries represented in the Finance Committee, I think I missed Equatorial Guinea. I also apologize for that.

I am further glad that the Council Members have supported and endorsed a number of the recommendations and guidance provided by the Finance Committee, some of which pertain to underscoring the financial health of the Organization, that also depends on the timely payment of assessed contributions, urged the Members to pay their contributions in a timely and full manner.

And with that, there is also some endorsement on the Audit Committee composition and we endorse two candidates, and at the same time noting the recommendations by the Audit Committee on certain areas of the work of FAO. There is also the endorsement of the External Auditor, the Comptroller of

India, at the same time thanks to the work by the Working Group and the Secretariat in support of making the decision on this External Auditor. Also, the separation of the Ethics Officer and the Ombudsman is also one of those that were endorsed.

Regarding the Scale of Contributions, I specifically would like to thank Afghanistan for the detailed analysis provided with the trends resulting from the new index of Scale of Contributions.

There is also an endorsement on the budgetary transfers but also there is a note on the sustainable funding of the Scientific Advice for IPPC work. There is also a note on the TCP, on the low expenditure rate, although this is also relevant to the discussions in the previous item 3. But nevertheless, it was also mentioned.

There is also endorsement of the new representation allowance for the DDGs and the ADGs.

And then the unspent balance that needed to be discussed early. I think in this vein, we would just like to pursue that maybe in the next Session of the Committee, those issues regarding the unspent balance, the whistle-blower policy that was already lined up, and also perhaps what was mentioned about the private sector contributions, that had already been brought up along with some items in previous discussions on the Finance Committee, but not really as a separate item. This can be explored and we will try to examine and review the Agenda based on these recommendations.

The other issues that have raised concern are the Inspector General, the status and the challenges of its functions and also their recommendations on certain works of the institution, and the after-service medical liabilities.

And, finally, as I said, the least interesting topic of Human Resources will not be missed. This pertains to the recruitment process, in particular taking our full attention to the primordial criterion of merit while also taking into account gender and geographic distribution, the mobility policy, the vacancy rate. And, relatedly, the Inspector General recommendations in this regard.

In short, I am very appreciative of the Council's comments and I think this could be supplemented, of course, by the responses or views that the management and the Secretariat could provide. Thank you once again, Council Members. And thank you to the Secretariat, to all that I had mentioned earlier in my presentation.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

On behalf of the Secretariat, I would like to thank the Members of the Council for their guidance, the encouragement, and even some applause during this Session of the Council. We have listened with attention and I can tell you that beyond the life of the Session of the Council, we will use this guidance in our work to improve the management of the Organization.

We would like to thank also the Chair and the Members of the Finance Committee for the guidance provided during the meeting, and for this very clear report with actionable recommendation, very useful for the work of the Secretariat. We are looking forward to the report on this at the next Session of the Finance Committee.

I also listened with attention the comments and I was hoping to have some intelligent feedback to provide, but I could not find some that would not be provided better by my colleagues. There were a number of comments on Human Resources, and the Director of Human Resources will provide some feedback now. There were also some comments on the question of the arrears and the cash availability and it is important to have the Director of Finance Division provide a clarification on this, on the situation of the cash.

Finally, there were comments on the resources allocated to the Office of the Inspector-General and the concern regarding possible impact on the performance and the independence of the function of the Inspector-General. And the Inspector-General being very independent, I propose he replies to these questions, to these comments and that he gives his views on this matter.

This is what I can say and, Mr Chairperson, if you agree, we could share the workload amongst us, starting with Fernando.

Sr. Fernando SERVÁN (Director, Oficina de Recursos Humanos)

Quiero reiterar el mensaje que acaba de mencionar el Director General Adjunto de Operaciones. Recogemos los comentarios y la guía que, Ustedes, Miembros del Consejo, nos están dando con respecto al tema de Recursos Humanos. En particular, respecto a la implementación de las políticas y procedimientos de reclutamiento, manteniendo el mérito como criterio principal de contratación. Tomamos nota también de la necesidad de mantener flexibilidad en la contratación, como han subrayado muchos Miembros, y mantener los esfuerzos por mejorar la distribución geográfica equitativa y el balance de género.

Al mismo tiempo, queremos mencionar que damos mucha prioridad a la implementación de las recomendaciones del Informe del Inspector General respecto al reclutamiento de profesionales, desde que fue publicado hemos logrado implementar la mayor parte de las recomendaciones con el objetivo de cumplir su ejecución antes del Comité de Finanzas próximo, en el cual presentaremos un informe detallado de la implementación de las recomendaciones.

Concluyo mencionando que, como se recoge en el Informe del Comité de Finanzas, la Secretaría continuará con campañas de difusión en regiones específicas respecto al Programa Mundial sobre Pasantías, Voluntariado, Investigadores invitados tratando de dar prioridad a uno de los elementos que mantiene un flujo de funcionarios y de empleados al día, jóvenes y dinámicos para mantener la actualización de la Organización.

Mr Aiman Ibrahim HIJA (Director, Finance Division)

Thank you all for the nice comments we hear about finance management. I will convey these comments to my colleagues and it will encourage us to continue the work. When anybody have any question throughout the year, we are ready to respond to it.

I would like to talk about the cash status of the Organization. As the paper says, the cash is sufficient until the end of the year. Actually, the cash available today in our bank account is sufficient until the end of June 2019. So the statement of cash available until the end of year is subject to Member Nations paying their dues on a timely manner. I heard and appreciate the appeal of Member States for all Members to pay their dues.

Second point is the arrears, where we have serious challenges. Seventy-two countries, as of today, have arrears of a total amount equivalent to USD 120 million. That is almost 25 percent of our annual budget. Therefore, we hope Member States work on this problem of funds due to the Organization and settle it so we can proceed with our programmes and work.

And, again, I would love to thank all of you for following up with your capitals for the amounts due, because for many of the countries it was only possible to receive the funds with the support of their Representations in Rome.

M. Thierry RAJAOBELINA (Inspecteur général)

Je voudrais remercier les délégations qui se sont exprimées pour donner leur appréciation positive sur le travail fait par mon bureau, le Bureau de l'Inspecteur général, ce qui est très encourageant pour nous.

Je voudrais juste faire deux rapides commentaires. Le premier, sur la mobilité. En effet, nous allons faire un audit de la mobilité cette année. Je ne voudrais pas que les attentes soient trop grandes, car je ne crois pas que le rapport pourra être discuté à la prochaine session du Comité financier, mais sans doute à celle du printemps 2020.

La deuxième remarque, plus importante sans doute, sur les ressources du Bureau. Il y a deux aspects: d'abord, en matière de ressources humaines, je tiens à rappeler ce que j'ai dit au Comité financier, car c'est la première fois, en trois ans de mandat pour moi, que tous les postes, à la fois d'auditeurs et d'enquêteurs, sont pourvus. Des efforts considérables ont donc été faits pour remplir les vacances de postes.

Ensuite, s'agissant des ressources humaines hors personnel, pour les consultants, notamment pour les aspects techniques et les missions dans les bureaux décentralisés, nous avons fait face à des difficultés. Celles-ci ont été mentionnées dans mon rapport annuel, dans le rapport annuel du Comité de

vérification, et elles ont été discutées avec le Directeur général, qui a, pour cette année en tout cas, pris les mesures nécessaires pour nous permettre d'accomplir pleinement nos missions. Cela devrait nous permettre de couvrir, je l'espère, le plan de travail qui a été discuté avec le Comité de vérification et le Directeur général.

Donc, je pense que le mieux, à ce sujet, est sans doute de refaire le point de façon plus précise au moment du Comité financier de novembre.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings our list of speakers to an end, I can now read out my conclusions on item 7, *Reports of the 174th and 175th Sessions of the Finance Committee*.

1. The Council approved the reports of the 174th and 175th 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 2020-21 presented in paragraph 14 of document CL 161/4;
- c) noted that the Finance Committee had authorized forecasted budgetary Chapter transfers arising from the implementation of the 2018-19 Programme of Work in favour of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 from Chapters 6 and 8 through 11;
- d) endorsed the Finance Committee's guidance to the Secretariat on Human Resources Management, welcome the improvements in geographic distribution of staff, supported the policy of recruitment of consultants, noted the implementation of the internal audit recommendations on professional staff recruitment processes and looked forward to the future Office of Inspector General's review of the geographic staff mobility programme and reiterated merit as the primordial criterion in recruitment of staff;
- e) noted the importance, as conveyed in the 2018 Annual Report of the Inspector General of strengthening internal control, in particular in high risk areas and Decentralized Offices and the Finance Committee's appreciation and encouragement of efforts to promote the implementation of control improvements;
- f) endorsed the appointment of Ms Anjana Das from India and Mr Fayezul Choudhury from the USA as members of the FAO Audit Committee for an initial period of three years;
- g) adopted the resolution as set out in paragraph 36 of document CL 161/4 for the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India as External Auditor of the Organization for the six-year period 2020-25;
- h) endorsed the Finance Committee's support for the proposals to separate and enhance the Ombudsman and Ethics function and on the application of term limits for the Inspector General;
- i) endorsed the proposed update to the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee;
- j) noted that the Joint Inspection Unit's Report on "Review of Whistleblower Policies and Practices in the United Nations Systems Organizations" would be included on the agenda of the November 2019 Session of the Finance Committee;
- k) approved the new levels of representation allowances at USD 4 000 per annum for Deputy Directors-General and USD 3 000 per annum for Assistant Directors-General, to come into effect on 1 August 2019; and
- l) noted the advice of the Finance Committee to the General Committee of the Conference that changes to the current arrangements for the representation allowance and housing arrangements for the Director-General were not warranted.

That is the end of my conclusions. The floor is open for any remarks.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

First of all, I would like to apologize to all of you for the annoying noises during my previous interventions. Now I will keep my iPads and iPhones away so there is no problem, I believe.

From a regional perspective, we think equitable representation is very important. So, in paragraph 1 (d) and after the second line of this paragraph, after “distribution of staff”, I would like to suggest that we add “encouraged the Secretariat to pursue a geographically and gender equitable representation efforts at the senior positions of the Organization”.

And I also would like to suggest at the end of this section to please add a new paragraph: “encouraged Management to give due emphasis in its outreach efforts in specific regions for the FAO’s global internship, volunteers and fellowship programme, including the indigenous community to train youth”.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La inquietud de la República de Guinea Ecuatorial se basa principalmente en que estamos adoptando los informes, uno es el del 174.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas y el otro el del 175.º, aunque, en los resúmenes, solamente figura la parte del 175.º y no se hace mención de la parte del 174.º, que corresponde a los asuntos del Programa Mundial de Alimentos. Si le parece pertinente, yo podría proponer un texto, un subapartado.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Could we go to subparagraph (c), please? Following that paragraph, we would like to propose another paragraph that would state “endorsed the Committee’s request to explore options to fully fund the Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and the IPPC and to present them at the November 2019 session of the Finance Committee for consideration and approval”.

CHAIRPERSON

Romania, may I refer you to item 3 of our Agenda? This item has already been dealt with.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

They are separate items, in fact, although they might look similar, on item 3 we were discussing allocation for the next biennium. What we are requesting now is actually related to the transfer from the current biennium, so they are two separate issues.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on the amendments proposed by the various delegations?

Ms Catherine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Yes, Romania is correct. We are talking about transfers from the 2018-19 appropriation here, which is why this is actually a separate point to what we discussed under item 3. So I would support the inclusion of this language.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We agree with what Japan proposes.

CHAIRPERSON

Equatorial Guinea, you have some comments on the Finance Committee’s report. In fact, the practice has been that there have never been any comments. I am talking about prior sessions, because the report goes directly to the Executive Board of WFP, but if you have a comment, let us hear it.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

Teniendo en cuenta que estamos en el Consejo, si estamos adoptando informes, algo se tiene que reflejar sobre los informes que estamos adoptando. Entonces, en este caso propondría el siguiente texto: “El Consejo reconoció la importancia de que los cambios propuestos en la estructura orgánica del Programa Mundial de Alimentos permitirán que dicha organización pueda mejorar sus servicios de asistencia humanitaria, asistencia para el desarrollo y la consolidación de la paz.”

Es una propuesta. Si a los Miembros les parece conveniente, lo adoptamos.

Ya que estamos en el tema del Programa Mundial de Alimentos, podría proponer otro inciso, si me lo permite: “El Consejo manifestó su satisfacción en el sentido de que la actualización que han realizado sobre el plan de gestión del PMA para 2019-2021 no conllevará alguna carga adicional al presupuesto administrativo de dicha organización.”

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Equatorial Guinea. Any reactions to the proposals by Equatorial Guinea in regard to the report dealing with WFP?

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

I would like to support the remark you said earlier, and support the practice, which has already been established here, that aspects of the reports of the Financial Committee dealing with the WFP be looked at by the Executive Board of WFP. I understand the concerns of Equatorial Guinea, but from the point of view of procedures, we have not discussed that report, and it would be strange now to include the wording that we see here on the screen.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Could we go back to former subparagraph (d) that starts with “endorse the Finance Committee’s guidance to the Secretariat on Human Resources”. We would like to add after “consultants...” and delete from “noted...” until the “...recruitment process” and replace with the following language: “noted with concern the findings of the Report of the Inspector General on recruitment and onboarding of professional staff and the implementation of the recommendations of this report”.

We would also like to support the intervention by the Russian Federation on WFP.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

We can certainly understand the sentiment behind the request from our colleague from Equatorial Guinea, but on the grounds of process, it is unusual to include language like that when we have not actually discussed the report and we would also recommend maintaining the current practice of leaving that to the WF Executive Board.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Maybe just to suggest a change to the Japanese proposal “to pursue geographically on gender equitable representation efforts”. It is usually “equitable geographic representation” and “gender parity”. I suggest the following wording: “to pursue geographically equitable representation efforts and gender parity in the senior positions of the Organization”.

CHAIRPERSON

Equatorial Guinea, in view of the comments made by several delegations can I have your reaction to those?

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

Disculpe, Sr. Presidente. No entendí bien la formulación de su pregunta, por favor ¿me la podría repetir?

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, I had explained that the practice was in the Council that the Finance Committee’s report relating to WFP never got discussion because the report was going to the Executive Board of WFP. Certain delegations took the floor and agreed with that position. What is your reaction to those? They are requesting that the current practice should be maintained.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

Por tener en cuenta mi inquietud, yo, en principio, dije que era una propuesta ya que estamos adoptando los informes. Pero la práctica, es decir, los hábitos, no justifican la legalidad de un acto.

Es decir, estamos en un Consejo, estamos refrendando informes, aunque la decisión se haya tomado en la Junta del Programa Mundial de Alimentos. Eso no significa que en nuestro informe del Consejo no puedan figurar los informes que hemos discutido.

O sea, yo hice una propuesta, la sometí a los Miembros. Si les parece conveniente lo adoptamos, si no lo retiramos. Yo no tengo ningún inconveniente, solo que he puesto una razón.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I support the proposal of Romania and other countries, Russia included, to remove points two and three because, as members in the Finance Committee we had a meeting on 6 February and we did not get into details about this organizational chart and we had a recommendation to wait until we received the views of ACABQ. After that we will have another Finance Committee meeting to consider the organizational chart of WFP.

Therefore, I cannot accept that the Council recognize the importance of the changes when we did not discuss this, and cannot support to put it in the recommendations.

Secondly, I want to go back to paragraph (d) of your summary, and would like to stick to the recommendations of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee asked the Secretariat to improve the geographical representation of consultants and geographic representation of staff, taking into consideration merit. Therefore I want to stick to the recommendation of the Finance Committee. We have agreed on this and this is agreed language. We support the proposal of Japan, but suggest to have it on another paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

First of all, would the Council agree that we delete the paragraphs relating to WFP's Finance Committee report? I see delegates nodding. So, we delete the paragraphs, Equatorial Guinea.

We have a proposal from Egypt. Can we go along with that?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I think, we can go along with the Egyptian proposal, but we will just point out that there is also agreed language from the Finance Committee right after that says "encouraged the Secretariat to pursue its efforts toward gender parity of the workforce and, in particular, for senior positions". So, I am fine with reflecting those two ideas separately. So, it could be semi-colon and then have the second language. But, I think that the Japanese proposal was aiming at the two ideas.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the revised wording takes into account proposals by Canada, Japan and Egypt. Could we adopt this wording?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We have comments on this sub-paragraph (d), we would like to add something to the language that was proposed by Egypt and to go to geographic representation of staff, and after "staff..." within the text that was proposed by Egypt, insert "...at regional level...", because we know that the key performance indicators have already indicated our performance in the geographic distribution of staff. So, I think, this is relevant at regional level.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I think it is better if my colleague from Romania wants to add "at regional level". Here I would like to add, "at headquarters and country level", not regional level.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am afraid we cannot agree with this proposal by Egypt. Where the key performance indicators are clear, we are outperforming, so, any adjustment that would need to be made should be done at regional level.

CHAIRPERSON

Why are you singling out the regional level? Should it not include the whole Organization?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOUSU (Romania)

No, since the key performance indicators, as we mentioned, are outperforming, and that includes headquarters.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

My recommendation is to stick to the language of the Finance Committee report because if we are going to start identifying levels... I think that, although we do recognize that there is an observation, and as we found out discussions, that there is outperformance in certain levels.

We should not be pinpointing specific levels. It could currently be outperforming but this could change in the future. Therefore, I think it will be advisable to be generic on these levels, as in the previous Programme Committee.

I appeal that we just stick to the Finance Committee report language.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

If we are going to stick to the Finance Committee language, I just notice that there is a nuance here. What the Finance Committee says is not requesting the Secretariat to improve the geographic balance, but rather that the efforts of the Secretariat to improve should retain merit as a primary criterion, which is different.

So, it says that the efforts to improve the geographic balance of consultants and geographic representation of staff should retain merit as the primary criterion for recruitment. Given the explanation about outperformance, I think this makes more sense, that we should stick to the language of the Finance Committee.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The language of the Finance Committee is clear and we want to stick to it.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

We would caution against selective use of the text adopted by Committees. If we choose to adopt that text, we should reflect in full the text of the Finance Committee. Italy fully agrees with Canada in saying that paragraph 25 (d) of the Finance Committee implies that merit is not currently being followed as the primary criterion for recruitment, and in this sense we recall FAO outperforming key performance indicators.

So, we should stick to that language because there is something in this text that clearly shows some contradiction between geographic balance and geographic representation and merit that is not currently being fully retained as the primary criterion for recruitment, as shown by the Inspector-General's report.

CHAIRPERSON

I think following the intervention of the Chair of the Finance Committee and some other members, there is support for sticking to the wording of the Finance Committee. So, we will include the wording of the Finance Committee.

So, now the amended version takes into account, or reproduces, the text of the Finance Committee. Is that acceptable? Can we move forward? I see we can. So, the paragraph is adopted.

If there are no other comments we can go to the next item.

- Item 8. Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (11-12 March 2019)**
- Point 8. Rapport de la cent-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (11 et 12 mars 2019)**
- Tema 8. Informe del 108.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (11 y 12 de marzo de 2019)**

CL 161/2

CHAIRPERSON

We move to Agenda item 8, *Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*. You have document CL 161/2 before you.

I now invite Ambassador Godfrey Magwenzi, Chairperson of the CCLM to present the report. Ambassador, you have the floor.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

It is my pleasure to present the Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, the CCLM, which was held on 11 and 12 March 2019. This will be, hopefully, a very brief intervention.

The CCLM Agenda included two substantive items.

The CCLM examined a document entitled *Measures to Improve Timely Payment of Assessed Contributions*. The Committee took note of a detailed presentation of the document by the Secretariat.

The Council is invited to note the deliberation of the CCLM.

The CCLM: a) noted with concern the negative impact arrears have on the financial situation of the Organization;

b) appealed to Members to make timely payments of assessed contributions to ensure the smooth functioning of the Organization;

c) urged FAO Management to apply strictly existing mechanisms provided for in the General Rules of the Organization to ensure compliance with the requirements to pay assessed contributions on time.

The second item on the Agenda of the CCLM was the *Reform of the International Poplar Commission (IPC)*. The Committee reviewed a Proposal to amend the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the framework of FAO.

This is the result of a long process of negotiation by the Parties that started seven years ago, and which was considered on various occasions by various Governing Bodies of FAO, included the CCLM.

The Committee was pleased to note that, on 6 February 2019, at a Special Session of the Commission, the Parties approved the amendments by a vote at the required majority.

The Committee endorsed the Draft Conference Resolution entitled *Amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the framework of FAO* set out in Annex to the Report of its 108th Session.

The Council will note that a few days ago, Japan identified a number of minor purely clerical errors, contained in the approved text of the revised Convention. These purely clerical errors were corrected by the Secretariat following review by CCLM Members. Document CL 161/2 Rev.1 incorporates these clerical corrections.

The Council is invited to endorse the Draft Conference Resolution intitled *Amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the framework of FAO*, set out in the Annex to the CCLM Report (Document CL 161/2 Rev.1), and forward it to the Conference for its concurrence.

I thank you very much Mr Chairperson and invite the Council, through you, to approve the conclusions of the report.

Ms Maria Araceli ESCANDOR (Philippines)

The Philippines has the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We thank the Chairperson of the CCLM, Ambassador Godfrey Magwenzi, for the excellent presentation of the Report of the 108th Session of the CCLM. We also seize this opportunity to thank all CCLM Members, the Legal Counsel, as well as the Secretariat in concluding the discussion in a constructive and timely manner. The Asia Regional Group has carefully studied the Report of the 108th Session of the CCLM and wishes to provide its views on the following issues.

On the reform of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) proposal to amend the convention placing the IPC within the framework of the FAO. The Asia Regional Group is also of the view that the outputs and achievements of IPC are central to FAO's mandate and contribute to achieving FAO's Strategic Objectives, in particular, Strategic Objective 2, make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable. Strategic Objective 3, reduce rural poverty and Strategic Objective 4, enable more inclusive agricultural and food systems.

We appreciate the efforts that have been taken within the reform process and submit that substantial proposals that the revision of the IPC convention, including, but not limited to, the expanding of the scope of the convention, to cover not only poplars but, also, other tree species that have similar growth patterns and uses in the tropics and sub-tropics as well as enhancing the implementation of the IPC decisions and recommendations at national level in order to encourage decentralization.

Thus, the Asia Regional Group shares the same view of the CCLM under draft Conference Resolution entitled, Amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission Within the Framework of FAO, as set out as an Annex to Document CCLM108/03, subject to additional amendments, and endorses the amendments adopted by the IPC at the Special Session on 6 February 2019 for submission to the Council for consideration and endorsement to the FAO Conference.

On measures to improve timely payment of assessed contributions, we understand the difficulties that the Organization is facing due to the late payment of contributions. We are also of the view that the timely payment of Members of their contributions shall enable FAO to function properly in accordance with its mandate in assisting Members to achieve global food security and nutrition.

We appeal to Members to make timely payments of assessed contributions to ensure the smooth functioning of the Organization. We are also mindful that this situation may also be influenced by developments in the current global economy.

As such, we feel that it would be more favourable to have a more systematic and comprehensive approach to deal with the issue of timely payments. We should also carefully and thoroughly take into account the impact of any proposal to developing and less developed countries that might further contribute to the worsening of their economic development.

We also consider that the timing of discussions on this issue is better discussed and decided within the existing mechanisms of the Basic Texts of FAO after a new Director-General is elected at the FAO Conference in June 2019. We feel that Members would be in a better position to deliberate and find a common, agreed, solution after the Conference and with a new Director-General.

In the meantime, we further encourage the Organization to engage more closely with Members in arrears. More open discussions are needed to overcome the situation in a matter acceptable to parties concerned.

We note that the 108th CCLM Session is the last meeting of the Committee for the period of 2017-2019. Allow us to thank all the Members of CCLM, for their hard work during these past two years as well as their spirit of friendship, resulting in a concise and systematic discussions for the benefit of all the members and the well-functioning of the organization.

For outgoing CCLM Members, we offer our highest appreciation for your time and dedication in the effort to assist the Council in addressing various legal and constitutional issues. For those who would be re-nominated for the next period, we hope that the excellent work and cooperation will continue, taking into consideration that there are still many important global issues that require our immediate action.

With this note, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to hand over the floor to South Sudan, the Chairperson of the G77, to deliver a joint statement on behalf of the group on this item.

Ms Natalina Edward MOU (Observer for South Sudan)

South Sudan has the honour to delivery this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Godfrey Magwenzi, Chair of the CCLM, for his presentation and leadership and would like to highlight the following points.

The Group of 77 and China has no doubt that the financial liquidity of the organization depends mainly on the timely payment of the assessed contribution of the Member States. However, the financial position of the Organization's liquidity, as shown in the Report of the 175th Session of the Finance Committee report, is suspected to be sufficient to cover operational needs up 31 December 2019 and this was reflected in the reports of the Finance Committee of most of its previous Sessions.

While many countries of the Group are in bad need for the assistance and cooperation offered by the Organization, we are very concerned that the new proposed measures will prevent these countries from exercising their legitimate rights in the Organization.

It is important to note that this amendment will affect not only the developing and less developed countries, but also developed ones. Since the new measures are aiming to reduce the payment period and the right to vote to one year as well as denial of membership in the governing bodies. It is, therefore, hard to believe that the financial situation of the Organization will change after applying the new procedures.

Concerning the measures used to apply a discount rate for the Member States that pay their contributions prior to 31 March of the year of assessment, can be cited as proof. Since that citing this incentive deemed to have limited impact upon the timing of payment of the contribution.

Although a large number of meetings in many previous Sessions of the Conference, the Council and the Finance Committee were unable to come up with a concrete decision, we still believe that the suggestion to maintain and save the *status quo* by continuing to apply the existing mechanism provided in the General Rules of Organization is still suitable, sound and advisable.

Secondly, regarding the endorsement of the draft Conference Resolution entitled *Amendments to Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the Framework of FAO*, set out in Annex of the report and forwarded to the Conference for its concurrence, we acknowledge the extension of the Convention for International Poplar Commission to include not only poplar trees, but also other types of trees with similar growth pattern, in order to be used in tropical and sub-tropical regions. As reflected, the revised title of the Convention, as well as other provision relevant to the convention itself, including Article I, III and IV.

We equally urge the Organization as a specialized UN agency to make use of its technical capacity to enhance its mandate and contribute to achieving its Strategic Objectives (SOs). Particularly SO2: make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable; SO3: reduce rural poverty and SO4: enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food system.

With this, the G77 and China endorse the report.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

Let me thank the Asia and the G77 and China for their very kind words of appreciation for the work of the CCLM. Since this will be my last time to sit up here, let me also salute the members of CCLM. It was indeed a joy and a pleasure to work with them. I think I should say that it is easier to work with the lawyers because they are learned people. That is why they are always called my learned friends. They are focused and conducted their deliberations in an atmosphere free of controversy and confrontation. This is why our meetings were always very short. Someone said that these were the shortest meetings in the history of the UN and it was because of the caliber of the people that I was leading.

Let me also thank you members of the Council for reposing such trust and confidence in us and for supporting us. I hope that you will extend the same support to the next CCLM. It is your Committee that will be working for you.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Just two very brief observations. A word of apology, through you, to the representative of Japan that we indeed did not notice a few clerical errors in the text of the Poplar Convention. In fact, this process has lasted for some eight years and there were successive iterations, successive versions of the Convention. So, it is with a relief that we see that we are coming to an end of this process and we apologize for any inconvenience.

Then, in response to the observation and the comments from the representative of South Sudan, we, of course, are not pursuing the comprehensive set of proposals that had been put forward to the CCLM.

CHAIRPERSON

So, I can now read out my conclusions.

Item 8: *Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.*

(1) The Council approved the Report of the 108th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. In particular, the Council:

- a. Noted with concern the negative impact that arrears have on the financial situation of the Organization.
- b. Appealed to members to make timely payments of assessed contributions to ensure the smooth functioning of the Organization.
- c. Urged FAO Management to apply strictly existing mechanisms provided for in the General Rules of the Organization to ensure compliance with the requirements to pay assessed contributions on time.
- d. Noting the contribution of the International Poplar Commission's contribution to FAO's Strategic Objectives and food security goals, endorsed the draft Conference Resolution entitled Amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the Framework of FAO, set out in the Annex to its Report, and requested that it be forwarded to the Conference for its concurrence.

That is the end of the conclusions. The floor is open for any remarks or comments.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

I just wanted to thank the Secretariat for considering our point.

Mr Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

Just an editorial detail in the sentence concerning the Poplar Commission. It says that we noted the contribution of the contribution. "Contribution of Poplar Commission" could be simpler.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other request for the floor, so we can conclude item 8.

Item 15. Any Other Matters**Point 15. Questions diverses****Tema 15. Asuntos varios***Item 15.1 Amendments to the World Food Programme (WFP) General Rules**Point 15.1 Modifications à apporter au Règlement général du Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM)**Tema 15.1 Enmiendas al Reglamento General del Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA)**CL 161/INF/6 Rev.1***CHAIRPERSON**

We now move on to item 15, *Any Other Matters*. We can go to sub-item 15.1, *Amendments to the World Food Programme General Rules*, which is presented to Council for information only. The document before Council is CL 161/INF/6 Rev.1.

I invite Mr Bartolomeo Migone, General Counsel of the World Food Programme to present this item.

Mr Bartolomeo MIGONE (General Counsel, WFP)

With your permission, Mr Chair, I was going to let my colleague, Sean O'Brien, begin the presentation.

Mr Sean O'BRIEN (Director Budget and Programming Division, WFP)

We really do appreciate the opportunity to be here to present the changes, the amendments to WFP's General Rules arising out of the implementation of the Integrated Road Map of WFP. As outlined in WFP's Basic Texts, all amendments to our General Rules must be, obviously, approved by the WFP Executive Board. But, they are also submitted for information to both ECOSOC and the FAO Council.

So, what you see before you this evening are the amendments that have already been approved by WFP's Executive Board. I had a presentation, I am not sure if it is available. But, basically, the second piece of background I want to update you on is in the next slide, which is WFP's Integrated Road Map. Many of you have been involved in the discussions at WFP's Executive Board.

In November our second Regular Session in 2016, the Board approved four core documents, collectively known as the Integrated Road Map. First and foremost, a new strategic plan for WFP that was aligned to the sustainable development goals, focusing, mainly, on SDG 2, zero hunger, and SDG 17, supporting the implementation of the SDGs.

In addition, the Board approved a new policy on Country Level Strategic Planning (CSP). The preparation of countries strategic plans. These define and outline WFP's role in a given country over a period of up to five years.

Thirdly, we introduced a country portfolio budget. This was a result of the financial framework review, which realigned our budget structure along the lines of the CSP and, also, therefore, along the lines of the new strategic plan and also, therefore, aligning it to the SDGs.

Finally, fourthly, we introduced a new corporate results framework. So, those four pieces, all integrated, form the core, the foundation, if you like, of WFP's Integrated Road Map.

In nutshell, the Integrated Road Map moves WFP from a project based framework, which we have outlined on the left hand side of this slide, to a more integrated strategic framework. So, in the old days we would have multiple projects operating in a given country. There was a disconnect between our strategic level organizational planning and our implementation at a country level. Also, a disconnect with our financial and performance management systems.

The old structure, also, resulted in fragmentation and had limited, in our view, certainly, limited transparency in giving an overall picture of the WFP's work in a given country.

Within the new framework, we feel we have addressed many of those drawbacks. There are more coherent, strategic-focused, country strategic plans presented to our Executive Board. Improved governance as a result of that. Less fragmentation. We've also, through the linkage of the four documents, been able to align our performance framework to our financial management framework, to

our governance framework and to the SDGs. So, a clear line of sight is the term we used to describe this framework.

But, the changes also impacted WFP's Basic Texts in essence. In particular our General Rules and that is why we are here today. We outlined three different areas that were impacted in the General Rules which I, with the Chair's permission, I would like to pass over to our legal counsel to describe.

Mr Bartolomeo MIGONE (General Counsel, WFP)

As my colleague Mr O'Brien mentioned, WFP is submitting for your information, as well as that of the United Nations' Economic and Social Council, the amendments to the General Rules that the Board approved in order to bring into effect, across WFP's portfolio of food assistance programmes, the Integrated Roadmap policies that my colleague Sean has described.

The FAO Council's role in respect of these amendments is established by WFP's constitutional document, the General Regulations, which at Article VI.2 (b) VI. require that amendments to the General Rules be submitted to this body and to ECOSOC for information.

As you know, WFP is an autonomous joint subsidiary body of FAO and the UN, so this is ultimately a result of FAO's role as one of the two parent organizations of WFP that it receives this information.

The amendments were already approved by the Executive Board and they are listed at Annex 2 to the information paper before you, and in summary they cover three thematic areas.

The first is terminology and definitions. For example, the old programme categories that WFP used to use the Emergency Operations (EMOP), the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO), and the old cost categories are replaced by the new IRM ones.

These new programme and cost categories are defined in the amended General Rules II.2 and X.2, respectively, and then referred to throughout the General Rules.

The second area of amendment pertains to full cost recovery, which is the principle set forth in Article XIII.2 of WFP's General Regulations that requires donors to cover all of the costs of their contributions, unless the Board has specifically authorized an exception in the General Rules.

So here, IRM-specific guidance on how to calculate those costs and achieve full cost recovery is provided in the amended General Rule XIII.4.

The General Rules are also being adjusted to reflect revisions to the principle of full cost recovery that were approved by the Board. For example, with regard to exceptions, waivers and reductions of indirect support costs.

Finally, Article VI.2(c) of WFP's General Regulations authorizes the Board to delegate to the Executive Director certain authorities to approve and modify programmes.

The Board approved interim delegations for the new IRM system in November 2017, and these are included at Annex 1 of the document that is before you, which is an Appendix to the General Rules.

They initially were applied to programmes operating under the new IRM system in parallel to legacy ones operating under the old system, but since January of this year they are the only ones as all programmes now run under the IRM system.

However, they are still called interim delegations of authority because in approving them the Board decided that they would benefit from being tested for a period of time before final ones are approved in February 2020.

So this piece of work will go before the Board again at that time and will then return before this body for information after it has been approved by the Board.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr O'Brien and Mr Migone, for your comprehensive presentation. As you said, this is an item which is for information before the Council and it has already been approved by the Executive Board. So, we thank you for this presentation and the Council has noted the changes to WFP's rules.

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (continued)

Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021 (suite)

Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21 (continuación)

C 2019/3; C 2019/3-WA11

CHAIRPERSON

We have an outstanding item, which are two paragraphs in item 3, which we had deferred earlier in the morning. Can we put those two paragraphs on the screen?

We have paragraph 6 (f), from item 3. So, on 6 (f), you have the wording which was proposed by different delegations in the morning. To achieve consensus, may I appeal to members to adopt the wording of the Finance Committee's Report because there was a detailed discussion in the Finance Committee as well and it resulted in consensus wording. I would like to appeal that we adopt that wording, so that we can move forward.

Egypt and Afghanistan, may I appeal to you to agree to the wording of the Finance Committee, so that we can move forward because the Finance Committee's wording refers to Resolution 9/89. That Resolution is not just a number because there is a text linked to that Resolution. Anyone talking about the Resolution or wanting to consult it would automatically look at the text which has various aspects.

Could we just stop at 9/89 like the Finance Committee did or at 9/89 with the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session to have consensus? As I said, consensus means, the member countries coming together. It means a strengthened governance process and it means a strong Organization.

Could I appeal to Egypt and Afghanistan to agree to the Finance Committee's wording?

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I am wondering why you are only asking Egypt and Afghanistan, and appeal to them to accept the recommendations of the Finance Committee. I think this appeal should also be directed to the United States and Romania, and other countries to have a flexible approach to reach consensus in this regard.

CHAIRPERSON

The reason I was asking you and Afghanistan, and probably Jordan, is because the U.S. and the European Union accept the Finance Committee's wording and you all had concerns with that. So, as I say, the Finance Committee's wording refers to a Resolution and the Resolution is not just a number, it has a text to it, and the text has the aspects which you were referring to.

So, the Resolution is not just 9/89. It also has text, and that text contains aspects which were important for you all.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

These are not Egyptian interests, but the interests of all the developing countries, and if the members of the FAO Council from the developing countries are accepting this compromise, we can consider it. I am not speaking on behalf of all the members of the FAO Council. I am trying to support them and I was pushing forward because this is very important for all the developing countries. In particular at this critical time, while the numbers of the hungry people are increasing and TCPs are one of the core functions of FAO.

So, I do not know if my colleagues can accept this compromise. After that I can give you my word.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Je pense que c'est un point important sur lequel nous sommes en train de débattre, mais il se fait tard et les gens commencent à être fatigués, même si je comprends bien votre préoccupation de vouloir aller vite à la conclusion.

Cependant, ce que vous proposez, c'est le débat que le Comité financier a eu durant sa session, alors que je pense qu'il y eu, ici aussi, un débat dans la salle.

Pour ne pas escamoter ce qui a été dit, je vous proposerais peut-être de nous laisser aller dormir, de réfléchir à une nouvelle proposition, qui incorporerait ce que nous voulons aussi, parce que je suis très gêné qu'on en laisse la responsabilité à l'Égypte et l'Afghanistan.

Avant que vous ne clôturiez la session, je voudrais dire que notre collègue de l'Afghanistan avait bien résumé les débats et je vous proposerais, Monsieur le Président, de recomposer un texte comprenant tous les éléments qui ont été dits en salle, pour en discuter demain.

Il n'y a que la matinée au programme de demain et je pense que les esprits seront peut-être plus calmes pour réfléchir et trouver une solution à ce problème.

Mr Hamid SID AHMED M. ALAMAIN (Sudan)

There are some questions raised by my colleague from Egypt and also from Afghanistan with regard to the TCP share in the budget. As you might know, we raised this question in our statement in the Finance Committee and in the PWB. When you look at the reference that you made, it was 30 years ago and since then there has been no development in that area. So our concern should be considered. When you request only a select group for consensus, this is not consensus

I therefore ask the ICC to also ask the other Members for their flexibility, and I think we will find room for agreement.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We have listened with attention all afternoon how again and again we come back to contentious language and end up agreeing on the language that had been agreed in the Programme Committee and in the Finance Committee. The only issue that that logic does not appear to apply to, is the one here.

The deal that we offered in the morning stands. We can support the Finance Committee language and if that is unacceptable we disassociate from consensus and will offer a declaration to be included in the text. In fact, we have already got a drafted declaration. We will finish that tomorrow and offer it up. We can either live with the same compromise that has been used on probably four or five different agenda items here, which is to go with the agreed text. If colleagues cannot agree with that, we disassociate from consensus and we will produce our declaration to be added in the report.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We were not part of the Finance Committee discussions but we were part of the Programme Committee discussions, where we did discuss the TCP, what its impact is and how to promote its visibility, and there were some requests in that regard, which is reflected, also, in paragraph (g) that follows.

We feel that both (f), which is expressed by the Finance Committee, and (g) read together, gives the assurance that we will come back to this issue, which is an important one. But, I think it is important, at this stage, not to give any guidance that is not well informed, and to take into account the deliberations of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee, as well as today's deliberations.

We feel that (f), stopping at "39th Session" gives the flexibility, both at this moment and for the new Director-General, to come back with more information. But, the issue is on the table, so we have the opportunity, again, to give the best guidance we can give with the information we will have in due time.

So, I feel that all our concerns are addressed with (f) and (g) together.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

If someone reads Conference Resolution 9/89 and reads the recommendation of the 39th Session, what is the gist of it? If the gist of these two is that there is still room for increasing the rate, then it is okay. Why don't we say it?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We would like to support what was said by Canada. We, ourselves, strive for consensus, and for reaching a consensus on this issue. As you put it in your introductory statements just a few minutes ago, the language of the Conference Resolution 9/89 is relevant and is a good basis for future discussions, and at the same time, as Canada put it, it is written in sub-paragraph (g). We need to have further discussion before having the necessary information to have a solid basis for taking consistent decisions. We believe that the outcome of the Finance Committee was relevant enough as a compromise that could be adopted also here.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

They are saying the same thing going on and on. Consensus, consensus. I am making the last attempt. After “39th Session”, put a comma and then write, “which do not prohibit a possible increase in the rate of TCP in relation to net appropriation”. Then that is a compromise.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on Afghanistan’s suggestion?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

We would like to second what has been said by the Romanian Presidency of the European Union and, frankly speaking, we see the suggestion from our colleague from Afghanistan as a little bit awkward, stating that something does not prohibit something else. It is already encapsulated in Resolution 9/89 and I would suggest to colleagues to consider the efforts that are being put by the EU and its member states as well as by other OECD Countries in terms of technical cooperation.

So, this should not be neglected in our view.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other comments. But, going by what Congo mentioned, perhaps a rest today and coming back to this paragraph tomorrow morning may have a different outcome and in the meantime we can have some informal discussions as well. Would you agree that we take up this paragraph tomorrow?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I was very supportive of your efforts to try to conclude this issue. I feel that we are very close. The Conference Resolution, while it is 1989, before the SDGs and all that, is clear, as was the recommendation of the Conference at its 39th Session. To answer Afghanistan’s question, of course it does not preclude that option. It is quite clear. I just do not understand why this language cannot be accepted and reflect the discussions of today as well – for us, it is very important.

We have just approved the restructuring of the department doing programmatic and resource mobilization that reflects the evolution of FAO’s project size. TCP’s quite small, including climate finance, GCF, and also the GEF, there are a lot of changes, and we need to see the impact evaluation before we make any recommendation.

But this option is always open. So, I feel that we are all covered and I do not see how discussing this tomorrow will make a difference. We are all flexible here and I do not understand the concern with the wording as it is proposed by the Finance Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

I heard quite a few comments that there will be a new Director-General, and it would be appropriate to spell certain things out in the report. But, the new Director-General, if he is given some input and told there is a Conference Resolution 9/89, he is going to want to know what the text of that Resolution is and the text covers all this. So, there I agree with Canada that the text of the Resolution has all that. So, anyone talking about Resolution 9/89, if for no other reasons that it is an old Resolution, will want the text and the text makes it clear. It does not prohibit.

So, why can’t we stop at the Recommendations of the 39th Session of the Conference and 9/89? Any reader of the Council’s report would want to know what the text is and will go and get the text and read

it. It even mentions a figure, which I do not think has been referred to much today. Resolution 9/89 even refers to the ultimate objective and it gives a figure.

So, it is all there. That is my appeal, that the Finance Committee's Report talking about 9/89 is not a number. 9/89 has a text, and that text, I think, covers some of the interventions I have heard today. So, considering that 9/89 has a text to it, could we come together and adopt the Finance Committee's Report because the Finance Committee's Report, as I say, as soon as someone talks about 9/89 he wants to know what the text is and the text is pretty clear.

If you want I can read out the text of 9/89.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The text of the resolution will not be in the report, right?

CHAIRPERSON

The number cannot be on its own, it has a text. So, anyone wanting to read or wanting to know what 9/89 is, would have to go the report of the Conference and see the text.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

You think someone in my country when they read it will find the Conference report?

CHAIRPERSON

He will rely on you as his representative.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

What is wrong with including the gist of the Resolution?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Quería sugerir solamente que se podría agregar el enlace a la resolución en el documento para que sea fácil para cualquier lector alcanzarlo.

CHAIRPERSON

May I have a reaction to Chile's suggestion?

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

During the lunch break I had some discussions with a number of delegations and indeed, to my mind, what Afghanistan has mentioned about a non-Council member reading our report, it will be vague to them what Conference Resolution 9/89 is and what its recommendations are. So, I tried thinking about adding the gist, for example, including, after "39th Session of the Conference..." a short description saying, "...regarding the possibility of raising TCP appropriation in the future." Something like that.

It does not simply describe it but alludes to the gist of what the Resolution is. Now, the risk is in formulating something like that, which might not accurately capture all of this. So, my suggestion is we either footnote something or annex the Resolution to the report so that it will just be a matter of factually informing the reader if they want to know what the contents of those Resolutions are.

CHAIRPERSON

We have two suggestions. One by the Chair of the Finance Committee and one by Chile. Can I have some comments on those?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I think we can go along with the suggestion by Chile. It is something that could help us move along and it is pragmatic. Anyone interested in seeing what exactly the Resolution is referring to, could easily access it. We reflected upon the proposition from the Chair of the Finance Committee and we appreciate the proposition, but think it will be difficult to encapsulate, in just a few words, the gist of the Resolution.

So, having it in the appendix will be a good solution.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Equally, to support the very good suggestion by Chile. We can easily add a footnote and the link to the document.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We can join in with Chile's suggestion, as backed by the EU and Canada.

My Jyri OLLILA (Finland)

Today's discussion makes it clear that we have a discussion ahead in the forthcoming meetings, as is already stated in paragraph (g). Coming from a paper production country, it would be nice to print it out completely. But I can support the good proposal by Chile.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment?

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

If I understand it, Chile will want to put it as a footnote?

If something is put as a footnote, is it part of the report? Because if you put the gist, it is part of the report. If you put the gist, as we recommend, then it is part of the Council report. But, if it is only a reference footnote, I do not think that is part of the report. But I am not so sure.

CHAIRPERSON

I thought Chile's suggestion was to put a reference and a link. Now this is to help the reader. I do not think it is the question of whether it is part of the report or not. It is to assist the reader to go and see the text.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

No, sir. The way I understood the Chile proposal is not a reference, it is to put the text of the Resolution as a footnote. If that is not the case then there is no compromise.

Mr Lupiño LAZARO (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Afghanistan, with reference to the question, what if the footnote on Conference Resolution 9/89 contained a link, that gives access to the document. Because, for one, it would save the printing, or having it reproduced entirely in the document. At the same time it would have direct reference to where it can be found.

So, two links, one to the Conference recommendation at the 39th Session and one to Conference Resolution at 9/89. But, this will be a link and, essentially, a part of the report, I think.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Surely we have more important things to talk about than this. I assure colleagues that we will include the full text of the Resolution in our declaration. So, people who are reading this will be able to see it. We will also point out our interpretation of the Resolution and, probably, some commentary about how we believe it is being misinterpreted. But, I can assure you, Sir, that the full text of the Resolution, as well as the applicable parts of paragraph 230, will be in our declaration which will be extensive. So, colleagues will be able to do this.

I just recommend we move forward. We disassociate with consensus, drive forward with language you can agree on and we will submit our declaration tomorrow, which will include this and let's move on to the next point.

Ms Renata REGRELLY NOGUEIRA (Brazil)

We are listening attentively to this debate and we understand some countries are not comfortable with not mentioning Resolution 9/89 in a clear way. So, maybe, we would like to put forward to the other members of the Council the alternative of mentioning the title of the Resolution as well, which is,

“Increase in Allocation for Technical Cooperation Programmes in Forthcoming Biennium”. That is the title according to the FAO website, if I am not mistaken.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I have the impression that we are very close to consensus unless we continue slowly but steadily approaching, sort of, science fiction here because we are alluding to the fact that a Conference, which is, of course, overarching, the supreme institution of FAO, how an FAO Conference Resolution can be part of a Council Report.

So, this very sound and wise proposal from Chile, can be complemented on the link to be clicked plus footnote plus whatever else because we have the text and, as you were saying, everything is in there.

CHAIRPERSON

Any reaction to what we have just heard from Italy? I see no request for the floor and there is still no agreement. So, what about my proposal?

M Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

J'avais fait une proposition, et comme nous en train de tourner autour du consensus, nous y sommes presque, je voudrais, Monsieur le Président, vous laisser la latitude de voir comment vous pourriez nous rassembler tous autour d'un consensus demain matin. Allons dormir et je suis certain que nous arriverons à le trouver.

CHAIRPERSON

So, this was a suggestion I made following Congo's previous intervention. So, I agree, we are going round and round like a tadpole biting his tail in a bowl of water.

So, can we go and come back tomorrow morning. We will be fresh and, perhaps, members would also consult each other. So, maybe, take this paragraph tomorrow morning and go to the other paragraph which there was no agreement on, which was regarding peacebuilding.

Mr Hamid SID AHMED M. ALAMAIN (Sudan)

I think we can accept your suggestion. But, I am asking if you can circulate just the paragraph by email after the close of the Session.

CHAIRPERSON

The other, paragraph (m) in the report of the item 3. So, here is a new wording, would members be comfortable with this wording?

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to you and the FAO Secretariat for their efforts to find a compromise language. We are ready to support this alternative paragraph as it is now on the screen. Saying that, we urge the FAO Secretariat in its documents not to use the reference to FAO's role in peacebuilding and we hope that the respective adjustments will be made with regard to the PWB.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment on the proposed wording which clarifies the words used previously was peacebuilding and now that has been changed? I see no other comments, so this paragraph is adopted.

So, we have got one outstanding paragraph.

We have come to the end of today's Session and we meet tomorrow at 09:30. Thank you for your patience.

The meeting rose at 20:41 hours

La séance est levée à 20 h 41

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.41

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
FIFTH PLENARY SESSION CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
10 April 2019

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.03 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 03
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 10.03
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 (continued)

Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2018-2021 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2020-2021 (suite)

Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2018-2021 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2020-21 (continuación)

C 2019/3; C 2019/3-WA11

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the fifth meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

May I remind delegates of the need to register for Council if they wish to be included in the list of participants of this Session.

We have an outstanding item from yesterday, Item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21*. We now resume our discussions on the outstanding paragraph 6(f) in the draft conclusions for Item 3, which is projected on the screen behind the podium.

As you will note, the paragraph is similar, or the same, as the report of the Finance Committee. The proposal is, like Chile suggested yesterday, to put a footnote, which will give the link to the resolution.

So, there are two links, one to the 2015 Conference Report and one to Resolution 9/89. I hope this will be acceptable to Members. The floor is open.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Again, we express appreciation for the spirit of compromise and the work that colleagues have been doing. We can support this compromise, as articulated by Chile, and as put forward there on the screen.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

As a compromise, we go along with what was said. We would like to make one suggestion, if you do not mind. Take the word ‘while’ out and say ‘and taking note of’.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I think after a long debate in the last three days we proposed a lot of language in the spirit of showing more flexibility and also try to reach a consensus but I think it was very hard for all the members to accept all our proposals. Right now I can accept, and want to support, the proposal of Afghanistan and we will see.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

The same in our case. In the spirit of compromise, we think we can go along with the proposition from Chile and your proposition. Probalby it would be better if it would say, rather than “and taking note”, “takes note”, just to make the language clear and concise. Other than that, I think we can move along and agree with the compromise.

Mr Hamid SID AHMED M. ALAMAIN (Sudan)

Sudan is not going to block the consensus. We appreciate your effort to come up with the compromise suggestion for acceptance. However, we can say that our request, as a developing country, has not been matched, but we will not block the consensus and therefore we can accept the suggested solution.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We align ourselves with those who have accepted the proposal from Chile and we also support what Afghanistan, Egypt and Sudan have said. We join this consensus, even though our view has not been taken into account. But, to maintain consensus we support all the proposals that have been put forward.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I think we are very near to a consensus and we need to fix this language. Our colleagues from Afghanistan propose to change the word “while” with “and”, and my colleagues from Romania are

asking to change it to “takes”. So, we need to see the final version and also we need to get the reactions from other members to finalise this and to see the final wording of this paragraph. After that we can give you our final position.

CHAIRPERSON

In the first instance, let me ask the US whether changing the word “while” to “and” would be acceptable.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We can accept that. We can accept the text that is on the screen.

CHAIRPERSON

So, Romania, would you go along with that too?

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

Yes, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we have consensus and I congratulate Members.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

But right now we are moving forward to accept the proposal of Romania and United States. My colleagues from Afghanistan and I supported his proposal and I cannot accept this. So, I prefer to retain the language of the Finance Committee and I cannot accept this.

CHAIRPERSON

Can you tell us what your disagreement is, with which word? Because Afghanistan’s word “and” is being taken into account.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I feel that “takes note” is not convenient for me. I prefer to stick to “while taking note”.

CHAIRPERSON

But “while taking note” does not agree with what Afghanistan would like because Afghanistan wants “and”. So, Afghanistan, I see from your gestures that you do not mind being “while”. So, we are arguing for no rhyme or reason. So, could we go back to “while taking note” and could we agree on that wording?

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I think after this long debate, we stick to the language of the recommendations of Finance Committee. After all this debate, these discussions and negotiations, and just with your proposal and I would like to thank you very much for all your efforts to try to help all the membership in the Council to reach a consensus. I would also like to give you, if you allow me, a statement before giving you my final decision here.

Egypt, as a previous Chairperson of the G77 and China and the current president of the African Union for 2019, has observed that there are a lot of tremendous obstacles facing the developing countries in achieving the ambitious 2030 Agenda, as efforts towards achieving SDGs were mainly due to the lack of appropriate technical knowledge and financial support. One of the core functions and the main mandate of FAO is to support the developing countries through technical assistance mechanisms, supported by the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). And under the shadow of growing numbers of undernourished people in the world, reaching record levels of 821 million in 2017, we have a shared responsibility to undertake all necessary means to address this setback, which is why Egypt and other developing countries raised the issues of the TCP after 30 years since the Conference Resolution 9/89.

We would like to reiterate the importance of showing flexibility in our discussion in order to reach consensus and show our support to the developing countries in achieving food security and ending

hunger by 2030, and one of the means to do so, in our opinion, is to consider the increase of the resources available to TCP projects, if not now, maybe in the future, in order to support the developing countries. I would like also to request the FAO Secretariat to ensure the full utilisation of TCP appropriations.

Mr Chairperson, in the spirit of reaching consensus, we cannot object to your proposal that could provide a way forward and in a way to maintain the unity of the membership of the Council ahead of the elections of the new Director-General. We are joining the consensus on a clear understanding that we will pursue our discussions and the negotiations in the future, including at the 41st Session of Conference in June 2019 as we are making a reasonable and fair demand, to seek a possible increase of resources for TCPs in the future. We look forward to the incoming elected Director-General of FAO to take the helm in this regard.

CHAIRPERSON

I see we have a consensus and I congratulate the Members for coming together on this.

M. Seydou Cissé (Côte d'Ivoire)

Je voudrais appuyer la déclaration de l'Égypte, qui va dans le bon sens, dans le sens du compromis trouvé au sein du Conseil.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We support what Egypt said in relation to their statement on behalf of developing countries.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other requests for the floor. As I was saying, I congratulate the Members for coming together on this text, which has been with us since the day before yesterday. It shows the governance process in FAO is working, so I congratulate Members and we can conclude on this item.

Item 10. Arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference (including Provisional Timetable) - Recommendations to the Conference

Point 10. Organisation de la quarante et unième session de la Conférence (y compris calendrier provisoire) – Recommandations à l'intention de la Conférence

Tema 10. Disposiciones para el 41.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia (incluido el calendario provisional): recomendaciones a la Conferencia

CL 161/6 Rev.2

CHAIRPERSON

The next item is Item 10, *Arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference (including the Provisional Timetable) – Recommendations to the Conference*. The document before Council is CL 161/6 Rev.2.

As Members will recall, the Council at its 160th Session in December 2018 agreed that the theme of the General Debate be “Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development”.

Today Council is invited to: adopt the tentative timetable of the 41st Session of the Conference; agree on the recommendation of the Biennial Theme to be submitted to the Conference for endorsement; 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 members of the General Committee; and Nine members of the Credentials Committee.

I suggest we begin by considering the draft Provisional Timetable proposed for the Conference that is set out in Appendix A to document CL 161/6 Rev.2 regarding Arrangements for the Conference.

Does Council wish to approve the Provisional Timetable?

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia)

Malaysia would like to express its support to the proposed topic for the general debate of the Conference. This is a topic of importance to many countries, including Malaysia, where agriculture plays a significant role in addressing challenges faced by rural communities, including hunger and malnutrition by improving the livelihood, access to basic facilities and provisions of support systems.

As such, discussions in the upcoming Conference on the topics of migration, agriculture and rural development are timely. Malaysia sees this as an opportunity to share the success story of its agriculture development project in rural areas under the new economic policy that has helped the country to address rural poverty and migration.

Malaysia also looks forward to hearing from other Members on the contribution of the agricultural sector in addressing migration in their respective countries.

On the proposed timetable, we noted the proposal for the appointment of the Director-General to take place on Sunday, consistent with past practice. However, we noted with concern that the scheduling of this appointment on Sunday will incur an estimated cost of USD 250 000, when the Organization is searching for efficiency savings to support programmes and activities for member countries.

We would like to propose that the election be scheduled on Monday, 24 June 2019 while maintaining the address by the candidates on Saturday afternoon, 22 June 2019. This is still in line with the Basic Texts that provide for the appointment of the Director-General to begin and take effect within three working days following the opening of the Session.

Nevertheless, I would like to say that this proposal is subject to consensus and on the understanding that any re-scheduling does not reduce the opportunity for discussions on other agenda items.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to suggest to consider the Item point by point. The first point I would like the Council's agreement is on the timetable, and then we will come to the biennial theme and the Officers of the Conference.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

The EU and its Member States welcome the information document provided by the FAO Secretariat on the arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference.

We would like to underline that it is important to stick to the time schedule set out in Appendix A to this document, especially to the date of Sunday 23 June 2019 for the election of the Director-General. In fact, in making the arrangements to participate in the Conference, ministers have already taken account of this date for the elections.

We have another part of our statement that relates to the theme of the Conference but, as you indicated, we will come back on that.

Ms Elsa SIMÕES (Cabo Verde)

We seize this opportunity to congratulate the Independent Chairperson of the Council for the excellent work overall, but particularly in the preparation of the Conference.

The arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference reflect the discussions and consensus reached through a permanent consultation and consensus building.

The provisional timetable is indeed the most important in view of the volume of work scheduled and the time needed to accommodate discussions and consensus building. However, this time also costs money which we have been informed to be around USD 0.25 million.

Keeping the actual timetable is desirable and recommended to achieve the best result. However, the Africa Regional Group is sensitive to the costs, it is consulting with its members, and will come later with a position. I will come back with the other issues.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

On the question of the date for the Director-General elections, our view is that we have been working off this date for quite a long time and, as I am sure we all know, getting something in ministers' diary is no easy feat, so to change something at this relatively late stage would be highly problematic for attendance, which I do not think is in anyone's interest.

I take note of the comments made by colleagues around cost but I can only imagine that if we did not proceed as planned, then we would be condensing the work and having night sessions, which would require extra costs for interpretation, etc. But on the basis that we are talking about ministers' diaries that are set way in advance, I would be inclined to maintain the date.

CHAIRPERSON

Malaysia, could I ask whether you would go along with the members who are suggesting we stick to the planned date?

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia)

Yes, as I mentioned, in the spirit of consensus, and I believe I did mention if there is a consensus to this. But this is just a proposal, so Malaysia can go along with the consensus.

CHAIRPERSON

I take it that the Provisional Timetable is approved by the Council. The Provisional Timetable will be published on the Conference web page.

In line with the recommendation of the 39th Session of the Conference, the Conference will be required to endorse a biennial theme for consideration by Governing Bodies at sessions taking place during the 2020-21 biennium. In this regard the Council may wish to take into consideration the trends and challenges for food and agriculture identified in the Medium Term Plan and proposed the following theme: "Promoting healthy diets and the prevention of obesity".

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

I am once more honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. In regards to the proposed biennial theme, we would like to propose broadening it so that it is focussed on food systems, promoting healthy diets and addressing all forms of malnutrition. We consider that this broader theme would be better aligned with FAO's core mandate.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Regarding the biennial theme, we thank the Secretariat for proposing "Promoting healthy diets and the prevention of obesity", but we consider it should be discussed further by the Council.

We acknowledge that obesity is a major challenge. Brazil experienced a significant increase in overweight and obesity in all age groups, and chronic diseases are the leading cause of death among adults. However, since the other forms of malnutrition, namely undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, also constitute a significant burden, we believe they should also be addressed in the biennial theme.

Moreover, we would like to underscore that any debate on "healthy diets" must necessarily be multidimensional. Brazil supports, and adopts within its domestic regulation, a broad approach to the concept of "healthy diets" that goes beyond the biological consideration of nutrient amounts.

Adequate and healthy food is a basic human right, implying the guarantee to permanent and regular access to alimentary practices which are suitable to the biological and social aspect of each person.

These practices must be referenced by culture and the dimensions of gender and ethnicity. They also must be financially accessible and address the principles of variety, balance, moderation and pleasure. In that sense there are practically endless combinations and amounts of food that make up healthy diets.

We also would like to suggest that Council consider an alternative biennial theme, which would be "Food Loss and Food Waste". One-third of all food produced is either lost or wasted, severely undermining the global efforts against hunger and malnutrition.

FAO documents affirm that food loss and waste represent a misuse of labour, water, energy, land and other natural resources, and accounts for a great share of greenhouse gas emissions.

The relevance of this theme has been recently underscored by several regional conferences and governing bodies of FAO, including the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Jamaica last year.

To conclude, regardless of which theme is chosen by the Council, we would like to propose that a concept note on its relevance and pertinence be presented to the Conference.

Ms Elsa SIMÕES (Cabo Verde)

Cabo Verde is honoured to speak on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. The proposal for the theme "Promoting healthy diets and the prevention of obesity" for the biennium 2020-21 clearly reflects the challenges we all have, both at FAO level and at the level of each of our Member States, if we are to effectively contribute to accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals numbers 3, 12 and 13. Therefore the theme is suited to enhance the focus and priorities of the Governing Bodies in the implementation of the Strategic Framework.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

We have heard a number of potential topics and areas of coverage discussed on this issue and we note that some of the rationales and discussions verge on the political and risk getting into inherently controversial territory. We also observe that we will have a new Director-General in this biennia who might also have views or ideas on the push forward.

We would therefore suggest a more general approach and in support of that more general approach, we could use the language that is already in paragraph 12 and just make the theme "Trends and challenges for food and agriculture".

This would encompass everything that we have talked about here, avoid needless controversy and, again, give the incoming Director-General a little bit more scope to help direct the way forward.

CHAIRPERSON

Any comments on that proposal?

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

We had the same thought when we were assessing this paper that it might be a bit preemptive for a new Director-General to set in stone such a topic, even though it is a worthy topic. I think the suggestion from the US to have a slightly broader one, which gives both the Director-General and Council in December, or potentially the Council immediately after Conference, to give it a little bit more thought.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment? Do I take it that we agree with the US proposal, which is "Trends and challenges for food and agriculture"?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

The proposal coming from the US, which we welcome, we understand that it is a little bit too broad. Everything can go under this subject and I would like to remind that it is a theme to be adopted by the Conference, and if we are going to wait for the new Director-General, it will take two years until the next Conference.

We are not against this kind of proposal, but I think we should be a little bit more specific, maybe in the same line that Romania on behalf of EU proposed and which is basically what we said in our first proposal could be a little bit more specific. But, again, we are not against it.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comments? So, we still have the US proposal before us. One of the reasonings was that the new Director-General may have some views and the new Director-General always has the opportunity to review certain aspects, particularly the Programme of Work and Budget.

So, the advantage of the US proposal is that it can encompass what the EU proposed and what Brazil has proposed and we can go forward with that, if the Council would agree. I see no comments.

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algérie)

Sur cette question, je suis plutôt attiré par ce qui a été dit par le Brésil et le représentant des États-Unis concernant l'option de laisser quand même une thématique un peu large.

Mais je souhaiterais préciser que la thématique qui sera choisie ne doit pas dévier de la mission essentielle de l'Organisation, qui est de combattre la malnutrition et la faim dans le monde.

Les questions de promouvoir une alimentation saine et combattre l'obésité sont des questions qui sont traitées au niveau d'autres organisations, à savoir l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (l'OMS). Aussi, pour éviter une duplication de traitement de ces questions, je pense que quelle que soit la thématique sur laquelle nous statuerons pour le prochain exercice biennal, il faut rester attaché à la mission de cette Organisation, qui est de combattre la faim et la malnutrition dans le monde.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We are of the opinion that actually having a more focused theme would be beneficial and the theme that we propose reflects a broader scope and, to be honest, the issue of addressing malnutrition is the core mandate of FAO because we are suggesting to address all forms of malnutrition.

While obesity might be tackled by other organizations, other forms of malnutrition are the core of this Organization. So, therefore, we would rather have a focused approach for the next biennium, and we are sure that the next Director-General, whoever he or she may be, will find that the themes that we propose are at this moment essential.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

Je m'aligne en partie sur l'intervention de l'Algérie. Je pense que l'obésité est un aspect de la malnutrition. Donc, selon moi, dans un esprit de compromis on pourrait dire «promouvoir une alimentation saine et suffisante, et prévenir la malnutrition».

La malnutrition englobe tous les aspects, n'est-ce pas? Qu'il s'agisse de questions de protéines ou de questions d'obésité. Il serait judicieux de proposer de prévenir la malnutrition au lieu d'insister seulement sur l'obésité, qui n'est qu'un aspect de la malnutrition.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy is of the opinion that we should combine both a wideranging topic with some more specific focus and we see merit under this respect in the proposal made by Romania on behalf of the EU and its Member States, because when we propose "Food systems, promoting healthy diets and addressing all forms of malnutrition", we actually are highlighting a very important key, crucial portion of the core mandate of FAO, but in such a way as to allow for very broad conversations.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nosotros quisiéramos expresar nuestro apoyo a la propuesta hecha por Rumania, en nombre de la Unión Europea; nos parece que es un tema que es importante para todos y que refleja la línea de trabajo que estamos siguiendo en la Organización.

CHAIRPERSON

Listening to some of the comments, perhaps I can propose a slightly different wording which would take account of what the European Union has said and what some other members have said. Would the Council be prepared to go along with the wording "Promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition, including obesity"? Would the Council go along with that?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

We think that the reference to food systems is really key in order not to separate nutrition issues and fight against all forms of malnutrition from the many root causes which lie in unsustainable food systems. This is very much the theme of the International Symposium held in December 2016 here in FAO.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Mr Chairman, we could go along with your proposal but I think it would be necessary to stress "including obesity". It is a form of malnutrition, so it is understood by everyone.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We agree with what was said by Brazil, that, in fact, obesity is one of the forms of malnutrition, so we address all forms of malnutrition, as you stated. And we also agree with what was said by Italy, that we cannot address malnutrition without linking it to food systems and to healthy diets.

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

Colleagues, we made our original intervention because we noted that this language is becoming politicised and we just saw an example of that here, in which not only do we talk about food systems but, quote, “unsustainable food systems”. That is a value judgement. That is an inherently political judgement there. It is not to say we can’t have that conversation but I think we need to be careful about it and so we find that the term “food systems” has been politicised here in FAO, so therefore we do not think it would be helpful to add it to the theme.

That does not say that colleagues cannot speak to it, however, we think it would produce inherently a political aspect that would detract from our work. Therefore, we support your formulation.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to support my colleague from the United States.

Sr. Mateo Nsogo NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

Para evitar la confusión que puede existir con la expresión o la politización de dietas saludables. Por lo tanto, propongo que en “sistemas alimentarios saludables” en vez de “sistemas alimentarios” pongamos “dietas saludables”, que se refiere concretamente al consumo.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, what I read out speaks about healthy diets. I shall quote “Promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition, including obesity”.

Now, the comments from some Members that malnutrition includes obesity and we did not mention that, it does not detract from the wording by including obesity.

May I suggest that, if there is support for what I have just read out, that is “Promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition, including obesity”, there is a suggestion from some Members to delete ‘including obesity’ because malnutrition includes that aspect. But by including it, does not detract from the previous.

Perhaps, in the interest of consensus, we can keep that wording.

Now, I may point out that all this will go to the Conference for endorsement, and the new Director-General would be reviewing the Programme of Work and Budget, and the Conference could delegate to the Council to decide if there is a different text or wording being proposed.

The Conference could delegate the Council to approve at its next Session, if Members feel that perhaps the views of the Conference would be useful as well.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We must insist that we do not see the point of singling out one form of malnutrition, obesity in that case, especially since, to our recollection, none of the Members insisted on addressing in particular obesity, as it is encompassed within the “all forms of malnutrition”. Also, singling out “obesity” would diminish the importance and the relevance of “other forms of malnutrition”.

So, we either just stick to general language of “all forms of malnutrition” or make a list of all the forms of malnutrition that we need to address and combat. So, we would prefer to keep out “obesity”.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We would prefer to remove “including obesity”. But I ask the floor to be reminded that we proposed a concept note on the relevance and pertinence of the theme, which should be submitted to the Conference. So, it would be important that we decide also this.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Brazil. That can be done.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

This was just to support what the Romanian colleague has just said but after the intervention from Brazil I do not think it is needed any longer.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

Nous sommes en train de tourner autour des mots et ne parvenons pas à sortir de l'impasse. C'est une question de responsabilité collective.

Les dernières données sur la faim dans le monde nous indiquent clairement que la faim est en train d'augmenter. Il ne suffit pas seulement d'avoir une alimentation saine, mais il faut aussi qu'elle soit suffisante et nutritive. Nous comprenons que dans certains pays en développement ou dans les pays développés nantis, l'obésité est une question extrêmement importante.

Je rappelle que la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition, la CIN-2, a eu lieu ici, au cours de laquelle des définitions ont été établies et pratiquement acceptées lors de cette Conférence.

L'obésité n'est qu'un aspect de la malnutrition. Si vous proposez toutes les formes de malnutrition, nous sommes d'accord, mais qu'on ne prenne pas en compte seulement l'obésité, qui est une des composantes de la malnutrition. Il faut mentionner toutes les formes de malnutrition. À ce moment-là alors nous sommes prêts à accepter ce type de proposition.

Ms Maria Araceli ESCANDOR (Philippines)

This is just to support the previous speakers in proposing the deletion of "obesity", and we could also support the proposal of Brazil.

M. Boumedienne MAHI (Algérie)

Je ne reviens pas sur l'explication proposée par mon collègue de la Côte d'Ivoire que je soutiens et appuie, et je me joins aux collègues qui ont proposé de supprimer la référence à l'obésité.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other requests for the floor. There is general support from the speakers to delete the word "obesity".

My proposal is we delete the word "obesity" and, taking the comments of Italy into consideration, insert "Food systems, promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition".

It would read "Food systems, promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition." Would this be acceptable?

Mr Thomas DUFFY (United States of America)

No, I am sorry, I will explain again. Food systems has become an inherently politicised phrase here in Rome and at FAO. You heard Italy also talk about unsustainable food systems. This is a value judgement and a political point.

Because the term food systems has become politicised here, we object to its inclusion at this point. That does not prevent countries or regional groups from raising it, but we do not think it would be helpful to include it in this and we, again, support your original, compromise language.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would also like to support your previous proposal, to keep the theme, "Promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition", because food systems, as my colleague from US said, it is kind of political here, so it is better to keep a general theme for the incoming Director-General.

After that, we do not know his or her priorities or views, so it is better to keep something very general for the sake of all the Members here.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Nosotros queremos apoyar que se mantenga “promoción de dietas saludables y prevención de todas las formas de malnutrición”, sin la mención de los sistemas alimentarios.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I think that here an explanation is needed. When we say food systems, I wonder how can it possibly be associated with politicisation of the concept? I mean, food system is FAO, basically. It is a Food and Agriculture Organization.

So, for food systems as such, there is no political implication. It is just about the relationship between how food is produced along the value chain and how people feed themselves. I really do not think that any political implication can be seen in the expression “food systems”. This is just for the sake of clarity.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Italy, for that clarification. But would you go along with the wording I proposed, which was “promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition”?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I look to the Romanian presidency of the EU, since we have a joint position.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

In fact, we, of course, support what was said by Italy, because there is no politicisation of food systems and we did not mention in our intervention other language in terms of sustainable food systems or something similar. We only mentioned food systems, which is actually, as you know, part of a workstream of the Committee on World Food Security that, in fact, links food systems and nutrition.

So, when we talk about healthy diets, I think it is very relevant to also consider food systems. And, as we said, without politicising it, without mentioning that food systems are either sustainable or unsustainable, diets are an end result of food systems.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia)

I would like to also share my view that I agree with Italy, that the expression “food systems” is not political in any way, in terms of trying to address the problems we are facing when it comes to healthy diets and so on. But I agree that, in order for the theme to be general, it has to be able to allow the new Director-General to take up his own mandate in the theme itself. So, I would agree with the earlier proposal by the Chair, that we just focus on “Promoting healthy diets and prevention of all forms of malnutrition” and put a stop there, without including “obesity”, to make it as general as possible.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree with the comment made by Malaysia, that it should be a general theme which can encompass all aspects. That means not to be specific. So, could we go along with “promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition”? Under this heading, you can talk about food systems and you can talk about obesity. The theme has to be a general one. So, could we go along with this?

I think silence means yes, so I think we can conclude on this item.

The suggestion by Brazil on the concept note, there will be one.

The biennial theme, as agreed by the Council, will be submitted to the Conference for endorsement.

With regard to nominations for Officers of the Conference, the following proposals have been received for endorsement by the Council. At the moment we have not received all of them, so I will just, for information, give you the names we have received.

Chairperson of the Conference is His Excellency Enzo Benech, Minister for Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay.

For the three Vice-Chairs of the Conference we have received so far only two names, which are Germany and Thailand and we are awaiting the third name. As soon as we have it, we will inform the Council.

The Chairperson of Commission I is Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch of the United Kingdom. Chairperson of Commission II is Mr Bommakanti Rajender of India.

The seven Members of the General Committee would be Australia, Canada, China, Niger, Peru, San Marino, and we are still awaiting the nomination from the Near East Region.

The nine Members of the Credentials Committee would be Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Guatemala, Malaysia, New Zealand, San Marino, the United States of America, and we are awaiting two names which we will communicate to the Council as soon as we have them.

Once we have the full list, the Council can endorse it. For the moment this is just for your information. We will take this item once we have the full list.

Item 11. Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 160th Session of the Council (3-7 December 2018)

Point 11. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent cinquante-neuvième session (4-8 juin 2018)

Tema 11. Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 160.º período de sesiones (3-7 de diciembre de 2018)

CL 161/LIM/3

CHAIRPERSON

So, we can go to the next item, *Status of Implementation of decisions taken at the 160th Session of the Council*. The document before you is CL 161/LIM/3.

The Council is invited to note the information on the implementation of decisions taken at the 160th Session in December 2018.

There is one aspect, which is the appointment of secretaries of Article XIV bodies, which is set out in the tables of decisions. I would like to inform the Council that I had a further exchange with the Chairperson of the Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in February this year and the matter was subsequently discussed at the bureau meeting of the Treaty in March.

As agreed by the 160th Session of the Council in December 2018, the ICC is mandated to continue consultations with the concerned Article XIV bodies and the FAO Secretariat in order to reach a lasting solution on procedures for the appointment of secretaries to these bodies which is acceptable to all concerned.

With the aim of reporting back definitely on this matter at the 163rd Session of the Council in December 2019.

Having said this, I open the floor for Members who may wish to comment on these remarks.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Quisiéramos hacer un comentario respecto al proyecto de Resolución que se eleva a la Conferencia, relativo a la celebración del Día Internacional de Concienciación sobre la Pérdida y Desperdicio de Alimentos. Quisiéramos solicitar a la Presidencia que, por favor, indique que este proyecto ha sido propuesto por Argentina, así como está en el resto de los proyectos, donde se indica el nombre del país que promovió la presentación de la resolución.

M. Constant Herman DAZAN (Bénin)

Le Bénin et la Côte d'Ivoire ont le plaisir de s'exprimer ici au nom du Groupe Afrique. Le Groupe régional Afrique remercie le Secrétariat pour l'inscription permanente de ce point à l'ordre du jour de chaque session du Conseil. Cela témoigne de l'importance que la FAO accorde aux bonnes pratiques liées à la mise en œuvre et au suivi des décisions adoptées par le Conseil.

Le Groupe se félicite du niveau élevé de mise en œuvre des décisions, telles que reflétées dans le document en cours d'examen, et félicite particulièrement le Secrétariat de la FAO pour avoir traité des décisions relatives à l'agroécologie et au harcèlement. En effet, parmi les décisions du Conseil rapportées dans le document, le Groupe note avec satisfaction que la mise en œuvre de 12 d'entre elles est complètement achevée et qu'une seule est en cours d'exécution.

Il serait donc possible à première vue d'affirmer que nous sommes à un niveau d'exécution de 92 pour cent.

Néanmoins, le Groupe régional Afrique constate avec regret que certaines décisions importantes prises par le Conseil lors de sa session de décembre, et dont la mise en œuvre nécessite un suivi, ne figurent pas dans le document. Le Groupe voudrait faire référence, par exemple, aux décisions du Conseil pour l'élaboration d'une stratégie visant à intégrer la biodiversité dans tous les secteurs agricoles, la rédaction d'un rapport de répercussions administratives et financières liées à la création d'un sous-comité de l'élevage, sans oublier, bien sûr, le lancement de façon conjointe avec le FIDA et le PAM d'un cadre conjoint de programmation par pays.

Sur ce dernier point, il n'est pas inutile de rappeler que le Groupe Afrique, au cours de la session de décembre 2018, avait encouragé la FAO à établir des synergies stratégiques avec les autres organisations des Nations Unies, en particulier le FIDA et le PAM ainsi que les banques de développement afin de mobiliser les ressources financières à cet effet.

Par ailleurs, le Groupe régional Afrique relève que certaines décisions, dont la mise en œuvre a commencé, ne figurent pas dans le document. Par exemple, de nombreuses initiatives ont été menées pour la mise en place d'une stratégie complète et opérationnelle d'éradication de la légionnaire d'automne, en vue de mettre un terme à sa prolifération en Afrique et dans toutes les autres régions; l'élaboration, en tenant compte des propositions régionales, dont celles de l'Afrique, d'une vision révisée du Code de conduite international sur l'utilisation et la gestion des engrais.

Le Groupe aurait été heureux de voir tous ces points, avec le niveau de mise en œuvre, inscrits dans ce tableau. Avec ce commentaire, le Groupe Afrique prend note des informations contenues dans le document.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

En la misma línea de lo solicitado por Argentina, quisiéramos pedir que en el proyecto Resolución sobre el Año Internacional de las Frutas y Verduras se indicara que fue propuesto por Chile con apoyo del GRULAC.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other requests for the floor. There are some requests for clarification. In fact, the responsible member from the Secretariat is on her way. We will just wait a few minutes.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

At the beginning, I would like also to express my appreciation for Management that provide us with this report on the Implementation of the Organization Council's decisions.

I have only two issues here. I want to ask Management and get clear guidance here. There are two other decisions of the last Council, in paragraph 29 of the Report of the 160th Council Session, I read that "the Council requested that the Joint Country Programme Framework (CPF) to be piloted with IFAD and WFP", and that an update be provided at the next joint formal meeting of RBA governing bodies. I want to know the status of this decision.

And also, in paragraph 18(e), "the Council requested FAO Management to conduct the staff satisfaction survey in 2019". I would like to know the status of this decision as well.

CHAIRPERSON

Sorry, Members, we are still waiting for the Secretariat to join us. In the meantime, perhaps instead of waiting we can move to the next item.

- Item 13. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2019-20**
Point 13. Calendrier 2019-2020 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales
Tema 13. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2019-2020

CL 161/LIM/1

CHAIRPERSON

The next item is item 13, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2019-20*. The document before you is CL 161/LIM/1. The floor is open for comments from members.

Ms Gail HUMPHREY (Canada)

Just to inform that the informal North American Regional Conference will take place the week of 6 April 2020, to consider when scheduling.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. We can move on to the next item. These we will keep pending until they join us.

- Item 14. Provisional Agenda for the 162nd Session of the Council (1 July 2019)**
Point 14. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent soixante et deuxième session du Conseil (1^{er} juillet 2019)
Tema 14. Programa provisional del 162.º período de sesiones del Consejo (1 de julio de 2019)
CL 161/INF/2

CHAIRPERSON

The next item is item 14, *Provisional Agenda for the 162nd Session of the Council* which will be held on 1 July 2019. And the document before you is CL 161/INF/2 for discussion of this item to members.

Perhaps we can close one of the items which is the Calendar. And we take note of the comments and we will amend the Calendar.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

With regards to the Calendar and with regards to the provisional agenda, I would like to refer to the Near East Regional Conference. I believe there is a footnote here, saying that there might be a change of dates. My question to you is: is it 1 to 5 March or have the dates been changed?

CHAIRPERSON

I understand the change of date from 1 to 5 March is confirmed.

With that, we can conclude items 13 and 14.

I apologize Members, I am told that Members of the Secretariat are on their way.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I asked for the floor in order to propose that you remind the Secretariat that it is obvious that the functionaries responsible for the theme that is going to be treated by the Council should be here.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Brazil. I could not agree with you more. I think it is the duty of the Secretariat to keep track of the timetable and be here. We can't keep the Council waiting until members of the Secretariat arrive. And now we have to repeat because they have not heard the request for clarification and the questions.

May I request Egypt to repeat your questions?

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would also like to join my colleagues from Brazil, we have been waiting for 15 minutes, so hopefully the Secretariat could be on time to address our concerns and answer our questions.

I raised two questions about two decisions of the last session of the Council. They are contained in paragraph 29 of the Report, that the Council requested that the joint Country Programming Framework (CPF) be piloted with IFAD and WFP and that update be provided to the next joint informal meeting of RBA governing bodies, that will be held next September. I want to know the status of this decision.

And also, in paragraph 18(e) the Council requested the Organization's Management to conduct a staff satisfaction survey in 2019. I would like to know the status of this decision as well.

Sr. Mario LUBETKIN (Director de Gabinete)

Ante todo, disculpas, Sres. Representantes por estos minutos de atraso. Ha sido una cosa absolutamente excepcional y excepcional será. Conocen nuestra trayectoria y la forma profesional en la que nosotros trabajamos, por lo tanto, simplemente pedirles disculpas en esta ocasión.

En relación a la pregunta de cómo estamos preparando la reunión informal del mes de septiembre, de los OSR, en este momento estamos trabajando con nuestros colegas del PAM y del FIDA en un plan de trabajo específico que pensamos concluir antes de fines de mayo. De forma tal que en septiembre podamos no solamente abarcar el conjunto de aspectos que los diferentes Sres. Representantes están discutiendo desde el mes de enero, como propuesta de agenda a la que posteriormente nosotros haríamos el ajuste definitivo, si no que también estamos trabajando en uno de los pedidos que Ustedes realizaron, el plan de trabajo conjunto, a partir de un conjunto de iniciativas que ya estamos desarrollando y otras que tenemos planificado desarrollar tanto a nivel central, regional, como local.

Al respecto, podemos adelantar la información que hemos acordado con nuestros colegas del PAM y del FIDA de realizar la tercera visita conjunta de los líderes de las tres agencias los próximos 14 y 15 de mayo a Laos. Como Ustedes recordarán, la primera visita de los tres líderes – histórica primera visita – se realizó hace dos años a Etiopía. El año pasado se realizó al Níger y esta será la primera visita conjunta en la historia de las tres Organizaciones, a un país asiático. Junto a esto, estamos preparando los otros aspectos de los planes de trabajo.

En relación a las solicitudes sobre las encuestas de satisfacción por parte de una acción de los RBA, este es uno de los temas que trataremos en la próxima reunión conjunta de los “Senior Managers” que Ustedes saben que se realiza cada seis meses y este será uno de los temas que colocaremos en la agenda de discusión.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to thank the Director of Cabinet, Mr Lubetkin, for his response. I just want to raise with management that these two decisions are not in the table that you provided to us. I would like to put these two decisions on the table and also to put beside them the status of the implementation and to ask if you will provide us with the timeframe to implement this?

Thank you for the information you provided us about the joint visit of the three Agencies to Laos.

M. Constant Herman DAZAN (Bénin)

Il aurait fallu, je crois, commencer par les questions évoquées par le Bénin qui, tout à l'heure, a parlé au nom du Groupe Afrique. Cela aurait permis au Directeur de Cabinet de répondre de façon plus globale puisque les deux questions que l'Égypte a évoquées font partie de la déclaration globale que le Bénin a faite au nom du Groupe Afrique.

Il ne s'agit pas que de deux questions qui ne figurent pas dans le document actuellement en examen. Nous avons souligné dans notre déclaration que plusieurs décisions, qui ont été prises lors de la session de décembre, nécessitaient un suivi et qu'il n'y en a pas trace justement dans le document actuellement en cours d'examen.

En résumé, il y a deux catégories de décisions: celles qui ont été prises et pour lesquelles un suivi est nécessaire, c'est-à-dire que leur mise en œuvre nécessite un suivi, et celles dont l'exécution a débuté, mais qui ne figurent pas dans le tableau. Donc, il n'y a pas là que deux éléments.

Sr. Mario LUBETKIN (Director de Gabinete)

Este proceso de actualización y respuesta de los puntos señalados durante el Consejo no es un tema solamente de la FAO, sino que tenemos que responder y hacer una actualización las tres Agencias conjuntamente. Y eso, junto al Plan de trabajo, es lo que está en proceso de definición. Esperamos, en breve plazo y una vez que tengamos el acuerdo con los otros dos colegas, poder transmitir el conjunto de información aún pendiente.

CHAIRPERSON

I think there were two questions. One from Argentina and one from Chile. May I ask Argentina to please repeat your question so that the person responsible for answering can hear the question.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Sí, en realidad era solamente agregar en el listado donde se menciona el proyecto de resolución sobre el Día Internacional de Concienciación sobre la Pérdida y Desperdicio de Alimentos, que era un proyecto de resolución presentado por Argentina y apoyado en su momento por el GRULAC.

CHAIRPERSON

Chile, may I ask you to repeat again your question?

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Es lo mismo que lo solicitado por Argentina, en el caso del Año Internacional de las Frutas y Verduras quisiéramos que se indicara que es una propuesta de Chile apoyada por el GRULAC.

Sra. Marcela VILLAREAL (Director, División de Asociaciones)

Claro que sí, con muchísimo gusto. Ahora que las dos resoluciones van a ser presentadas a la Conferencia se puede incluir, naturalmente, que fueron presentadas por el país y apoyadas por el grupo relativo. Eso se presentará así para aprobación de la Conferencia.

CHAIRPERSON

There was also a question for the Director of Human Resources.

Sr. Fernando SERVÁN (Director, Oficina de Recursos Humanos)

Quería mencionar, respecto a la encuesta de satisfacción de personal, que estamos yendo adelante por dos caminos en paralelo. Por un lado, coordinando con las agencias basadas en Roma la posibilidad de hacer una encuesta sobre los temas de acoso sexual y abuso de autoridad durante este año.

Hemos contactado, en particular, el Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA), y estamos tratando de coordinar el tipo de preguntas de manera que sea similar y pueda ser lanzado al mismo tiempo.

Por otro lado, en lo que respecta a una encuesta más amplia a todo el personal sobre elementos de satisfacción, comentarios sobre las políticas y mejores propuestas, hemos comenzado un proceso de recopilación de información de cuestionarios similares de otras agencias para tener un punto de partida para comparar resultados.

Sabemos, al mismo tiempo, que el PMA no planea hacer una encuesta de esta naturaleza este año. En el caso de ellos, es cada dos años y lo hicieron en 2018. El próximo será en 2020. Sin embargo, hemos pedido acceso al tipo de encuesta, los patrones que usan y las temáticas para poder, en lo posible, tener datos que luego podamos comparar y beneficiarnos de su experiencia.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I just want to ask for clarification from the Director of Human Resources whether this survey will be conducted this year in 2019, or next year? Because I did not get it from your response.

Sr. Fernando SERVÁN (Director, Oficina de Recursos Humanos)

La propuesta es hacerlo este año, en 2019.

Item 10. Arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference (including Provisional Timetable) - Recommendations to the Conference (continued)

Point 10. Organisation de la quarante et unième session de la Conférence (y compris calendrier provisoire) – Recommandations à l'intention de la Conférence (suite)

Tema 10. Disposiciones para el 41.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia (incluido el calendario provisional): recomendaciones a la Conferencia (continuación)

CL 161/6 Rev.2

CHAIRPERSON

Any other questions? If not, we had left one item unfinished, item 10, *Arrangements for the Conference*. We now have all the names for the various officers. The Chairperson of the Conference is His Excellency Enzo Benech, Minister for Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay. Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference: Germany, Thailand and Qatar. Chairperson of Commission I: Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch of the United Kingdom. Chairperson of Commission II: Mr Boomakanti Rajender of India.

The seven members of the General Committee would be Australia, Canada, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Niger, Peru and San Marino.

Nine member of the Credentials Committee, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Guatemala, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, New Zealand, San Marino and United States of America.

This was the information outstanding. With this we can conclude item 10 as well.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Querría solicitar información sobre los Miembros de los Comités de redacción para la Comisión 1 y 2.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General to give clarification on that.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have not received all the nominations for the members of the Drafting Committees for Commissions I and II. Those nominations will be submitted to the Plenary of Commission I and Commission II at the start of the proceedings for adoption.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

Could you kindly re-read the candidates for the different Commissions please?

CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson of Commission I is Her Excellency Marie-Therese Sarch of the United Kingdom. Chairperson of Commission II is Mr Bommakanti Rajender of India.

The seven members of the General Committee: Australia, Canada, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Niger, Peru and San Marino.

Nine members of the Credentials Committee: Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Guatemala, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, New Zealand, San Marino and the United States of America.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

For the Credentials Committee, there are two countries from the Near East, or one? Oman and Kuwait?

CHAIRPERSON

Those are the names I have been given, Kuwait and Oman.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Simplemente para aclarar que el Grupo de America Latina y los Caraibes, a través de nuestra Delegación, comunicó las siguientes candidaturas aprobadas por el GRULAC. Para el Comité de Redacción de la Comisión I, se comunicó la aprobación a las candidaturas de Argentina y Perú. Y para

el Comité de Redacción de la Comisión II, se comunicó la aprobación a las candidaturas de Brasil y Costa Rica.

CHAIRPERSON

We take note of what you are saying, but as the Assistant Secretary-General pointed out, this matter will be dealt with at the Commissions. So, may I close this item?

Item 15. Any Other Matters

Point 15. Questions diverses

Tema 15. Asuntos varios

15.2 The José Graziano da Silva Award for Zero Hunger

15.2 Prix José Graziano da Silva «Faim zéro»

15.2 Premio José Graziano da Silva por el Hambre Cero

CHAIRPERSON

So, we can now go to item 15. As requested by Members when they adopted the Agenda, we take up sub-item 15.2: *The José Graziano da Silva Award for Zero Hunger*. I give the floor to Uruguay who had proposed this item.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

En la sesión de apertura del Consejo, como Usted lo ha señalado, solicitamos en nombre del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC), la incorporación en la agenda bajo el tema 15.2 la iniciativa de crear el premio “José Graziano da Silva Hambre Cero”, como un merecido reconocimiento a los grandes esfuerzos desplegados por el actual Director General de la FAO para la consecución de ese objetivo, que es el segundo entre los 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de las Naciones Unidas, es además un objetivo clave en la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible y prioridad absoluta en la labor de esta Organización.

En realidad, no se trata de una iniciativa aislada, sin precedentes. Por el contrario, desde el año 1967, cuando el Sr. Binay Ranjan Sen concluyera su mandato, se ha venido siguiendo la práctica de establecer un premio que reconozca los logros de cada Director General de la FAO, tanto en la Administración de la Organización como en el liderazgo ejercido en la lucha contra la pobreza, el hambre y todas las formas de malnutrición. De tal forma, se han instituido sucesivamente cuatro premios, según el siguiente detalle:

“B.R. Sen Award” en reconocimiento a la actuación sobresaliente al oficial de campo que hubiera realizado la contribución más destacada al desarrollo de países en los que hubiera estado destinado;

“A.H. Boerma Award” para periodistas que se hubieran distinguido en su labor por haber contribuido a aumentar el interés del público sobre aspectos importantes relativos a los problemas alimentarios mundiales;

“Edouard Saouma Award” para instituciones que hubieran implementado con particular eficiencia proyectos financiados por el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (TCP) de la FAO;

Y finalmente, “Jacques Diouf Award” para individuos o instituciones, tanto nacionales como regionales, que hubieran realizado una contribución importante para el mejoramiento de la seguridad alimentaria mundial.

Al respecto, se puede acceder por internet a la lista de instituciones e individuos que han recibido hasta ahora esos cuatro premios de la FAO.

Como es sabido, el programa Fome Zero fue lanzado en el 2003 con el propósito de alcanzar la completa erradicación del hambre y la malnutrición en Brasil, abordando sus causas subyacentes, particularmente la pobreza rural. En tal sentido, se aprovechó un conjunto de 31 programas interrelacionados, coordinados y reforzados mutuamente para lograr sus objetivos, así como una combinación de iniciativas a corto, mediano y largo plazo.

También como es sabido, la FAO reconoció el potencial de Fome Zero desde el principio, brindando rápidamente su apoyo financiero y técnico. De tal forma, el programa Fome Zero llegó a decenas de millones de brasileños que vieron aumentar su ingreso promedio en un 20 por ciento a través de las transferencias en efectivo, mientras que el incremento para los agricultores familiares fue estimado en un 33 por ciento.

En la actualidad, el programa Fome Zero se convirtió en un punto de referencia a nivel mundial, dado que desde su implementación en Brasil unos 100 gobiernos han expresado su interés en aplicar un enfoque similar, basado en la “doble vía”, para erradicar el hambre y la pobreza en sus propios países. Paralelamente, ese interés generalizado ha generado una alta demanda en la cooperación bilateral y multilateral, involucrando y potenciando la acción de la FAO.

Es interesante recordar en ese sentido cómo el programa Fome Zero se convirtió en Hambre Cero: en octubre de 2005, Brasil y Guatemala plantearon la propuesta que Fome Zero podría servir como modelo para una iniciativa innovadora, destinada a liberar a América Latina y el Caribe del hambre y la malnutrición. La propuesta fue aprobada posteriormente por los 29 países de la región, y al mismo tiempo se fijó la meta del año 2025 para la completa erradicación del hambre en la región. Ello fue recogido de inmediato por el entonces Director General de la FAO, Jacques Diouf. En la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Seguridad Alimentaria (CMSA) de 2009 en Roma, la FAO pidió un compromiso internacional para erradicar totalmente el hambre de la faz de la tierra en el 2025.

Posteriormente, en el 2012 la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible (conocida como “Río+20”), lanzó cinco puntos urgentes como respuesta al desafío del Hambre Cero.

Y en el 2015, el Hambre Cero se convirtió en el segundo de los ODS, aprobados por unanimidad en la Asamblea General de la ONU, contribuyendo a promover el compromiso global destinado a la erradicación del hambre y la pobreza a lo largo de los próximos 15 años.

Y en todo ese proceso, el actual Director General de la FAO, José Graziano da Silva, tuvo una participación protagónica.

En el caso de que la idea de establecer el “José Graziano Da Silva Award” sea respaldada por el Consejo, como esperamos, el premio estaría destinado a reconocer los esfuerzos exitosos de la sociedad civil en torno al objetivo Hambre Cero.

En tal sentido, nos permitimos solicitar a la Presidencia del Consejo la preparación de un proyecto de resolución para ser sometido a la consideración de la Conferencia en su próximo período de sesiones, previa consulta con los diversos Grupos Regionales.

Mr Vlad MUSTACIOSU (Romania)

We welcome the proposal for a Graziano da Silva Award in recognition of his commitment and dedication to the Organization in the past eight years. Given the financial implications of all awards, in the future we would welcome a general review of the procedures for the establishment of such awards by the Finance Committee.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Monsieur le Président, avant que le Congo ne s'exprime sur la question, j'aimerais vous demander humblement de donner la parole au Président du Groupe Afrique, le Nigéria.

Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

Nigeria is in full support of the proposal by Uruguay. And more importantly, in line with this same proposal I am glad to inform the Council that the heads of states of the African Union appreciated Mr José Graziano da Silva for his role in the celebrated African Agricultural Transformation Agenda for shared prosperity and livelihoods.

On 11 February 2019, at the end of the Summit, Dr Graziano was given a Certificate of Recognition presented to him by the Head of State of Egypt who is the current Chair of the African Union.

Without doubt it will have financial implications, but I think, as a matter of fact, honour should be given to whom honour is deserved. And in that sense, Africa fully supports the proposal by Uruguay on behalf of the GRULAC.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment? I see no request for the floor and I see general support for this.

Mr Babiker OSMAN MOHAMED ALI (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

Sudan also has offered Dr José Graziano da Silva an award through the Minister for Agriculture, a high level medal in recognition for his effort in serving the Near East region.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We in Jordan, fully support the proposal of Uruguay regarding the award with the name of Dr Graziano, due to the important efforts he put into agriculture and in combating hunger and malnutrition across the world. We support this proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other request for the floor? I see none.

I can conclude on this by saying that we take note of the comments of Uruguay on the question of the resolution. And I will work with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the regional groups to prepare a resolution for submission to the Conference.

So with that, we can conclude this item.

I wish to remind members of the side event “Assessment of FAO by MOPAN” which will take place in Sheikh Zayed Centre from 13:00 hours to 14:00 hours.

The Drafting Committee will convene this afternoon at 15.30 in the Iraq Room.

Before we close, I wish to remind Council that the only item on our agenda tomorrow is item 9, *Address by Candidates for the post of Director-General*. Please note that, due to the foreseen high participation of delegates for this item, we will convene in the Plenary Hall on the third floor of Building A. In order to ensure that the address to Council by the first candidate starts punctually at 9.30, Members are requested to be seated in the Plenary by 9.15 at the latest.

This brings us to the end of our proceedings. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12:10 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 10

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.10

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
SIXTH PLENARY SESSION SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
11 April 2019

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 09.28 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 28
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 9.28
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 9 Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General
Tema 9 Declaraciones de los candidatos al puesto de Director General
Point 9 Communications des candidats au poste de Directeur général
CL 161/7 Rev.1; CL 161/7 Rev.1 Corr.1; C 2019/7; C 2019/7 Add.1

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the sixth Meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

We start our proceedings with item 9, *Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General*. The documents before you are CL 161/7 Rev.1; CL 161/7 Rev.1 Corr.1; C 2019/7 and C 2019/7 Add.1. I wish to inform Council that in accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of Article XXXVII of the General Rules of the Organization, five nominations for the post of Director General were received by the established deadline. One candidate subsequently withdrew his nomination, as set out in document C 2019/7 Add.1. We therefore now have four candidates for the post of Director-General of FAO. The curriculum vitae of the four candidates are contained in document C 2019/7.

The procedures concerning the address by candidates to the 161st Session of the Council, and 41st Session of the Conference, were approved by Members at a Special Informal Meeting I convened on 4 March 2019, as decided by the 160th Session of the FAO Council, with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the seven FAO Regional Groups. The agreed upon procedures are set out in document CL 161/7 Rev.1 and CL 161/7 Rev.1 Corr.1.

Furthermore, on 1 April 2019, as agreed by Members at the Special Informal Meeting held on 4 March 2019, I convened a meeting with the representatives of the four candidates to determine the order in which the candidates would address the Council and the Conference.

As set out in document CL 161/INF/1 Rev.2, the order of speakers at Council will be as follows: Mr Ramesh Chand (India), Mr Davit Kirvalidze (Georgia), Mr QU Dongyu (China), Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle (France).

As agreed by Members, each candidate will be allocated 90 minutes as follows: 15 minutes for opening remarks; 10 minutes for a question and answer session with each of the seven Regional Groups; and 5 minutes for closing remarks.

In order to ensure strict adherence to the established time limits, a stopwatch will be visible on the screens on each side of the Plenary Hall. The stopwatch will also be visible to the candidates both at the lectern, as well as when seated at the podium.

Furthermore, a traffic light system will be activated at the lectern for the opening remarks. When the yellow light starts flashing it will indicate that the candidate has one minute remaining. Once the time limit has been reached the traffic light will flash red and I will deactivate the microphone. The same applies for the question and answer session through the use of the stopwatch.

As agreed, the questions to the candidates will be asked by a representative of each of the seven FAO Regional Groups. Members representing the Regional Groups will speak in the alphabetical order of the English names of the Regional Groups, and the order of the Regional Group will move up one place for each candidate.

The representatives of the Regional Groups should request the floor by pressing the button in front of them.

As agreed by Members, there will only be one candidate in the Plenary Hall at any time for the duration of item 9.

After each address there will be a 15 minute break to allow the candidate to take his or her leave of the Plenary Hall and for the next candidate to be accompanied to the Podium.

I now ask the first candidate to speak this morning and the candidate will be Mr Ramesh Chand from India.

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, Mr Khalid Mehbood, esteemed Members of the Council, representatives of governments of Member Nations, Members of FAO Management and staff, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. It is indeed a great honour for me to address this august assembly as a candidate committed to serving an organisation that is deeply engaged in securing a hunger-free world.

Member Nations look toward FAO to fully execute the vision set out in its Constitution adopted on 16 October 1945 that is a world free of hunger and malnutrition; where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest. I am convinced that FAO has the ability to do so.

Let me elaborate on this. The FAO has been sensitising the global community about the extent and severity of hunger by providing estimates of undernourished populations at national, regional and global levels.

FAO has also been instrumental in shaping the discourse on food security and various issues around agriculture, fisheries, forestry and other natural resources. Its knowledge products and flagship reports have been the basis of a lot of progressive legislation and policies worldwide.

FAO started reporting estimates of hunger beginning in 1968 to 1970. It showed every third person in the world suffered from hunger during the late 1960s. Many countries at that time suffered from serious food shortages.

Since then the population of the world has doubled and food production has increased by 180 percent. This resulted in a 40 percent increase in per-person food production in the world. In spite of this increase, 820 million people still suffer from hunger, 150 million children suffer from stunting, 113 million experience acute hunger, and over 2 billion suffer from malnutrition.

This data clearly tells us that our job is far from over. Excellencies, today we have the ability, we have the means. And we have the capacity to eliminate hunger from the face of the earth.

What we need is a strategic vision and the will to implement it. I stand before you to pledge my fullest commitment to work towards creating that vision and generating the will to implement it through effective strategies and action.

I would like to share with you India's experience and my own childhood experience related to food security.

During the late 1960s, India faced a very serious shortage of food. The situation was so bad that our Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, appealed to all Indians to observe a fast once a week. Our schoolteacher and my mother at home told me also to skip one meal every week.

It was an agonising experience for a nine-year old child who was the son of a farmer involved in food production. And that left an indelible imprint on my impressionable mind. Throughout my personal and professional life, I have endeavoured to work with an aim that no one should be deprived of adequate food, and no one should have to go hungry.

But what is more important and worth sharing is that within a short span of one decade, India managed to overcome very serious food shortages. And emerged as self-sufficient in food staples. This was made possible by the vision and the will that involved harnessing the potential of the Green Revolution technologies through appropriate policy actions.

I feel convinced that if this was possible, zero hunger is also possible, if we have the will for it. We are all aware of the challenges in ensuring food security and adequate nutrition. These challenges have tested our resolve to fight and feed the scourge of hunger.

We have to address these challenges in a short period of time, under more stressful environments and with stagnant and shrinking resources. This calls for innovative solutions and initiatives.

I have met many of you over the last couple of months and have had the privilege of meeting several of your colleagues in various Capitals. One question that is invariably asked of me is “what would you as Director-General of FAO to address and arrest the rising trend in global hunger?”

My answer has been in three simple words: understand, strategise, and execute. Over the last decades, FAO has changed, and changed for the better. However, much more needs to be done. My road map would involve following salient points of action.

First, I would advocate for the refocussing of the global discourse from feeding to nourishing, from merely increasing food production to increasing production of safe and healthy food. Indicators of hunger based only on calorie intake have served their purpose. Now we need to move to a more comprehensive indicator that reveals the combined status of global hunger plus malnutrition.

Second, I would call for delivery of sustainable and innovative agricultural practices. While respecting traditional forms of agriculture, it is imperative to embrace modern science and learnings to take agriculture forward, especially keeping the smallholder farmers in mind.

We need to nurture forward-looking ideas to positively transform agriculture. I intend to strengthen FAO’s knowledge platform to foster dialogue and ensure exceptional technical expertise in FAO.

Third, to make agriculture youth-focussed. While the future of agriculture lies in today’s youth, sadly the youth do not see their future in agriculture. There is a need to modernise agriculture to attract youth and promote farm and non-farm linkages for decent employment for youth.

Fourth, empowering women as equal partners in decision-making and benefit sharing should be embedded in FAO’s work.

Fifth, reorientation of the global discourse on agriculture to address unsustainable use of natural resources, climate change, distressed rural migration, agrarian distress, disaster risk, rising obesity, foodborne diseases, economic viability of smallholders, gender discrimination and deprivation and loss of biodiversity. All of these are crucial to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sixth, I also visualise taking FAO on a path towards stronger partnership and collaboration with other UN agencies, especially the Rome-based Agencies, civil society, academia and research institutes and the private sector.

FAO must work with stakeholders to align its goals and efforts to the changing situations and contexts. It is equally important for FAO to play the role of a catalyst in forging partnerships between governments through South-South, North-South and Triangular Cooperation.

I want to stress that FAO’s neutrality should be its strength in forging partnerships and not a weakness for shying away from them.

Seventh, an important aspect of my vision for FAO involves enhancing its visibility, recalling its value and image globally. Of equal relevance is the need to deepen trust among donors and recipients.

Looking inwards, I would like to strengthen a decentralised FAO which provides valuable policy inputs, technical support and capacity-building to governments.

FAO needs the intensive engagement with governments to take rich FAO knowledge to country level and to ground level to address various challenges. In an increasingly interconnected world, I visualise greater efficiency based on information technology. I, therefore, see a place for stronger but not necessarily larger FAO country offices, empowered to take appropriate decisions locally, wherever feasible.

Delegation of responsibility and authority, and teamwork would be the hallmark of my leadership strategy. The most important tool the FAO Director-General has in setting and achieving forward-looking goals is his or her staff; and to achieve results, the Director-General must be able to instil a sense of commitment in them and a desire to contribute to the organizational goals. Implementing a judicious and transparent Human Resource policy to achieve personal and organizational growth while maintaining a fair representation of all regions would be my driver.

I would also like to unequivocally express my commitment to zero tolerance on harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority consistent with the principles and values of the UN system. This goes with my commitment to strive for an adequate representation for women in the Organization.

While talking of FAO with such a wide mandate, it is not possible to cover the entire gamut of its activities. I would therefore reiterate that our shared vision will be my loadstar.

Before I end, it is also important for me to share with you why I feel I am well suited to lead FAO. Ladies and gentlemen, I am a trained agriculture economist by profession and also a smallholder by heritage.

I have long experience of dealing with the agri-food sector, fisheries, forestry and food and nutrition security across 29 states of India, a country whose sheer size, population, diversity and inequitable economic growth present complexities, which has brought me into close association with every aspect of work in FAO's mandate.

My work in India, and academic institutions abroad, and my experience with international organisations, have sharpened my insights into all aspects of agriculture. It has helped me to offer multiple knowledge products and develop many protocols, standards and regulations.

My resumé that has been shared with you will give you a more detailed understanding of my involvement in research and policy-making as well as of my administrative, managerial and leadership capabilities required for an organization like FAO.

Today I hold the position of Member of State in the government of India by virtue of being a Member of the National Policy Commission, which in our language is called "NITI Aayog", and also the Finance Commission of India.

My tasks involve preparing results-oriented policies. My skills in prioritisation have helped maximising outcomes from limited public resources. I have been instrumental in changing the focus of our public policy from increase in production to an increase in farmers' income; and prepared the road map for the national goal of doubling farmers' incomes.

My approach towards a nutrition-sensitive policy has helped India overcome deficiency of pulses and bringing down food inflation from double digits to zero in just four years.

My engagement in the government policy and decision-making process has continuously reinforced in me the value of democratic and participatory decision-making, which I feel is an invaluable asset to lead FAO.

Let me end with my deepest thanks for your patient hearing and your supportive presence today. Thank you very much.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Africa Group to pose the first question to the delegate. Congo, you have the floor.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Je prends la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique. Je voudrais d'abord remercier Monsieur Ramesh Chand pour ces remarques préliminaires et poser trois questions.

Monsieur Ramesh, comment garantir que la vision africaine et son cadre stratégique, notamment l'agenda 2060, le Programme détaillé pour le développement de l'agriculture africaine (CAADP) et la stratégie de mise en œuvre de la Déclaration de Maputo, inspirent d'une manière cohérente et constante le programme de travail de la FAO en Afrique, et avec l'Afrique, en collaboration avec les institutions régionales africaines, en particulier le Nouvel agenda de développement de l'Union africaine, le NEPAD, et les communautés économiques régionales, comme partenaires de choix?

Deuxième question: l'Afrique est actuellement, en général, sous-représentée au sein de la FAO en termes d'emploi. Au cas où vous seriez élu au poste de Directeur général de la FAO, qu'envisagez-vous, en tenant dûment compte de l'équilibre du genre pour garantir que:

- a. plus d'Africains soient recrutés, en particulier aux niveaux des cadres supérieurs et moyens de l'Organisation et,
- b. des opportunités soient offertes aux fonctionnaires africains pour diriger des bureaux décentralisés en dehors du continent africain?

Troisième et dernière question: il y a trois décennies, la FAO fut, au niveau international, une véritable référence en termes d'expertise scientifique et de compétence technique, mais force est de reconnaître aujourd'hui qu'elle a perdu pied et tend à devenir une Organisation plus bureaucratique. Que pourriez-vous envisager pour ressusciter ce potentiel tant reconnu et ses capacités, et ce dans l'intérêt de ses Membres, en particulier de l'Afrique?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

A pertinent question related to the future development of Africa and also the role of Africa in FAO. But I have seen from FAO's literature that FAO has been working in Africa for a long time. I feel that we should take a pause and we should look back at the different kind of development work which FAO has done in Africa: what are the learnings? where have we succeeded? where have we not succeeded? And, what were the shortcomings?

The past and history are very important. We should not underestimate that. I will begin by looking at the different projects and programmes implemented in Africa and develop learning from them.

Second, the challenges of Africa are so complex, there are so many, that it would be naïve on the part of any institution to feel that it alone can address the problems of Africa. Therefore, there is the importance of partnerships, especially with local organisations, drawing from the knowledge of local people.

Let me share with you one incident. A person from Africa – my friend – once told me that a consultant came from some other country, and they were discussing development and some people told that consultant that they had no roads to go to the city. "How can they take their produce to the market when there is no road in the village?" And the answer of that person was "if you do not have a road, why don't you take it by rail or by aeroplanes?"

This shows that sometimes as an outsider a person may not have a good idea of the ground reality, the circumstances prevailing on the ground, so we need involvement of your rich institutions, be it NEPAD, be it AGRA, be it African Rice, any of those, and then come with a strategy based on consultations with all people who have knowledge and who have ideas about development in Africa.

Coming to your second question, representation of Africa, what I have learnt is that FAO has laid down some principles for minimum quota and for maximum quota for every country. I think this is a very healthy principle because it ensures that no country goes unrepresented and no country is over-represented and it also gives flexibility within that range to hire talent and respect merit - bring merit into FAO.

I am sure, whether it is me or any other person, that if there are some professionals from Africa who are doing good work in FAO, every Director-General would like to retain the good workers and no Director-General would like to retain a worker who is a liability.

So, I note it. I know there are capable people in Africa and they will get what is due for them based on merit, based on the principles laid out by FAO and all Members, I think the main concern of every Member in FAO is to get the best output from FAO.

So, this will always remain my primary concern, how I can get the best output from FAO. Then other things, which are the laid down principles, to satisfy those and to follow those.

I also want to add that a recruitment process should not be personalised. It should not be person-based. There should be well laid out, transparent, well-published criteria and procedures and I would like to

have some committee of experts, along with some veterans of FAO to select best people for me without getting myself involved in the selection process.

I think if this procedure is followed, I see no reasons why Africa or any other region will have a complaint about its representation in Africa.

You mentioned the situation in FAO three decades ago. Yes, institutions are never static, they are dynamic. Either they grow or they decay. That is the fate of most of the organisations. I think in my speech I listed seven, eight changes that I would like to bring to the table in FAO with support and in consultation with honourable Members of the Council and with their support I would like to implement those.

If, in the limited time, I have to tell you some of my priorities, what will be the first thing I would like to do, I would say that my priority will be to create an enabling environment in FAO to get the best out of the staff that is available in FAO and to attract the best talent from outside to FAO.

That is the way that we can make an organisation vibrant, we can make an organisation globally recognised and globally acknowledged and meet the expectations of its people.

I feel that this is not rocket science. It is not that these things are not known to people. It is a matter of conviction and practice. It is not a matter of knowing what method you will use. I think methods are known. It is for the person on the scene, whether he or she employs those methods or not.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Asia Group.

Viet Nam

Comme convenu dans le Groupe Asie, le Viet Nam passe la parole à la Thaïlande, Président du Groupe Asie, pour poser les questions au candidat.

CHAIRPERSON

Chair of the Asia Group, you have the floor.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

Thailand speaking on behalf of the Asia Group and to pose questions to the candidate as follows.

Question one, as we are aware, Agenda 2030 is just ten years away from now and if you assumed the office, the important responsibilities of eradicating hunger and reducing poverty will be on your portfolio. How would you utilise your experience and knowledge to achieve this goal?

The second question: smallholders and family farmers, especially in Asia, are facing difficulties in accessing technical assistance and innovative technologies to tackle the impact of climate change. How should FAO strengthen its role in this regard?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

At present, meeting Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 is, I think, the top agenda before the entire global community. Sadly, among all of the Sustainable Development Goals, for SDG 2, which is quantifiable, which is measurable, we have seen that since 2014 there has been a setback to this goal because the number of hungry persons has increased from 780 million or something to 821 million hungry people in the world.

I feel that the immediate priority and immediate concern of FAO should be, because rather than bringing it down, it is getting out of hand – the number of hungry has started increasing – to take urgent steps, very, very urgent steps to make sure that this trend is reversed.

And I am also conscious that this increase in hunger has not happened because of food shortages. There was good growth in food production globally, more than two times the growth rate in population during the last three, four years but despite this it has happened.

Therefore, the emphasis of FAO that only while producing more food can we address food security, can we address hunger, I think needs to be looked into. Yes, in some places, like Africa, food shortage

is the main reason. But there are other reasons, which are also very important – conflict, war, those kinds of situations.

I think to address this, FAO needs to embrace the bigger challenge, the bigger agenda, that unless FAO also pays attention to conflict, to some kind of war, to some kind of disruptions that are happening, which are forcing people in Africa and some Latin American countries to leave their habitats, go to towns as refugees and things like this.

I feel that those kinds of measures also have to be brought into the actions of FAO; if not on its own, maybe in coordination and collaboration with other agencies which deal with those kinds of issues.

The second thing, because we started those SDGs in 2015, now four years have passed. Continuous monitoring or achievements by countries so that we are able to know what are the weak spots, what are the bright spots and address them accordingly, so continuous monitoring of this progress made in different targets, different indicators, because SDG 2030 is a very elaborate agenda. It does not merely mention goals, it also gives targets and it also gives indicators, most of which are measurable.

So, we should track, and we should track on a real time basis, and FAO's working with different countries to provide that data. The next step is that FAO, in collaboration with Member States, should take action wherever we are not on track, wherever we are failing in our target to achieve that agenda.

Smallholders is a very big issue because earlier many economists used to believe that smallholders will vanish from the globe. The theory of scale tells you that over time, as it happened in Western countries, it is the large farmer who will take over, small farmers will lose their levered advantage to scale, so therefore they will vanish from the scene.

But the experience of Asia shows that the Western model of transformation of agriculture not at all applied to Asia. In Asia small is still beautiful. They are more productive than large farmers and because of culture reasons and many other reasons, most people are not willing to leave the land, so you find, even in an advanced capitalist country like Japan, there are smallholders.

Smallholders are the reality for Asia and they are going to be a reality for the future also in Asia. So, how can we make them economically viable? Quickly I would say that there are two, three ways.

One is that these farmers, they suffer in terms of scale. These farmers suffer in terms of bargaining power. These farmers suffer in terms of having access to modern capital, finance and market. So, we need to think of the model. There are always so many success stories. Excellency, they are there in your own country. I have done those studies.

I think the first thing is that organising smallholders in the form of it could be farmer producer organizations, it could be cooperatives, it could be farmer groups and it could be even farmer producer companies. Organising them so that they are able to pool their resources, they are able to pool their own scale factor and powers and I have seen some of the farmer producer companies, they are so strong that even multinationals cannot compete with them.

Second about that model is helping these farmers through the institution of cooperatives. Some of you might have heard of India's experience with milk cooperative Amul models. No multinational is able to compete with Amul in ice-cream, in milk products and many other commodities and this famous cooperative, which is now more modern and more competitive than most of the multinationals, is sending produce from India to more than 60 countries. I think we should harness this power of cooperatives also to help smallholders organise themselves and become stronger and get access to markets.

The third model is linkage with the private sectors, not that the private sector will take over the land of smallholders. I'm not talking of corporate farming, I do not support that, but contract farming. Again, there are so many examples in Thailand, where small farmers enter into a contract with a commercial firm which gives technology, which gives capital and they have an arrangement for use of the farmer, bid cover, risk of market, any price fluctuations and provide access to modern capital. That is another model.

So, I will say that if we want to make smallholders viable, we should not leave them on their own, we should organise them, we should mobilise them, either through farmer producer companies or through

institution of cooperatives or through their linkage with the cooperative sector, through the institution of contract farming.

Climate change is affecting all types of farmers. It is more important for smallholders because their capacity to bear the shock is not very, very strong but different countries, they are coming with a different kind of strategy. There's a strategy of mitigation, various strategies of adaptation, there are strategies to cope with this.

I feel that the main role of FAO is to see to it that these kind of situations do not arise. But if it arises, then to work with an institution like WFP to provide humanitarian aid, to provide an emergency aid kind of situation. But FAO has an important role to come with technology packages, that rather than going for monoculture it is better to have a farming system so that if some climate shock destroys your crops, you can rely upon livestock. If it destroys your livestock, you can rely on fishery.

I think FAO needs to come up with those kinds of strategies, those kinds of practices for adoption by the farmer and also mechanisms like crop insurance which are affordable by small farmers.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the European Group. You have the floor.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Finland is putting forward the questions on behalf of the European Regional Group. We have a slightly different proposal for you, Dr Chand. We would like to follow one question and one answer system. Because we would like to ask three questions, and it would basically not take more than two minutes.

Our first question is on UN system reform. On repositioning as a UN development system, how does FAO need to change to deliver under the new system?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I read the speech of UN Secretary-General which he delivered, I think, in November 2018. He talked of repositioning the UN as a 21st Century institution and the Secretary-General proposed some measures which are covered in three categories – development, management and peace.

I feel that FAO should take its cue from there. Whatever the UN is doing for the system as a whole, FAO should also integrate with that. Like one is to strengthen the institution of UN Resident Coordinators. I think FAO should also contribute to it. They should support it.

And second is to prepare country-level strategic support plans. Again, I feel that FAO should be doing this kind of things also. There is a need for preparing strategic plans at country-level. I mentioned in my speech that the main problem of FAO is knowledge product not reaching countries. So, if you prepare a country level strategic plan that is the way to achieve this.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Our second question is on transparency and accountability. Webstreaming this hearing and Chatham House events are examples on ways on how to increase transparency and accountability. What are your plans to ensure transparency also vis-à-vis the civil society, private sector and academia and accountability for Members?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

These are assets of any vibrant and strong organization. Any organization which does not follow these principles of transparency and accountability and which is shy of criticism by civil society, I think, faces the risk of losing its way. It faces the risk of committing mistakes. So, transparency and accountability, these are the two ways and I consider civil society as an institution which shows you the mirror so you can see your face, that this is right or this is wrong.

As I mentioned in my speech, to achieve transparency, to achieve accountability is not something which is rocket science. There are well laid down principles in books of administration - what one should be doing in Human Resources, what one should be doing in management, communication, all those kinds of things.

FAO also has expertise in those areas. It is a matter of conviction, whether you want to do these kinds of things or not. If you want to do these kinds of things, then this question of how you do it, it will follow. I think that will be the natural follow-up of your intention and your conviction.

We talk about this transparency. If I have to hire a person in climate change, if I put it in the global media, we require a person who has this kind of qualification, who has this kind of experience, and I put in place a panel of experts drawn from that area, the people who are respected, everybody knows how you put those people, how you selected those people.

Then whatever decision you will be taking, it will not only be transparent, it will be respectable. Then I think some countries will not complain that rather than taking this person from my country, why you took it from the other country? Ultimately, everybody is interested in output, in delivery.

I agree with you, that these are very important and involvement with civil society in two days' time is very, very important because today's challenges are so many. They are so complex that they cannot be left to governments alone. We need to involve all organs of modern society in addressing needs and in addressing aspirations of mankind. I agree that FAO should consider its involvement with civil society as its asset rather than, as I said, feeling shy of participation with civil society or with the private sector. So, these are my views.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Maybe just a follow-up question. Would you like to comment on those examples, which I mentioned in the beginning, which concern this process of election of the Director-General?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I think you are referring to Chatham House? I have respect for institutions. After I filed my nomination, I have been receiving from the Secretariat, through our Permanent Representative, the process to be followed for this election and whatever I receive from the Council, from the Independent Chair of the Council, it makes no mention of engagement of candidates with civil society and institutions like that.

You may not believe, even in my country, I have been approached by so many media. You can see it on Google. I did not give one statement to any of the newspapers. I only told them you meet such and such official who has been designated for this purpose. My sole reason, and the reason with my country, not to participate in Chatham House was that we feel that whatever procedure has been decided by the Council, we should respect it and we should abide by it.

If the Council decides, even at this stage, there are two months left to election. We would like to participate, but that should come from the Council.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

The last question is on the Committee on Food Security. What is the added value of the Committee on Food Security for FAO and how would you strengthen it?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I find that the Committee on Food Security looks at technical aspects of food security much more closely and there is a difference between the FAO Conference and FAO Council, which is involved in almost all aspects of FAO – FAO management, FAO governance, FAO budget and all those kinds of things. But to my mind, as far as the Committee on Food Security is concerned, it focusses on food security and its technical dimension.

I think it does not go – I may be wrong, I need to look deeper into it, but this is my understanding of the Committee of Food Security – that it looks at technical aspects. Some aspects that may be missed by FAO. The Committee on Food Security sets the direction for FAO. For food security these are the dimensions at which you should look at, these are the norms which we should look at and this is something which we need to achieve in a particular way.

This role of the Committee on Food Security, I would say is much, much more technical rather than the role of Conference and Council, which I find covers both technical, administration, running of the

organization and other things. However, I think I need to look deeper into it to develop a full understanding of the role of CFS.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Latin American and Caribbean Group.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

El Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe ha definido que le formularíamos cuatro preguntas muy específicas. La primera pregunta es la siguiente: ¿cuál será el rol de FAO durante su gestión, en favor de los países en desarrollo de renta media y media alta?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

The world is diverse. In my speech I gave examples of diversity in India. If we look at productivity per unit of land, the ratio between the lowest and highest is one to four. I think that applies more strongly to the world. Some countries, they are much, much further ahead in agriculture development. Some countries are still very, very behind. So, I feel that for FAO a matrix approach is needed, listing the countries on one side, their present condition and, based on those conditions, what kind of intervention is needed. If a country has become MIC, that doesn't mean its problems are over.

If you are successful in adopting the green revolution, you might be facing a problem of secondary nature of green revolutions, problem of overexploitation of water, problem of excessive use of chemicals, problem of invasive weeds, problems of transboundary diseases.

I would not say that merely because a country has become MIC that there is no need for FAO to do anything there, to my mind this is not the right approach, and middle income countries have their own problems, but they are different than what will be the problem of some other country. Even there you find that agriculture development is at a low level.

The second reason why FAO should be engaged in middle income countries is that within middle countries you find there are pockets of hunger, there are pockets of food insecurity, there are pockets of poverty but it is that average which is masking what's happening there. So, this danger of statistical averages, my professor used to say, if your legs are in the oven and your head is in the refrigerator, on an average you are at comfortable temperature.

I think that middle income country averages should not misguide FAO to ignore middle income countries. Then there are other issues related to standards, related to class, boundary kind of situations, invasive weeds, microbial resistance and many others. And if you look at FAO's normative work, that focuses more on those kind of issues.

I will say that middle income countries need support, need technical support, need knowledge product of FAO but they have to be of a different type compared to the products which are being given to countries with low income or countries with the bottom middle income compared to those who are at the top in the middle income country category.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La segunda pregunta es la siguiente: en un contexto de presupuesto congelado, ¿en qué proporción la FAO debería dedicarse a la elaboración de normas y estándares y a las actividades de desarrollo en el terreno?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I feel that these are the decisions which should be left to the judgement of the Council, because mechanical fixation of ratio – 60/40, 70/30 – and that rigidity may sometimes be harmful for the overall goals of an organization. Flexibility is something which helps you to maximise and optimise the output that you get for your resources.

While addressing some of the groups, I said that the rule of thumb – as the crude method would say – that since both these programmes are equally important and, according to me, both of these are largely complementary to each other, one could say let it be 50/50. But this is not the ratio which is based on some scientific evidence.

I, as an academic, feel that one can do a study that these are the two activities and this is the amount which we are distinguishing. If we have empirical data on what kind of return we have been getting from these two, one can find out what is the optimal distribution of resources that we have for these two uses.

But right now I would say that we depend upon judgement of the Council, we depend upon judgement of the Conference, which guide the Director-General on how he or she should maintain this balance between the two, because both are important.

If we do normative work, and that remains in Rome, that goes only towards research publication of FAO staff. It is of no use if it is not reaching. In order to take these normative standards to their actual application, there is a need for some field work, for some technical programmes, programmes and activities at the country level. Similarly, if there are some problems at field level, that should give the feedback for the normative work within FAO.

I see that there is a strong complementarity. This division is somewhat artificial. One should look at optimising, one should look at maximum gains. These are like the two legs of a person. You can't walk on one leg. So, you need to keep both legs strong, to walk and to run, so exactly how much resources you allocate, sometimes this may also depend in a particular situation. Like if you have made enough investment in the normative.

You find there is a lot of normative standards work which has accumulated in FAO in Rome, so now for some years you allocate more for country programmes, for TCP so that this much knowledge product can be taken there.

A situation may arise after that where there is a vacuum in the knowledge product. There are so many challenges which have come, like in agriculture now a lot, many challenges. We look at agriculture as if it is important only to give food but because there was a 15-minute limit, so I had to remove some part from my speech, agriculture to my mind today matters much more for non-food issues which concern human beings than food issues.

Then that will require normative work. That will require extensive work. This is how we need to keep a balance between the two.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La tercera pregunta, tenemos menos de dos minutos. Teniendo en cuenta el peso creciente de las contribuciones voluntarias, ¿cómo garantizará que se atienda también el interés de los países que no pueden hacer contribuciones voluntarias?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I think, voluntary contribution, by name, implies that this does not have to come from every country. It is voluntary, it is just a choice. And, generally, the countries which are making this contribution, I think they are not making this contribution with the expectation that it will come back to them, or it will go to the country of their choice.

I can understand that voluntary contribution may be linked to some projects, but as far as choice of country is concerned, even if I think it is imposed on FAO, FAO should enter into dialogue with the countries which are giving this money. That they should have a say, that whatever voluntary contribution they are getting, according to the judgement of FAO, according to the information available with the FAO, where this money should be invested.

I understand that the last few years, this voluntary contribution has been coming, for specified goals, it is not available in the general funds. So I feel it should be the role of FAO to strengthen its trust fund, so that FAO has the say as to where they are using this trust fund, rather than someone dictating to you where this fund should be spent.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Near East Group.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan)

Allow me to give the floor to Kuwait, the Chair of the Near East Group, to pose the questions on behalf of the Group.

CHAIRPERSON

Kuwait, you have the floor.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My first question is, in your views, what are the most urgent challenges for agriculture development in the Near East Region?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Most of the countries in the Near East Region, depend on imports to meet their food requirements. Yes, there are some countries, like Iran, Afghanistan, which meet their requirements, to a large extent, through their own production, but countries like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, they have to depend upon this food production elsewhere. I feel that the biggest challenge related to food for these countries is this risk of trade distortions, risk of conditions which are imposed on trade, risk of suddenly stopping imports and exports.

Why I am saying so, because I saw, during the global food crisis, from 2008 to 2010, that some countries, they just stopped exports, they put bans on exports, which jeopardized food scarcity of countries like Singapore, countries like Kuwait, and other countries.

I feel that these countries, because they are not food producing countries, their food self-sufficiency is very, very low, in some countries, close to zero. So there is a need for international agreements that in case of any shock, any food crisis, this trade in food should not be stopped, this should continue.

So this, to my mind, is the biggest challenge of food for Near East countries.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My second question is on budget constraints, and as you talked about, the need to increase capacity building of FAO staff. How would you increase the capacity building of FAO staff in line with the latest development in sectors of technology and innovation with, what we have, the problems regarding budget constraints?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

In fact, I am more concerned with FAO developing capacity of Member Countries, not so much about developing capacity of FAO itself because I find [...] here and there but FAO has good expertise. If I have to learn anything on any new aspect of agriculture, I always go to the site of FAO and invariably I find that there is an authoritative literature on that particular aspect.

And since FAO professional staff itself is experts, in order to develop their capacity further, I think they should interact more and more with the world-class institutes in the world, which are leaders in technology, which are leaders in different areas of agriculture.

I agree with you that there are issues related to budget, because there is some agreement that there will be no growth in assessed contribution of FAO in nominal terms, and with inflation, even in dollars. So its value gets eroded, so certainly it is coming down. To some extent, it is possible, through efficiency, that there is some flexibility in every system. But there are limits to elasticity, beyond a point, the elastic will break, it is not infinitely elastic. So after harnessing, I think all those kind of venues, the only choice that we will be left with for FAO, if the budget does not increase, is prioritisation. That there are ten things to be done, but only six things can be done. So then you employ a standard technique of prioritisation, regional prioritisation, team prioritisations, prioritisation across strategic objectives. So that is another kind of thing.

But my own take is that, over the next two years nothing may happen, but beyond that, if FAO or any organization can demonstrate to stakeholders, this organization can deliver, this organization matters,

then I feel that funds could start coming. People in this world have funds, but they are not able to identify those sources, those institutions, which they feel can produce good results out of their funds.

There are foundations in the world, I know your own foundation, Qatar Foundation, there are institutions in Kuwait, there are institutions in my country. They sometimes come to me, what are these sources where we should be having in India. They often come to me, what they should do. So once I told them this agroecology project in India, the Andhra Pradesh, they gave huge funding support for that.

I feel that in this world, there is no dearth of donors. What they are looking for is: what is the suitable recipient who can deliver? It will be my endeavour, if you people would give me this opportunity, that within two years to demonstrate to the world this is the organization where you will feel proud to put your money. Because it is here that money is used for maximization of the welfare of humanity, particularly the poorest of the poor.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

Just to follow up on that. How would you persuade donors to continue to provide financial support?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Of course, one is promise, but not everybody may take promise at face value. Then the second way out is that you show in the past that you contributed something to us this is how we have used it and these are the results that we got.

And third way is, of course, sensitizing. This world is going to face very serious dangers, so you contribute something, otherwise we will not be able to do anything for climate change. And that is something which will threaten the life of everyone. The water table is going down, our children may not get water to drink, we may not get water to produce food. So there are, I think, three, four standard ways I have worked in those institutions where fund mobilization was required.

I can share with you that when I took over as Director of the National Institute of Agriculture Policy, after two years, people who wanted to give money, they were coming to me, they wanted to give their money.

I was making choices about whom to choose to get this money from. It depends, if you are able to deliver, people will be coming to you. But until then, really, you need to win the trust of the donor, you need to convince them about the cause, and also, about the ability of your organization to contribute to that cause, and to serve that cause.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

I think we have about a minute and a half. You will face the problem if you are elected as Director-General, with the regions asking to be employed or to have better chances to be represented. And countries who are donors, also want more jobs. How would you balance this issue?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I find that giving fair representation to all the regions is the commitment of FAO. That should never be compromised, that must be met. And as far as I know, voluntary donations, voluntary contributions, which are coming to FAO are important for FAO. But those should not be linked to particular positions.

The positions in FAO must be filled based on the criteria that these persons, within the norms decided by FAO, will be delivering, or will be helping FAO, to maximize its output. I think that a reasonable Member would also not insist too much on this.

I think time is over but I can share an example with you. It is not possible, maybe we will share that outside this room.

CHAIRPERSON.

I now pass the floor to the North America group.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

Dr Chand, I have the pleasure, on behalf of the North American Regional Group to pose three questions to you. The first is a two-part question. It refers to your reference to gender in your opening statement.

I want you to speak to us, both about the organization. The FAO, after a recent UN survey, indicates that there continues to be concerns amongst the staff about sexual harassment, and a fear or reporting those incidents to Management. I wonder if you could describe to us how you would lead organizational change, to establish a true culture of zero tolerance, to which you spoke.

And secondly, given the fact that women are very actively engaged in agriculture, sometimes 50, 60, 70 percent, depending on the country, what are the particular changes that are facing women agriculturists, and what could the FAO do to be able to really unleash and empower them, and to increase their productivity?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I think, within organizations, I was heading an institution, we set up internal committees, which were headed by women. I put up a box outside my room, that any woman, if she has any complaint, without mentioning her name, she can put a slip there, I will follow it up.

I feel that we need to encourage the staff in FAO, that if they have a problem, they should have the confidence in their Director-General, in their superiors, that they can make a complaint. I think that is the first thing, which becomes the cause of sexual harassment. If any harassment is not brought to the attention of the management, then it emboldens the people who are doing this kind of thing.

The first thing to encourage women to open up. Not publicly, through some mechanism, while maintaining their anonymity. Then, after that, suitable action, which is visible. As it is said in law, it is not only important to deliver justice, but justice should also be seen to have been delivered.

So if there is some complaint, not only taking action, but it should be made public. So there should be some exemplary kind of treatment – I will not say, punishment – but that if somebody has done it, he or she cannot go without facing the consequences.

Once this messages goes, you will find that things start improving. So putting in place the mechanism to encourage, and to win confidence of women in the organization, and then to take action, I think these are the two main pillars to ensure that it is addressed. I feel these kind of things are still easy only with stroke of the pen.

But the second issue, which you have raised, is much more difficult. How to empower women, how to involve them in decision-making in agriculture. Again, the solution will vary according to culture, according to tradition, from country to country. But I think FAO can put some general contours of what should be the policy of different countries in empowering women, and in giving this recognition to women.

To some extent, FAO has started some initiatives, like the way data is reported. If I share with you, in the census of large number of countries, the work that women do in the household is not recognized as work. So that is why you find that many of the women will not count in the workforce. Whereas, many studies on that country will show you, if you look at the work chart, that women work for 18 hours, they work for 16 hours. But if you look at the definition of work, household work is not classified as work.

I think these kind of things should change. We need to acknowledge how much work women are doing. And finally, unless you give suitable titles to women, in some recognizable way, things are not going to change. No title does not necessarily mean that land is transferred under the name of a woman.

Yes, if some countries can do it that is an excellent thing to do. But there are different ways to giving a title. So if we give that title, that even if land is not transferred in the name of a woman, but she is recognized formally as a farmer, she is recognized formally as a tiller. So I think that we should

gradually move into that direction. Already, we are finding that the share of women in agriculture is rising, as men are moving out in search of jobs, and doing their business.

This burden falls more and more on women, it is already happening. Now it is a matter that you enable those women to play that role more importantly.

Generally, you find that traditionally there were some reasons that food is produced by women, but it is taken to market by men. So that, where the ultimate fruit is to come, it will not go into hands of women, but it will go to men, the reason being that all people who are there in the market are men.

But if you can have a market which is exclusively for women, if you have a self-help group of women, so that one woman is taking her produce, she does not have to face a different group of people.

It is people of her own class who will be there in that institution. Like one organization in India, I remember, SEWA, Self-Employed Women's Association, the kind of economic activities which they have promoted are worth seeing.

So I feel these are the steps. It is not an easy task, it is a historical, I think, inequality, which we need to address gradually. But as I mentioned, if there is a will, we can do it.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

You also referred to the important role that the private sector can play. And I thought, it would be interesting to hear you expand a little bit on your ideas. How could FAO help countries participate more directly in international trade, as a means to address poverty, and nutrition, climate action, and even, food insecurity?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Yes, the private sector can help in many ways. If you look at the situation of a developing country, the share of the private sector in the total investment in agriculture sector is awfully low. If I give you an example of India, it is less than 1 percent. Out of total USD 100 spent in agriculture, less than one dollar is by an organized private sector. That is the situation.

I think there is a need for attracting investment, but responsible investment in agriculture. If we want, that farmer is linked to a modern value chain, then without involvement of the private sector, either you have a farmer/producer company, or you have to make the private sector a partner in the production process, through contract farming, or through some other kind of mechanisms.

I think if a large farmer is to get linked to the international market, then value change is the route for that. And who are the people who are operating the value chain? It is the private sector. I think if we are able to put in place the right kind of mechanism to ensure that exploitation of small farmers does not happen, and the job of governments is to put in place healthy regulations.

Not to directly intervene by produce of the farmer, it is very inefficient, but to put in place the right kind of mechanism to facilitate transactions between smallholders and private players, to set the rule of trade. Then you just find that a farmer who is selling his produce at a throwaway price, the farm average price gets integrated with global prices.

So these are the ways. If, through this linkage with the value chain, a farmer can start off selling his apples at one dollar a case, if he is able to get two dollars a case, because he is linked to international market, it increases income, it addresses poverty, and it also addresses food security.

And today, there are so many examples of these kind of things. Earlier, the private sector was just, in many developing countries, looked at as exploitative. Yes, if you do not put in place the right kind of regulation, anybody is going to turn exploitative.

So I think by setting the rules of the game, we can involve the private sector, we can increase their participation, and this is how we can link smallholders to global market.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

I recognize we do not probably have time for a third question. But drawing from your experience with handling 29 different states in India, or provinces, how would you be able to manage the differences you have been hearing in this room today, drawing on one example from your experience?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

In fact, there are many examples. When I took over as a member of the Policy Commission, the first challenge before me was, how can [...]

CHAIRPERSON

I know pass the floor to the representative of Southwest Pacific Group.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I think I might join all colleagues here, today, in wanting to know the rest of the answer to that last question from North America. But it is my honor today to ask questions on behalf of the Southwest Pacific. The first one we would like to ask you is what are your perspectives on the food security, and nutrition challenges in the Pacific, and what are your intentions for the region, if elected?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

I find that the biggest challenge for the Pacific is natural hazards. Sometimes, cyclones, sometimes floods, sometimes, sort of storms. The Pacific region is much more exposed to natural calamities, than the rest of the world. We hear that every other day somewhere you find some kind of natural calamity hitting those regions.

Obviously, they affect food production, they affect human beings, and they affect livestock, and all other activities. I think in this kind of situation, if one is able to know the pattern of natural calamities in a particular island, one can make suggestions about what could be the best farming system in that kind of situations.

If I take an example, it will be more clear. If in some islands, you are getting frequent floods, field crops may not be the best solution, there, it will be the tree crops, it will be the tree fruits, which would be the suitable choice for that particular region. Similarly, if on an island, you are getting more cyclones, then trees may not be the right choice.

It may be some creepers, it may be a vegetable, which may be a more appropriate choice. But, still, you will find that if you are concentrating only on one activity, then the risk will increase. So if you have suitable diversification that is okay. Fish is very important for Pacific islands.

So if you are depending more on fish, and less on other kinds of things, then you will just find that the Pacific can adapt better. And it can reduce the damage or threat that is likely to be there to food security in the region.

But I acknowledge that the Pacific faces this maximum impact of climate change, other kind of natural disaster, which are there because of climate change, or because of other reasons. And I sometimes used to say that the Pacific and island economies, they have to bear the brunt of the development that is happening elsewhere.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I have a follow-up question. How would you ensure that the interests of small island developing states in the Pacific are well represented in the Organization's mandate, particularly when it comes to specific programmes targeting their needs?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

For FAO, all its Members are important. I have not looked fully at what kind of programmes, right now, are running across the world. So I think one of the criteria for FAO to give help to different countries is: which is the country that needs this support most? A country may be small, another country may be big, but if the big country is not in so much need of this support, I will say that priority will go to a small country, who is in too much need of support.

So, island economies, they may be small, but for FAO, it is one country, and you are one Member out of 193 or 194 Members. FAO, in some sense, is the institution which promotes equity – that every Member is equally important.

So I feel that FAO should include in its programme, in the headquarters, to create some knowledge product, dealing with, specifically, island economy. It should also have TCP focused specifically on island economy.

You may have a small population, much of the population from islands have moved to other mainlands, because life is so difficult, and economic opportunities are not there. So in some of the islands, I am told that those who are outside are much more than those who are living there.

If you will find that the local situation improves, there are venues for economic activity in that country, even this kind of distress migration will also get reduced.

I feel that FAO needs to take up both knowledge products for island economies, and also have technical programme for addressing issues of island economy. And if FAO does not have expertise on island economy, I would say that it should have this, some expertise, to guide FAO on how to intervene in island economies.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Another question for you. What is your view on the role of markets and trade in achieving global food security, and FAO's role in helping countries to build their capacity to trade?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

You see, market is a place where you get ultimate fruit of your activity. You may be working very hard, you may be increasing yields, but if you are not getting the right price, then the ultimate for which you are undertaking economic activity is not realized. And it is also now well established why so many are writing that today, food production is not as serious a problem as is income of the farmers.

As I mentioned in my speech, doubling farmer income, we captured as a target in our country. Bringing inflation to zero is very good for consumers, but it is not so good for the producers. How you tackle the interest of the producers, how to help producers to have larger shares in consumer dollar, or prices paid by the consumer, in today's world these are the major concerns.

Today, the population of the world is growing only by 0.9 percent, per year. And food production is growing, something around 2 to 2.5 percent, every year. But if you look at prices, over the last four years, globally also, you find that these prices are depressed.

I feel that markets are very, very important, otherwise, you may find that after some time, this impact of low food prices may result into some sort of crisis situation for the agriculture sector. Markets are the place where exploitation of farmers can happen, markets are also the place where you can ensure that prosperity of farmers is realized. I have seen it. That is how, out of 29 states of India, the Green Revolution initially occurred only in four states.

All others, it took ten more years. The reason was that these four states were able to provide good market to the farmers for their produce. Therefore, they were encouraged to adopt modern technologies. The role of the market is very, very important.

Today, there are so many problems with trade. All people know that in WTO, we could not reach an agreement, negotiations go on for so many years, for very, very long periods. I feel that the situation of international trade is not very healthy. But FAO has been playing its own role, it has been coming with, I think, that you know Codex Alimentarius, different versions of Codex Alimentarius, just to facilitate smooth trade.

But, as I mentioned, today, there are so many variations from smooth trade, that is happening. Again, the human ingenuity, and international desire for international cooperation, is at test. Fresh negotiations are happening to see to it that a large number of problems which are happening in case of trade, they are addressed through the mechanism, through the system of international institution, mainly WTO.

Otherwise, it may result in disintegration of multilateral trade agreement kind of things, which will be, I think, not good.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings to a close all the questions from the regional groups. I now give the floor to Mr Chand for his closing remarks. Mr Chand, you have five minutes for your closing remarks.

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

It has been a great experience for me to speak before you, and to learn about your concerns relating to the functioning and activities of FAO. And how the new Director-General can serve you better. But I conclude, after listening to you, that both you and I share a common vision for FAO, to see a world where every human being has sustained access to adequate, and nutritious food.

It is possible to deliver it, if all of us work together. Empowering every individual, community, and nation on the planet, to achieve more in their quest to end hunger, and ensure adequate nutrition and a healthy life, should be our mission. And bringing inspiration and innovation to every farmer in the world, to sustainably produce adequate and safe food, should be our motto.

Science and technology, and enabling policies, have helped in raising food production at a rate more than double the rate of growth in population, for a couple of decades, now. This is making the global community complacent about the availability of food in the future. Official development systems for agriculture is not keeping pace with the rising challenges in agriculture.

The science of agriculture is under serious question in many countries. These trends can be dangerous. FAO needs to sensitize the world against complacency on food, and put science into perspective. We are living in a world of breathtaking technological advances, capable of a delivering zero hunger planet. With an agriculture knowledge bank which is rich with legacy, know-how, and 21st Century science.

FAO needs visionary leadership that can draw from the best to deliver the FAO mission. The possibility of this depends upon your decision to choose the new leader for FAO. You all agree that this is an important election which will shape the destiny of the FAO.

I hope that your decision will be guided by a fair assessment of what you believe will be good for the Organization, and the future of mankind. My faith in your wisdom gives me the hope that you will elect a Director-General who will make FAO matter, who will make FAO deliver, who will make FAO more visible, and will transform FAO for the 21st Century. I look forward to seeing you all again in Rome, next June.

Applause

Applaudissements

Applausos

CHAIRPERSON

We now have Mr Davit Kirvalidze of Georgia with us here and I now give the floor to him for his opening remarks. Mr Kirvalidze?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Honourable Chairman, Ministers, Ambassadors, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman, distinguished Guests and what is very important, the FAO staff here.

I know hunger personally, and it drew me to farm. Eventually I was able to feed my family, my community and this is what led me here today. It is my great pleasure and privilege to address you as Georgia's candidate to be the next Director-General of FAO. We meet at a moment of tremendous transformation in the world. Even as technology powers new possibilities we cannot escape the significant problems that persist and nowhere is that disparity more evident than in the place we work. The world is falling too far behind in the war against hunger. If we continue on our current course, we are very unlikely to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I envision a different path. One where FAO uses waste resources and reach to power the future of food. A future with less waste and more investment in rural communities. A future where technology has to proactively prevent malnutrition. A future where food is safe and consumers make informed decision. A future where better management enables fisheries and forests to thrive.

We must accelerate agriculture. Not just expanding production, but enhancing methods of production. Sound data should drive decisions in FAO to help spread the use of digital agriculture.

Time is of the essence. We have accelerate sustainable practices to protect the environment and indigenous biodiversity. The Organization can accelerate the adoption of climate smart agriculture. Expanding agritourism programmes will enhance awareness on where and how food is produced and also generates new sources of income for farmers.

It is wasteful and irresponsible to fight the hunger only just to see it return. This must change. I would like to lay out my vision of FAO as an opportunity organization, where we provide countries and communities with the tools to do more than put problems on pause. FAO will help them see and seize possibilities.

Opportunity organization means equipping farmers with training and technology to reach new markets through free and fair trade. It requires creating conditions conducive to private sector investment. It involves helping local governments overcome informational gap. It is about making farmers more resilient and able to survive and strive through turbulent times.

It includes vastly expanding opportunities for women and creating good new jobs for young people in rural areas. It requires completely re-thinking and reorienting our work. The millions of men, women and children who are hungry today do not have the luxury of time. They deserve an Organization that engages immediately and ensures impact and enables them to emerge with new opportunities in hand.

It is not the kind of actions they have seen so many times stamped on t-shirts, glossy brochures and in short visits by a service to their communities. It is in actions that treat the root cause not just the symptoms. It is in actions that goes beyond aid and assistance. It is in actions that brings employment not just empty promises.

They want actions that empower entrepreneurs not just settle for subsistence. The opportunity organization will place rural development at the heart of our agenda. Bold ideas are just the beginning. They need to be fuelled by a leader with the passion and knowledge to inspire and implement them across this Organization.

My passion is driven by knowing the feeling of hunger. It is not a distant distress for me. I speak personally of the pains that continues to haunt more than 800 million people. I hope to make my passion contagious and spread it to every employee, contractor and Member State. The opportunity organization will be defined by this deep dedication to our mission.

Allow me to take a moment to address how I would manage the exceptional talent at FAO. Many innovative people contribute to FAO but too often we expect them to follow and not to lead. I shall ask a team of our most innovative minds to conduct a management review of the entire FAO structure.

The least tapped resource in most international bodies is its own staff. They know what reforms work and what do not. These experts know the organization far more in depth than its political appointees. Their knowledge is there to be unleashed and empowered. This includes finding new ways to share their expertise where it can have the most impact. I want the organization to be a powerhouse of knowledge that truly powers change in fields, forests and fisheries.

On my first day, I will open a call to all staff and partners to propose new policies, programmes and paths that can truly transform FAO into an opportunity organization. This is about cultivating new ideas and innovations. Included in this effort will be an examination of how we can collaborate more closely with other UN and international entities.

Following consultations between all levels of management, we will have a roadmap that reflects the best recommendations.

Let me begin this effort to inspire bold ideas with a couple of my own. Since 1964, FAO has mobilised USD 127 billion in new investments in agriculture and rural development. Yet, only five million is coming from non IFA sources. We should do it better.

I have experience, extensive experience, raising money from the private sector for significant agricultural projects around the world. I will work to significantly increase investment from the business community actively leveraging public-private partnerships. To help us attain that objective, I will launch an annual investment summit with leading businesses and venture capitalists.

The skills gap remains one of our biggest barriers to progress. As a Fulbright scholar, I know the power of educational exchange. We will create an ambitious new opportunity fellowship for the most promising young agricultural leaders from developing countries. Through partnership with top universities, businesses and institutions we will provide them with world class training and resources. They will have the knowledge, network and support to translate ideas in to innovations to connect farms to the future and accelerate change in their communities.

Finally, we will initiate a new e-commerce office at the organization dedicated to making the online economy more accessible to power the development in rural areas.

My dedication to expanding opportunities for women will be reflected in my leadership choices. I want to emphasise that no one should be denied, discriminated against, or deterred from pursuing opportunities. That includes all those who work at FAO. Under my leadership, there will be no tolerance for sexual harassment, period. More importantly, my team and I will work tirelessly to prevent such abuses. Our corporate culture will actively and aggressively promote gender equality.

As Director-General, I will bring focus to FAO's mission. Farmers and ministers must know we are there to support them. They must not only see, but feel our presence there. And they must witness the concrete benefits we bring.

The Direction-General should consider as his two primary constituencies, the farmer in the field and the national ministries of agriculture. FAO must effectively engaged both of them in order to succeed in its mission. We need to make it easier for the farmer looking at increasing their output to access and apply new innovations and technology. And we need to make this support scaleable and strategic through ministries of agriculture.

Each nation has an inherent right to charter its own course. My role will be to support the conditions for the kind of growth you seek for your country. Coming from a small country, I know how important this is for us. FAO, I believe is respects national sovereignty. It is one that we will build together rather than hand down.

As Director-General, I commit myself to the following. An opportunity organization that helps governments and farmers cultivate communities and crops. Though, through a more inclusive approach, every country can and should achieve food security. When we develop national plans we need to consider a broader range of options and every FAO programme ought to reflect the priorities and strategies of member countries and regions. They also need to include emerging options that exist outside of our traditional tools.

I would set high expectations for clear deliverables and sustainable impact. A report is not a result. A photo is not where we finish. I expect impact to be fast, far and felt. The Organization can and now will serve as a serious change agent. To the extent possible, this effort should be implemented through the private sector where they will be best administered most effectively and most likely to grow. But make no mistake, we will continue to lead and shine as a bright light, and fast forward on policies, standards, and targeted development initiatives. My goal is to ensure that food security in FAO is at the top of the global agenda.

My background as a Member of national Parliament and then as advisor to the government and private sector organizations worldwide equipped me with valuable insights. I know how to get things done. What works and what does not and what we expect from people in the organizations.

Having seen agriculture from every possible angle offers many advantages. As a potato farmer, I know both the heartbreak of crop failure and the joy of the bountiful harvest. I know from practical experience how FAO can be effective in this.

As a minister of agriculture, I know how an entity like FAO can effectively contribute to improving agriculture in a Member Country. Even more important, I know where donor programmes have missed the mark.

As a legislator in Parliament, I know about the importance of reconciling groups, sometimes across bitter divides and disagreements. Understanding and negotiating through these complex and constant tensions is the role the head of the organization must be equipped to navigate.

As a board member of an international development consultancy firm, I am acutely aware of what we should expect from implementing partners. I also have seen missed opportunities as programmes are developed in isolation.

Of the many roles and positions that I have been fortunate to occupy in my life, there is one that is perhaps most relevant. It is definitely the most relevant. It is to be a father. Being a parent is the ultimate managerial challenge. I have a family of which I am immensely proud. It is where I learned about importance of commitment, dependability, friendship, honour, responsibility and duty. These are attributes I will make sure are instilled in the FAO family should I become Director-General.

I am committed to honesty and transparency. My tenure will be one marked by unprecedented transparency. You will see and be satisfied that we are efficiently and effectively running FAO. I will deliver to you, to you Member States, a modern FAO that maximises its impact where it matters most. My approach as Director-General will be to recognise and apply the wisdom of the past, but not let it hold us back from the changes we need to make for the future.

We must ensure that our work is modernised and our impact maximised. We must re-energise our staff and stakeholders with passion.

Lastly, the opportunity organization, must charter a bold path to the future and this time ensure that we bring everyone along. It is a future where opportunities know no boundaries and borders. It is a future where food is no longer a factor in whether children can attend or advance at school.

Tonight, a family farmer will put their children to bed to sleep, worried of what the future holds for them. The increasing challenges of production weigh heavily on her mind. The decreasing price she can get for produce is a grave concern. Under my leadership, her struggles and it is also for other small farmers, will be a big part of our agenda. We will power new opportunities for them, their children, secure the future of farming. They may not hear what we say today, but they will feel what we do.

I will lead an FAO dedicated to not only allaying fears but inspiring hope and strategically seeding opportunities. With your support we can power a future where our food is finally within reach of every living soul. Together, we will accelerate agriculture to push the frontiers of prosperity, protect our planet and provide for all of its people. That is the great opportunity that lies before us and for which I will passionately work every day as your Director-General. Thank you.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Kirvalidze. I now pass the floor to the representative of the Asia Group to pose the group's questions.

Viet Nam

As agreed among the group, Viet Nam would like to pass the floor to Thailand, Chair of Asia Group.

CHAIRPERSON

Thailand, you have the floor.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The Asia Regional Group has three questions to pose to the candidate. The first one: Currently, FAO's work spectrum is becoming wider and more complicated while resources are becoming more constrained. What is your view on this trend and how would you ensure FAO will be kept on track in fulfilling its core mandate?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The fact that the spectrum is wider, does not mean it is bad or good. There is a purpose behind why it is wider, or why it should be or not to be.

The progress we are facing today worldwide, brings new challenges and new opportunities for all of us. FAO has its vision and FAO has its mission. FAO has its staff and FAO has you, Member States. We have decided where we need to go. There are different instruments that are going to lead us towards this way. There are going to be more activities on standards, more activities on development, empowering staff, staying aligned with UN reforms to empower more our staff and people in the region. With right coordination of all different directions we will achieve and we will strive to be there timely and effectively by 2030.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The next question. As you know that many international organizations are doing important work on climate change impacting on agricultural and food systems. How would you differentiate FAO's role based on its comparative advantage?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

This is very important and absolutely correct. Many organizations are working on different directions focusing on climate change. FAO has also its portion of this. And they all are having their findings, result and recommendations. The principal role of FAO, as I mentioned, is to be a powerhouse of knowledge.

First, they need to translate to every farmer, fisherman and forester what does it mean, how are they going to implement better agricultural practices and better environmental practices with responsible use of the natural resources to cope with this tremendous challenge? This is very important. Also, we need to admit that when talking about climate change it's not only about agriculture. It is not only about forestry and fishery. It also goes beyond the scope of this Organization.

But the primary constituents of our Organization are, or could be affected by this. They need to know what to expect, they need to know how to cope with this and they need to know how to contribute not to be part of those organizations that are affecting climate change.

I can give you a few examples. One that is very obvious, it is about reforestation. And this is obvious that we will need to put an emphasis on this. Forest is not only a source of oxygen. Forest is not only a source that absorbs emissions. Forest is heavily untapped potential for farmers, especially age farmers to receive from the forest naturally grown fruits and berries. And that is very important.

Soils. Cultivation of soil is something that is very difficult. Properly done, we can contribute to this difficult process. Properly done, we can lower the carbon emission. It is also FAO that could translate it because it has enough instruments to deliver it to our fellow farmers in the field.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The next question is: In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge that FAO is facing at the moment and how would you address this issue?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The biggest challenge is what we are all here and talking about. More than 800 million people are still hungry. About people who face malnutrition. We are talking about children who are stunted, who lacks the food. We are talking about poverty, we are talking about failed donor assistance worldwide. This is a fact and this is a challenge to be honest with you. And if we pretend that it goes away by itself, we are losing these people.

I do not know how often you are meeting with farmers. I am just back from Africa working in the field with many farmers there. Next I will be in Latin America. Many people do not even trust any more that there is going to be some assistance. And this is not only about FAO.

I want to emphasise, the world has changed. The early stages of development was completely different. Completely different expectations now are absolutely different from our fellow friends, in the farm, in the field, in the forest and the fisheries. Totally different. Many of them are not receiving what they are supposed to receive from international respected donor communities. And there are many reasons behind that. I am very ready and open when you wish to sit and speak about this.

But there is something that is very important, that if you want to be an effective donor and if you want to be really reflecting those challenges that I am asking now that FAO is facing, we need to imagine ourselves in the shoes of the people who are asking for help. Who needs this help and we need to make it quickly. This is the challenge that FAO is facing. This is the challenge that entire donor community is facing.

This is a challenge that everybody who is supposed to support somebody can close their office and laptop at six and come go home and have fun. While staying a few more hours, they can still save hundreds of lives there. It is according to what is their job description. And they may do it. But to be effective, we need to do it. We need drop the SUV trips to the communities there, where we are going there, putting a mark they visited there, probably bringing along national ministers there and pretending how nice we are delivering. And nobody is checking about sustainability, what is happening behind that.

This is the challenge the donor community is facing, and FAO among them.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

As you mentioned about how often that we visit the small farmers in the field. We have one question about our smallholders and family farmers, especially in Asia and Africa, facing difficulties in assessing technical assistance and innovative technologies to tackle impacts of climate change and other difficulties. How would FAO strengthen its role in this regard?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I mentioned that I come from a small country. And I come from a country where there is an abundance of small farmers with average size of lands 0.5 hectares. And that is a big challenge for us. That is a big problem. It is not only a problem about climate change, about cultivation practice, about economy of scale and about accessing markets. This is a big and complex problem. It is not only about agriculture. This is complex and here is the serious role of the rural development.

Rural development is a tool that we can apply to our small and family farmers to ensure that when somebody lives in the countryside, he is not mandatorily prescribed to be a farmer. He should have an option. Option on creating all farm jobs to give them choices, because living without choice is a living without hope.

There are different methods of working with small farmers. The most important thing for them in a bold sense, one: when they buy inputs and they are very small, they have scarce resources and they go on retail. When they sell their product, it is not regular and it is not in volume. And that is also not attractive for big buyers.

What can we do here? On the first hand, we have developed worldwide the system of farm service centres, stores that are working with small farmers. And they are working with small farmers helping them to explain what is a better way to consolidate their power. It could be creating and establishing cooperatives. It could be consolidating their products. But this is the power of being together.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the European Region. Finland you have the floor.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

We have at least three questions for you and again, hope about two minute answers.

Our first question is: What experience do you bring with you to ensure and strengthen FAO leadership in its field of competence by joining forces of other UN organizations and the international finance institutions?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I ought to make it less than two minutes? That is my direct personal experience dealing with all of them. I served four years as a governor to FAO representing my country to IFAD and WFP. And that was a time where my country was going through a transition period and transformation. And there is an ample role for all of them to play preferably, I prefer not to see WFP in any country, but sometimes it is necessary.

FAO drafting the policy, IFAD offering sovereign loans to countries for larger projects including investments in irrigation, in drainage, supporting young farmers, special attention to the mountainous and disadvantaged regions to go there. And as for other IFIs (international financial institutions) I would pay serious attention to the World Bank first of all as having a large portfolio including ADB, African Development Bank. And also, please do not forget about the importance of bilateral.

Bilateral aid sometimes is more effective than multilateral. We all may agree that you have seen successful bilateral projects because very often they are more targeted, more concentrated, results oriented and concerned about sustainability.

I would assure you, should I become Director-General of FAO, of the very intensive cooperation to strengthen, I want to underline, to strengthen, not to overlap, because sometimes donors tend to pick up popular issues, or to jump on those issues that is easy and neglect others. To respect priorities of recipient country because, before FAO, IFAD, World Bank, or ADB, or any other organization on a bilateral matter, steps on a country's soil, they need to know where they are going and there must be a strategy on the place and programme ready.

Here also, I see the role of FAO assisting national ministries to define properly elaborated strategies for rural and agricultural development. And after that, coordinating the efforts of the donors. That is possible and that is what we are planning to do.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Our other, second question is on the governance structure of FAO. How should the system of delegation of authority and reporting lines be built?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I want to come back to my speech and refer how I will start working here should I be elected and mandated by you.

The very first thing, is my approach to FAO's professional staff. To go there and to see their opinion on what works and what does not. Because one, is what we see from the outside and one is from the inside. I can tell you right now that delegating power is something that is part of my management structures.

There is no way that we could continue managing in the way that command economy was many years ago, and I was a part of that. It is not effective. It is not efficient and we need to clearly divide and delegate power not only here in this city but in the regions.

Our country offices must be equipped with the chances to make a decision quickly and effectively. Because remember what I said, millions of people are waiting for our decision. We need to be responsive. We need to be impassioned. And I have seen in many cases, when not only just a decision about how to travel and when to travel is just a matter of discussion of weeks and weeks.

I have seen projects waiting for kick off, approved projects, for more than a year. This would never happen. I can promise this. And one more thing that I want to add for you, that was not asked in your question, this is transparency. Transparency is something that builds or wastes the trust between us and Member States who are putting money in this Organization. This will be on the top of our agenda because there are not going to be any hidden and confidential issues on any direction.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Our third question is on innovation. How do you see the balance between traditional and local knowledge including agro-ecological practices and new technologies including IT and biotechnology?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I see it perfectly well. I was first the farmer in Georgia who introduced innovations and new technologies. And I want to tell you briefly about this because I think we still have time.

I was surrounded by old traditional farmers. And when we started to do something different, and it was not extremely different, but it was different. We put different distances in between the rows, applying European technology versus the, so called, post-Soviet technologies there. Different seeds, different depths of ploughing, different machinery, different harvesters, and what was very important, different warehouses. Different ways of using plant protection, chemicals.

We had been almost cornered by everybody the first year, but the next year when the harvest was there, when only our potatoes survived in our modern warehouse, everybody was there, asking and looking for that. Farmer to farmer extension of this is very well. And I believe that every farmer, first of all, needs to be informed and educated about the essence of A, or B, or C innovations, where they can get it.

And here is a role of extension service that is very important and crucial. This is a bridge between us, between ministries and between farmers in the field. Because this is knowledge distribution, this is advice. And wherever extension service works well, there is no problem with innovations, there is no problem with agroecology. Agroecology is applying principles of ecology to agriculture. This is what all life is about. It includes everything. It includes everything because if we could speak about ecology of soil, we could speak about ecology of cattle, we could speak about ecology of apples.

And this is very important, because not knowing the specifics of those factors, they are affecting the particular body we are talking about, and we may get mistakes. So, the role of agroecology I say that it is also to be explained very well to the farmers. They need to know first, and then second is that they need to see how this benefits their activities.

Farmers are conservative. Actually everybody who works there, mainly they are conservatives. Recommendations are not enough. It is my personal experience. A recommendation works only when we follow with the success stories. We can show the neighbour farmers, the farmer who is a leader that has already done it. And next, this is contagious, next they are going to do it. This is how I see it, empowering the role of extension services to have access to the fully equipped package of information for everyone in the world.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Maybe we still have time for one question. You mentioned about the important role of women in your statement. What should the organization do more, or differently to enhance empowerment of women?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

It should not just be only ticking the box. There should be an inclusive process in every programme. In every programme, in every activity within the Organization here in this building and in the field with every programme. With every programme, because I have seen many programmes, they are assisting, empowering women and those programmes delivered. And I do not have the time to tell my story but I will [...]

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative to the Latin American and the Caribbean Group.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Según lo acordado oportunamente por el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe, le voy a formular las mismas preguntas que le hemos presentado al Dr Ramesh Chand, por lo tanto la primera pregunta sería: ¿cuál será el rol de FAO durante su gestión en favor de los países en desarrollo de renta media y media alta?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The country I am coming from is also very close to this position. And being a middle income country, it does not mean the problems and troubles are gone. It does not mean that this process is irreversible.

We need to maintain active partnerships and continue more and more active engagement in a world economy, supporting trade, empowering those countries not to fall back. Create resilience with them and what is very important, gradually moving to be more dependent on the private sector activities. Because when the private sector is there, especially with public-private partnership, that is sustainable, that is business driven, that is for the future.

And I was actually really impressed and very much proud to meet here three days, four days ago, your former colleague and currently Ambassador from Guyana, Mr Deep Ford. And we discussed this exact topic. And there was a very interesting experience he shared with me. Something similar that I have done in different countries. But he told me a story about Nestlé on public-private partnership in Latin America.

I wish we were having more of such kind of examples today on the table. What I am going to do? I will encourage and support all such initiatives, not only support by word, or letter, I will work with any of you who initiates that, to knock every possible door, to make sure that we are getting this funding in place.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La segunda pregunta es la siguiente: en un contexto de presupuesto congelado, ¿en qué proporción la FAO debería dedicarse a la elaboración de normas y estándares y a las actividades de desarrollo en el terreno?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I have been through this question many times and I will tell you one thing. We need to end the division of those two items. We are talking about development but can you imagine development without standards. There is no development without standards. And also, if we let standards alone without development, it might be just the paper, we just need to know why we are talking of that.

And instead of trying to get more for one or another, we need to make sure that standards are fully funded. We need to make sure that our partner in WHO, also pledges full commitment to this very important thing. Because without standards there is no trade. Without trade there is no access to food. Without access to food, there is no food security. Period.

Now about development, development is not what we are doing today. It is not enough. Even if we can put more money in technical cooperations that is not enough. I have been a recipient of TCPs for many years, I know how good that is in terms of bringing good knowledge there when it is properly done and it is excellent. But it makes people like me, Minister at that time, really thirsty, ready to go. I know already what to do. But there is no water. There is no water to drink.

What we need here, we need to make sure that our development work here is fully funded, but that it be a step forward. Foundation to the forward to attract private capital to implement projects based on sound judgement on such kind of development activities for those countries they are targeting. With that we are going to really reach success and reach sustainable success, because if it is going to be done by private sector participation, they always, always care about their future and here is the role of the government to make sure they are regulated properly just to also mention the interests of the local people.

This balance is possible to achieve and I will do everything possible that is in, or might be in, my power to do so.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La tercera pregunta es la siguiente: Teniendo en cuenta el peso creciente de las contribuciones voluntarias, ¿cómo garantizará que se atienda también el interés de los países que no pueden hacer contribuciones voluntarias?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Volunteer contributions could be earmarked and non-earmarked. That is one thing. But there is another thing. We prefer to work in the future in such a manner that first we develop together with you all programmes and projects, and next we will go and ask for funding. Not vice versa that there is the money first and then we are thinking what to do with it. You all now there have been such cases.

This is from my point of view a principal pre-condition to be effective.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Como tenemos tiempo, le formularía una cuarta pregunta que no tuvimos tiempo de realizarle al Dr Chand, y la pregunta es la siguiente: ¿cómo evitar que el trabajo de la FAO en temas ambientales y nutricionales se utilice como pretexto para la creación de barreras al comercio internacional?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

If I understood it correctly this is about how we can ensure that FAO's work in environment and on the nutrition side is not a barrier to the trade.

That is an interesting question. What is the work with the environment? When we say food security and it is our target, we can achieve food security this year on the expense of skipping a chance for our next generation. And there is going to be still food security. We are all going to have plenty, but our children and their children will not have the same chance.

That is why I am always saying that we are talking about strategies, or food security, rural development and based on sustainable use of natural resources. I do not think that I need to explain to anybody here in this respected audience what it means. But that is something to be explained down to the farmers.

When we are talking about small farmers and I said there is a need for them to consolidate, is that we all know that in a small land plot it is almost impossible to exercise crop rotation. If you do not exercise crop rotation that means the fertility of your soil at the end of the day, it goes down. If it goes down, next you need a really long time just to rehabilitate this. And that adversely affects the production in the future. If we call an environmental worker to explain to farmers what it is, I would say that it is vice versa, it is going to strengthen our aspiration in this direction.

Responsible and sustainable use of forests. It could also strengthen. I give you an example, so we had a very massive chopping down in one country of chestnut trees. You know timber of chestnut is very expensive. And what we did with those group of the farmers and the village, we engaged them in a Chestnut Producers Association and helped them to find a market in Europe to sell their chestnuts.

They have been earning money on crops instead of timber. Those people who previously were chopping trees just trying to sell and smuggle it somewhere, they became the best guardians of their forest because they realised that there is another possibility, environmentally friendly possibility to get additional income. And not really with very hard work.

CHAIRPERSON

And now I pass the floor to the representative of the Near East Group. Kuwait you have the floor.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

We welcome Dr. Davit for our Q&A today. My first question is: In your views how would you address the FAO policies towards countries who are facing food crisis because of immigration of flux of refugees?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

If you have the chance to take this leaflet, I do not think it is a really perfect photo of mine over there.

There is one saying, that from crisis to opportunity. And when I was telling you my experience, I have been in crisis and not only once. Crisis, it is caused by natural calamity and the calamities that could be very close to you. It is a calamity caused by drought.

We almost lost everything. It was the most serious drought in the last century. And also, I mentioned there was a conflict, it was a military conflict. So it was an armed conflict. That also affects population. And I saw the FAO's role and what they did there.

In such a situation when you have immediate response first, to assist people with food here is our sister organization WFP, it leads on this.

From my standpoint the FAO's role is to support restoring livelihoods. Restoring livelihoods is in essence to avoid migration. People stay at their home, if they feel that they are attended to and they feel that there is assistance coming that is rightly directed. To make it more simple I would say instead of just providing them enough food to pass over to the next season, FAO should advocate and mobilise donors, and FAO has done it successfully in a few countries that I witnessed, to bring all donors to the table and help farmers to restore their livelihoods.

Is it animal husbandry, it is planting material, it is seeds, it is assistance with machinery. But this is the role, so I would finalise this in the following that, from the crisis to get out it is back through development to reestablish their economy.

There is one if, if there is a crisis that affects the natural resources in a manner that next you can not continue working there. That natural resources are gone or depleted in the way that no single assistance could transfer it back to the livelihoods. In such cases we are having migrants and resettlements. And that is already the discretion of the particular country to provide them, if of course there is availability, with area where there is a land available. If you are talking about in this case that I believe we are concerned about rural population. And in this case, they should restart their activities.

And here it is also a role of FAO to bring this to the attention of everybody. Because if FAO leads and knocks every door, I have seen many bilateral assistance sharing with their resources being sure that it is spent properly and rightly.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My next question is, as you talked about the family farming and as there are many limiting factors which prevent access to the small farmers in rural areas, whether it is man made or natural disasters such as conflict, sanctions, climate change. In your views what actions are needed in order to eliminate hunger and poverty in rural areas and help the small farmers?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I mentioned small family farmers. I spoke about their future. I spoke about consistent thinking about this issue because that is a direct part of my heart since it is vastly distributed in my country also.

I will tell you a few examples. We need to go to empower them in terms of volume of their produce. If we are talking about perennial crops, here it is easier. Because consolidation of the similar product is easier. It is easier to identify and find the sources for them for adequate storage systems. Is it conventional warehouse or is it atmosphere controlled warehouse or it is anything else that helps them to deliver to the market.

From another hand, what they need, I think my fingers are not enough to just count everything that is needed for them to make them really effective and happy. But this is all what we are supposed to do through our national colleagues, from the national agricultural ministries. They need, depending on where they live, they need the right infrastructure. They need irrigation or they need drainage. Depends on, when both terms they need it. It is also factors they limit their harvest. They definitely need access to finance.

Without access to finance and let's say financial services, here it is not only about credit. Here is many things including living, including insurance and all the other stuff, that they need. And it is hardly available for them.

Unless some countries are developing right policy on this. And I can tell you I have seen such countries, I know them and I think we are going to share the experience from those countries where they are successfully dealing with small and family farmers.

They need the right input supply. Input supply, it is a complex system. So that has to be of quality and have knowledge attached because it is very dangerous. I have seen many farmers that are misusing the right plant protection chemicals, or misusing the fertiliser. That is also a case of knowledge and they need this supply. And for this, I believe that farm service centres developed well in many countries is a solution. It is a one stop shop with everything in it, including credit, microcredit facility for small farmers, credit consignment.

There is a need to identify the drivers in every rural community with whom we can start this and I have launched more than a hundred such centres worldwide, in Asia, in Africa, in Moldova and in Georgia also. This is a very sustainable business because it is a synergy of private sector dealers to the farmers. And that works in an excellent way.

Here I see how we can put a step forward in helping the private sector in small scale farmings. They need access to the market. They need to know like the previous question from my respected colleague from Uruguay, they need to know what does it mean to work with the environment. That respecting the environment does not always means that we restrict agricultural production.

A deep knowledge of this subject allows all of us to make a clear line where we do not damage natural resources but we can still advance farther with new technologies and their implementation. This is how I see it.

And there is one final point I want to stress. These all will remain useless if there is no human factor. If the small farmers, they do not know that we care about them, if we are going there and we are not talking to them, again, all the ways now they are just observing the dust of departing SUVs from their villages and that is it. They go to restaurants to celebrate success of no more projects and they stay with their problems still there.

Human factor is the most important. That is what should drive for this. No robot can replace a human. No way, because it does not have a sense. This is feeling, when they feel that we are with them, we can do together everything. If we do not feel that, we can make irrigation, we can make input supply, access to credit, but that would never fly. This is where we should start.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

I do not know if you have time to answer this question. But quickly, as you know, 80 percent of FAO's budget goes towards salaries, expenses and other things. How would you make this budget more efficient? I think you need 10 hours to answer...but?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

80 percent?

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

Yes.

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Well, judging about budget, not knowing for what it is spent on in particular, it is irresponsible answer. So, I would say this. And I know many ways, it is not only there, I have a problem of budget in my family and I am just dealing with that. So, it is a matter of consensus.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of North America.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

The North American Region also has three questions for you. The first being how can FAO increase farmers' access to tools and technologies including biotechnology?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

As I mentioned, the best way for farmers to access anything, any tools, any innovations it is in the way that they should see it. They need to see and get information of what it is about and see it in action. I have never seen any farmer who refuses that, so, and I can tell you one quick example.

New technologies also means a special thermometer that you plug in the soil and it gives you projections. I bought this thermometer when I was a farmer back in the last century and put it in my farm. And everybody was joking me so, look my grandfather does like this and he knows that tomorrow it is going to be raining. And it is normally an area without night frost. Well my potato was already this tall. And we got a projection there was going to be night frost. I told them, listen, be careful about this. Ah, they said, there is no night frost. So we brought cultivators, integral cultivators and covered it with land. So, only we survived.

What happened next year, they just lined up in front of our warehouse asking for the thermometers. That is what we need to make sure that they see the advantage of new technologies. Conservative people are, they are naturally conservative, not because they do not like something, they need to be well explained, human factor embedded and demonstrable results shown. In this case, they go with you as a business.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

Second question. What more can FAO do to help countries participate in international trade as a means to address poverty and food insecurity?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The Organization must definitely finish its job with the standards and make sure that the standards are clear and transparent for everyone. No wasted interest embedded inside because without standards there is no trade. We should see those on both angles, producers side and consumers side. And also, we should make very clear the borderline, in between, food safety and food quality.

Food safety is something, though I am genetically an agriculturist. I was born into an agriculturist family, so I can tell you the consumer, I want to make sure that when I buy something it is strictly adherent to the safety qualities, safety features.

As for food quality, this is where I see ample room for the private sector to work on just putting quality labels, right titling to be assured. FAO's role is that to be active here on standards.

And second, I had the privilege to participate in one WTO summit. It was held in a very nice place. It was in Mexico, Cancun. And as a minister I went there to attend for negotiating for my small country among big countries. So our trade preferences, I did not see FAO there. But it does not matter.

So, what happened, no single meeting has been conducted. It was such a blur that in my four years tenure as a minister I just got one vacation at the expense of the government being in Cancun so, and enjoying this environment. I think that we need to be more active with WTO alongside with setting a standard.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

Since UN wide survey showed continuing staff concerns about sexual harassment and a fear of reporting incidents at FAO. How would you deal with this problem?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

We reflected in our speeches, it was advised and suggested, but reflecting something in a speech is not enough. Making promises is also enough not enough.

Harassment, any harassment particularly of course sexual harassment is punishable, is punishable by law. There is still a long way to go to achieve, and I see active role of any manager in any organization instilling right values there in organizations about respect and about gender equality.

And just to make it not only on the paper, just to make it implemented in their life. Because sexual harassment is coming from the very bad perception. Not treating equally everyone in the world, that

we are equal. And we need to empower women not only in this organization, we need to empower women in the entire UN system, but make this an indispensable part of every project.

Again we have a time I think it was your last question so if you don't have more I tell you my personal experience of this because I've been through it, I can tell you what I did. I'm coming from countries that sits in between Europe and Asia, and by that time I was already working in Washington so I was well paid and I had a business.

My wife was accepted in INSEAD school in Fontainebleau in France. And we had our third child, three or four months old, four months old. I knew she wanted very much to go. So I departed from Washington went back to Georgia and working long distance, I was allowed and granted this privilege by my CEO and President to do it.

I stayed home for a year. I took care of my children. And as my wife came back from France, and second semester in Singapore, she came back, and I went back to my job. Why I told you this story, is not because I did something miraculous. Just when I promise you to be sharp against harassment, I have done this in my life, so I will not allow anyone, if I am here, to do it here or anywhere else I can stand.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Southwest Pacific.

Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)

Thank you to my distinguished colleagues for their previous questions, many of which have answered some of our questions. I am honoured to take the floor on behalf of the South West Pacific region.

My first question is: what are your perspectives on food security and nutrition challenges in the Pacific and what would be your intentions for the regions if you were elected?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I have a very particular perspective on that, on Pacifics, I can tell you, because I had a lengthy discussion with your representatives on this, I shared my opinion. Of course we're going to do more and better in bilateral discussions but here is what I think.

For Pacific countries, it is very important, in terms to achieve food security, the Blue Economy. And Blue Economy is jeopardised by contaminated water. This is what goes beyond the mandate of FAO only and is to be raised on a very high level on every UN and non-UN summit for all parties concerned to be involved in this.

Let's take a particular direction. Fisheries are the backbone of an economy in many of those countries, and we all know how nice it is to go early morning to visit a fresh fish market and to buy fresh fish there. But on many occasions after that, their shelf life is too short. I would suggest exploring all possible opportunities as it is the future of opportunity organization, to explore adding value for these products that extends its shelf life and also makes it possible to put on transportation for a longer distance.

Second what I think we may need to explore, that I say it is not yet tapped well. It is agritourism. Places where we are now talking this is destination for many people who want to enjoy tourism there.

And what's next? When tourists come, they're always looking for the local produce, even if they like some famous international brands to drink or eat, they like to see it and check it because that's why they are there. And this is actual export without moving your product outside of your country. These people are coming by their own.

What we need here, we need to make sure that they are eating your local production, because if you are importing these products somewhere that means your tourist is benefiting somebody else, not your country.

So we need to meet production volume and quality. Quality is very important because if anybody gets poisoned, let's say it strikes immediately, you know the effect of social media, somebody puts that, I have eaten something in place and don't go there.

And next you need a long time to change it. Here is a way of getting our standards. In food safety, they are very important. And I am inclined to explore this opportunity with the World Tourism Organization, if this happens, to work hand-in-hand for the benefit of countries if they are considered tourist destinations, the origin is definitely there, it is.

Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)

My next question is: so given the unique challenges that small island developing states or SIDS have, how would you ensure that their needs, especially those in the Pacific, are well represented in the organization's mandate particularly when it comes to programme priorities?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I am from a small country as well. Sometimes it could be less than the size of Ireland. To be honest there is no single Georgian representative in this building except myself now and my staff who are with me and we are going to leave shortly.

Being represented here means two things, of course I will fight to maintain strict balance but it depends on you, my respected colleagues, to nominate qualified staff, to nominate qualified women, to reach this equal treatment that you are concerned with.

I promise I am going to consider that. As for programmes now, of course definitely. There will be a very fair selection of the programmes and not only programmes, I don't want us to stop speaking today only about programmes that is just opening the door or window in your countries. It is not enough.

We will work not only those programmes but we should make very aggressive campaigns to attract private investments in agriculture and food sectors in your countries. This is the way to future, otherwise we cannot catch up. I can assure that I know what means for a small country to be neglected. I know it very well.

I know what it means for a small country to be pressed by big powers sometimes when you are absolutely right, a decision is done not only by good and fair treatment but also by something else. That will never change. You know there is a saying, to divide equally and to divide by brothers.

I didn't know what it meant, and as I was explained to divide equally, means to divide equally. The divide like a brother that means big brother, big brother is getting most. That's not a way that should be still here. We need to make sure that it goes to everybody, but that happens if only if you are personally more active. Because there is going to be no denied initiative from my side if it comes to merit.

Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)

Our next question is about governance and reform of the Organization. So what are your highest priorities for governance and reform? How would you go about undertaking those reforms? And a related question is, how would you ensure that those decisions and those priorities were actually making a difference on the ground?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I will start with your permission with the last one, how I will ensure. We will set a very strict result based monitoring system. I mentioned that just a single report or nice photo is not a result. It's not a result. We need to make sure that we are satisfied and I tell you honestly, every donor who has paid money, they want to see the result. When they see the result they are encouraged to go further.

In many occasions they are already seeking a successful story just to build up on it because they are accountable to their parliaments. And they need to go back to report to their parliaments, that when I allocate to your [...] ministry this particular money for development aid, tell me what is the result? Sometimes they are satisfied to see reports or whatever, sometimes they go to the country and they are checking how it works.

So donors must appreciate that we are getting success and how am I going to ensure this? I am easy on travel, I will go and see how it goes, if people are satisfied and how they are meeting required targets

that was initially set. Because the first thing is to set it rightly, to have a vision. Because nothing is wrong with bad vision correctly executed. We should make our vision clear on every project.

Now about governance, I told you I've been a minister twice and people say that I was a good minister. I don't tell you I was a good minister or not, but my experience being a farmer just helped me to treat these people in the way that I wanted to be treated when I was there. In my office, when I work now with this consulting company we have like 45 employees, the environment is perfect.

Everybody who comes there, they are smiling from the morning. My staff are happy to be there, do you know why? Because it's human. It's human. I don't go to eat separately. If they invite me to play football, I go with them, if not I play myself.

And if they go on happy hour and they are calling me to go, I go with them also, because I like it and they like it. I treat them like my friends, not like I'm a boss there and telling do that or this.

This is how I see the right management in this. This is the way because if a person gets in the door of this building or any other building and they are not happy to attend their job in the day, we cannot make it successful. So this is how I am going to do it.

Mr Ryan WILSON (Australia)

In five seconds, the importance of regional organizations?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Very big.

CHAIRPERSON

I thank the South Pacific region for their questions and are now past the floor to the representative of the African group. Algeria you have the floor.

Algeria

I have, on behalf of the Africa Regional Group, three questions. The first one is as follows: how to ensure that Africa's vision and strategic framework such as Agenda 2023, and the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth, would inform FAO's work with and in Africa, with African regional institutions namely NEPAD and regional economic communities?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I can tell you that FAO alone cannot help me on this. FAO can help you to achieve these with its full strength and efforts assisting you to mobilise many different resources. Africa is completely different. I'm telling you as the person who has projects in many African countries, who has visited not all of them yet, but we are proud of the private input distributor dealers network we established in Africa, and I can tell you what we can do to make this happen.

I cannot name at this moment because I'm in the process of negotiation. I'm starting a huge public-private-partnership programme for Africa to put small farmer supporting mechanisation centers continent wide, but there are initial 10 countries selected where we are to close to finalising with the world leader machinery producer. This is a real result I'm talking about; this is not just a report. It's going there and helping. This is how I'm planning to work with that because we have so many things to do in Africa and it is so diverse that one single approach is not enough.

What I can promise you is that we will work hand in hand with you with every initiative that is envisaged to increase Africa. I don't want any more books similar to William Easterly's 'The White Man's Burden' to be produced again about our jobs.

Algeria

Our second question is as follows, FAO has been in the past three decades a major international in terms of scientific expertise and technical capacity, but it has since then lost ground. How do you plan to restore such acknowledged and required capacities in the interests of its membership including Africa?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Just to make one thing sure that I understood it properly. FAO lost ground on? I did not hear it well? FAO lost ground on?

Algeria

I said that FAO lost the ground.

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

On?

Algeria

Well, on the fact that it has been a reference in terms of scientific expertise and technical capacities.

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Well it's a direct and straightforward judgement. I would say when I was saying that I will put FAO on food security on the top of the agenda permanently within all UN and non-UN organizations it's a very broad definition. I meant also that FAO be the primary reference for all kinds of nonagricultural, semi-agricultural organizations when they make a citation or quotation or reference to studies to be a shining star ahead of others.

And FAO stats I believe, is working well and hard and they can make it better. And our partnership and cooperation with CGR is going to be more active and enhanced because if we are talking about science, if we are talking about respect, that should be based on science because as soon we are giving recommendations they are not working, so we are losing our respect.

Algeria

Next question is as follows, Africa is currently grossly underrepresented in FAO in terms of employment. If elected to the post of Director-General what are you going to do to ensure that more Africans are employed especially in senior and middle management and also assigned to lead the centralised offices outside Africa?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

It looks like I have a very difficult task. Every region is telling me they are underrepresented. I wish to find any region who is overrepresented here just to talk to them, to find out who is overrepresented in this Organization.

I understand this passion that we all want to be represented and I would support it of course, and that would be based on first of all professionalism, dedication and transparency and of course also on your suggestions, because we expect from you to nominate the greatest minds from your countries, they can contribute to our work and they eventually benefit back not only the continent, but the entire planet.

Algeria

To follow, Africa is the continent with the highest food insecurity. What will you do to help Africa to address this in terms of FAOs programming and budgetary allocation?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

It is correct and I have been a part of food distributing systems. In for instance, Zimbabwe near Bulawayo, we've been distributing food. It's the Feed the Future programme. Distributing food without follow-up is not sustainable because I'm not telling you insecurity could be sustainably finished by food distribution. It is emergency and on emergency, temporarily we can do it.

But I give you one example, I was talking to ambassadors there and telling that, that we can mobilise resources to make sure that we are getting water for those people. Water because they can farm. We just help them. I saw the village where a cow drinks water that's only every second day, and it walked 20 km just to get to water.

So one day is for eating, another day is for walking. Going there they are really in good shape so it looks good but they are walking too much. So we have to help them to get the water, it's very simple. Just a simple one. Water next door and the problem was solved. There was no need, I believe there was no need for somebody to fly from different continent to be there and tell this agency who is working there just do it.

I believe for this particular case we need to find what is the limiting factor, why are they insecure? Forget about calamities, forget about armed conflict and natural calamities where we cannot change a particular moment. Always there is something that could be changed, the problem is to diagnose it because when we go to a doctor we don't know what the diagnosis is we might be treated better. And sometimes it hurts, as for nature.

A particular case I'm telling you there is a problem with water and we just help them to check it. It's 70 metres, there is groundwater. So what I think is most effective for them, to open this, to let the water out and to introduce to them sprinklers or drip.

Also when we do it we need to explain to these people they should not irrigate by gravity because using gravity in the area where the ecology is completely different we are acting against agro-ecological principles. That means this natural body named soil, was established and grown for centuries in a dry area.

If it pushes this water in a flooding manner in gravity, we will get erosion. If we use it as rain fed that's the right ecological approach. Here is again environmental studies are hand-to-hand friendly, work in our best agricultural practices. And I believe that after diagnosing such kind of limiting factors, limiting factor is a basic rule in the vocabulary when you start a farming system.

So when you identify a limiting factor this means we know already what we're going to do. This is a big problem. As soon as we know that there are enough technologies worldwide and possible sources that we can cope with that.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to Mr Kirvalidze to make his closing remarks. You have five minutes, to make your closing remarks.

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I did write something here just to speak by the end. I'll make it shorter, I'll try not to read. I understand we are all talking about food security, and we're at the eve of the lunch. So let's take care about our own food security also. But I want to tell you briefly for your sakes, that I mentioned in my meetings with the regional groups I already had, I'm looking forward to seeing the Africa Group in person, and I am looking to speak with the Middle East, the Near East, everybody, I will come back to all of you.

I'll come back to all of you because I enjoy the discussion and I want to go in depth, in depth to speak about. I want to come back to what I really believe and telling. We need to have a success, success in this Organization. As well everybody wants success. And I've been through different occasions, you just listen to me I try to work on every possible angle of agriculture.

And I can share with you my experience and tell you that if you want to have success we need three things. We need to care, we need to know, and we need to have good luck. The last one does not depend on us, it depends on God.

But if we know and care, I expect more luck rather than failure. What is needed here, one, when I describe the failed donor programmes it is that we need to care more. We need to live more with the life of our sister farmers and brothers and fishermen and people who are working in the forest in the regions.

They need to feel that we are here, not only because we go and put our hands in the *Bocca della verità* and think am I correct or not, but we should make them feel our action. And that's how to care. But if we care we need to know, I may care but if I don't know, I cannot help you.

So this is knowledge and I want to make this massive report whatever is useful transformative in action, moving down to the people. Getting it to them and make it new. And the response to the last

question from my colleague from Africa, is that we need to find out why there is a problem. We should not make a general approach for everyone.

We are so diverse that it will not work. Copy and paste is not working in this business, that's why it is so difficult. This is very difficult and since it's difficult it's more challenging, but it's more fun and exciting when we are getting to the results.

When we see something, happy faces, happy faces of the farmer. When we see their, you know, I can tell you there was nothing better how I was greeted in Zimbabwe when I went there recently. That was something I was almost tearing up there. Because I was feeling that I did something good there and this is something that drives me.

Now, allow me to leave you with a vision of where we can be four years from now. I see a generation of farmers that are connected to the latest techniques and trends in agriculture. See their neighbours starting and growing businesses that add value to the goods produced. I see villages transform by the new ideas and innovations, brought by your fellows. I see countries spending less on aid and more on expanding economy.

I see the FAO attracting new Private sector investment to significantly expand TCP's and development work. I see an FAO staff that finally reflects gender and geographical diversity.

Indeed, my candidacy is fundamental about modernising the FAO. We need to rethink in planning our budgeting. My investment summary will be designed to ease the financial burden on Member States. They will focus on delivering the kind of programmes that bring real economic development to countries and communities.

Under my leadership, we will bring business to the table as full partner working side-by-side to create the kind of strategies and solutions that will truly be sustainable.

That is close to being done. And now to say during this lunch break, many of us will take advantage of the time to call our children and loved ones. It is my hope that the principles, plans, and passion you heard this morning will inspire some to say, I met someone who just might help lead the planet to a better place and a brighter future.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the end of this morning's meeting. We will reconvene this afternoon at 14:30. Please note the time, it's different from what had been put in the timetable. It's not 13:45, it's 14:30.

The meeting rose at 12:56 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 56

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.56

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
11 April 2019

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.39 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 39
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 14.39
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 9 Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General (continued)
Tema 9 Declaraciones de los candidatos al puesto de Director General (suite)
Point 9 Communications des candidats au poste de Directeur général (continuación)
CL 161/7 Rev.1; CL 161/7 Rev.1 Corr.1; C 2019/7; C 2019/7 Add.1

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the seventh meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

We continue our proceedings with item 9, *Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General*. The first candidate to speak this afternoon is Mr QU Dongyu of China.

Mr QU Dongyu, you have the floor for your opening remarks.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Honourable Independent Chairperson of the Council, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

I am standing here, with my great honour and duty, to present my manifesto on how to give FAO more relevance and visibility and provide better service, to help our Member Countries deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Seventy-four years ago, FAO came into being with an original aspiration for “building a world free from hunger and malnutrition”. Since then, the Organization has diligently performed her functions as an information centre, a normative agency, a policy forum, and a promoter of development.

History will not forget founders, pioneers and all the Directors-General from USA, UK, India, the Netherlands, Lebanon, Senegal and Brazil, along with all staff of FAO, who have worked tirelessly for the goals of the Organization. Nor will we forget the collective responsibilities and actions taken by Member Countries to make FAO stronger and better.

Nowadays, the world is undergoing profound transformation and big changes. However, agriculture is still the most inclusive tool to end hunger and poverty. FAO is well-positioned to act as a facilitator to assist all countries in realizing the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – in particular SDG 1 and SDG 2. However, we do not have much time left. We can never have any single country face challenges alone, nor leave anyone behind in our fight against hunger and poverty and in our pursuit of balanced, inclusive and sustainable development.

It is expected that the growing world population will approach 10 billion by 2050, and face more challenges. With these challenges will come greater responsibilities for FAO. Time is running short.

- The blight of hunger and malnutrition continues. One out of nine people goes to bed hungry each night.
- Climate change increases risks to agriculture.
- Resource depletion and environmental pollution are pressing.
- Risk of trans-boundary animal and plant pest and diseases are increasing.
- Eradicating poverty and realizing sound rural development remain an arduous task.

In the face of these daunting tasks and expectations of the people all over the world, we must have stronger political willingness and commitment with our vision of building a dynamic FAO for a better world by uniting forces of Member Countries and integrating functions of government, market, NGOs and people.

Our mission should focus on attaining “Zero Hunger” and improving malnutrition and livelihoods of people by “four betters”: better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life. These all serve income driving from low to middle-high up to reach the ultimate purpose of making farmers happier, rural areas more attractive, and our world more beautiful.

All roads lead to Rome. FAO should have a package of policies and innovative approaches at hand to tackle issues in different regions, different countries and different sectors.

After I have had a number of free talks with and visits to Member Countries and contact with experts including Professor Jeffrey Sachs, who has personally agreed to be my personal adviser for this post, I will hold extensive consultations with Member Countries and other stakeholders for FAO to propose the following actions:

Action One: Focusing on Zero Hunger and targeted poverty eradication. We must channel resources to the world's impoverished regions, to the vulnerable populations and to the staple foods of localized preference such as tuber and root crops, legumes, besides cereals. We should improve productivity by promoting advanced and applicable technologies, and turning experiment yields into farmers' yields, improve capacity of smallholder farmers by training on the whole value-chain operation and ICT application to upgrade the premium capability.

Action Two: Focusing on tropical agriculture. Tropical countries are the main battleground for poverty and hunger eradication making up a high proportion of the total population. The "one country, one agro-specialty industry" approach should be suggested for relevant countries, to improve post-harvest treatment and technologies, enhance cold-chain logistics.

Action Three: Focusing on dryland farming. Drought and water shortages pose a major challenge to world agriculture. We should support countries with an arid climate in establishing reasonable farming structures and cropping systems.

Action Four: Focusing on digital farming and digital rural development. We should embrace the digital era. The real world is a digital world. We should narrow the digital divide. ICT should be applied more widely along agriculture value chains to create new platforms and reduce urban-rural disparity; the potential of the smartphone as a new farming tool should be tapped for higher productivity. E-commerce should be promoted in the rural areas for farmers and startups to embrace C2C and C2B opportunities and achieve Farm to Fork model for production and consumption to serve consumers from all over the world.

Action Five: Improving environment for sustainable agricultural development. FAO should advocate better layout design and the transformation of agricultural production based on resources and environment capacity, minimize the environmental impact of production, processing and consumption. Develop high and stable-yield technologies to increase productivity and resource efficiency, promote circular agriculture and improve layout planning.

As an African proverb goes: "One single log is not sufficient to build a house". FAO needs to strengthen partnership, open door and reform, and diversify cooperation. I would like to highlight the following points.

First, strengthening North-South cooperation (NSC).

Second, expanding South-South cooperation (SSC).

Third, initiating agricultural eco-zone and belt cooperation.

Based on natural and biological patterns in different commodities, FAO should strengthen cooperation among countries in similar latitudes or agricultural eco-zones.

Welcome any public-private partnership for the impoverished regions and the vulnerable populations.

Welcome all institutional partnerships among Member States and between FAO with other international organizations and NGOs.

As an old Chinese saying goes, "it takes a good blacksmith to make good iron". FAO needs to further build up her unique strength as a specialized knowledge-based Organization, enhance its capacity to provide firm support on policy, technology and information to Member Countries, and do its utmost to become a reliable and beneficial international organization.

– Build up her strength in collecting and disseminating global knowledge as public goods.

– Foster her strength in global normative work on Codex and IPPC on standard development, and to establish science-based international standards which are suitable for national contexts and agricultural categories.

- Reinforce her position as a global response centre for food and agricultural crises.
- Play a stronger role in capacity building, to provide better field service. FAO should build a synergy between public and private sectors.

Talented people and good teams are the key to every success. FAO needs to develop a new organizational culture to improve her internal governance. To this end, FAO should focus on improving her capacities, effective delivery, rapid response, good service and close cohesiveness. FAO should create a favourable working environment for her employees. It must give full play to individual characteristics while building up team spirit. FAO should provide opportunities for young employees to grow and ample scope for senior staff to display their intelligence and experience. Meanwhile, geographic representation and gender balance should be improved to promote competence among diversity. I propose to create the awards of “Ten Best Young Staff of the Year” and “100 Excellent Staff of the Year”.

I hereby affirm that I will uphold the Organization’s zero tolerance to harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of power.

As a proverb in the Latin America says, “the power of the ship is on the sail and the power of man is in the heart”.

– I will work for an open and transparent FAO, for a digital FAO, for an integrated FAO, for a collaborative FAO, to pursue better coordination among Rome-based Agencies (RBAs, my interpretation is real brotherhood ally), and greater complementarity with other UN organizations, to jointly improve efficacy and satisfaction.

– I will work for a trusted FAO, deepen cooperation with global financial and development institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, in light of new challenges and new expectations, FAO requires a helmsman who must be energetic, far-sighted, experienced, open-minded, inclusive, devoted, skilled in communication, strategic and a strong doer at the same time.

Look back at my career path in one word, that is “bridging” – bridging between scientist and manager, between professional and policy maker, between government and farmers, between developed nations and developing states. And from bridging toward leading, I will be volunteering my bridging and network for FAO’s mandate and mission. I will bridge for all of you.

FAO, here I am.

I come with my passion and commitment to global food, agriculture, and farmers. I believe what Benjamin Franklin said, “Energy and persistence conquer all things”. But I am also keenly aware that Rome was not built in one day. I will work closely with you to commit, devote and deliver. Give me the chance, I will return you a dynamic FAO for a better world.

Thank you very much. Shukraan, Xiexie! Merci, Spasibo, Muchas gracias!

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of European Regional Group to pose the groups questions. You have the floor, Finland.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

For this statement, we have at least three questions for you. You are aware of certain initiatives to increase transparency and accountability during this election process, like web streaming, this hearing and international think-tank events evidence. What are your plans to ensure transparency? Also, vis-à-vis the civil society, private sector and academia and accountability for Members.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Start them one by one?

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Yes please.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Okay, that is good.

Thank you for your question. In my opinion, we have to respect all key players internationally and nationally. But, this time, I came here for this statement, based on a decision by the committee and the governing body. For other civil society, I have been for many years their friend, when I was a professor, as vice-president of a Chinese academy, even as vice-minister. We have worked closely with all those CEOs of the private sectors and also civil societies.

We will get all the intellectual support from them. But, this time we have to follow the rules and the Basic Texts. Second, due to the limited time, I have been fully booked. So, that is why I have no time to participate tomorrow, when there is supposed to be a debate.

If next time, our Governing Body, with the ICC, makes a decision, allowing all the candidates to participate and debate in Europe or in America or in Asia, then I will follow the decision because we have to. After the election, I will talk with Chatham House or Brookings or Tsinghua, anything, you name it. We would like to make FAO business more visible and more accessible to the society through different channels.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Our second question is on fisheries or ocean management. Several important fishing nations have not ratified the FAO agreement on Port State Measures to Fight Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing. How will you contribute to bringing them on board and effectively implement the agreement?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

For fish, fishing industry is one of the important industries for the world's nutrition improvement, especially for the small island countries. I just visited the small island countries, in terms of land territory they are small, but their ocean areas are really big. We have to create a good environment for them to enable sustainable development. As FAO Director-General, this will be one of my mandates, I should say.

Second, we have to bring all the issues into a more inclusive discussion because fisheries is not a purely economic issue. You have to understand the complications.

Third, fisheries, in my opinion, we only have one planet, so there is no doubt we have to establish restrictions against IUU to control and have a more traceable and more tangible result.

Fourth, capacity building, because a lot of small island countries, do not have the capacity to even investigate their own biodiversity, resources, natural resources in the ocean and how to develop the aquaculture around the coastal zone.

Fortunately, 23 years ago, I was a consultant for World Bank in China. They called it the Coastal Zone Development for Sustainable Development, where you had to establish linkage and integration between agriculture inland and near coast.

Then you can establish a technically, manageably and sound pack of solutions. Not a single solution. So, that is why we are much behind on what the real situation for technical support, for management, even for terminology. Because of my personal involvement for three times of MC for World Trade Organization, that is why also I say it is not that simple.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

The third question is, how will you ensure the impartiality and inclusiveness of FAO to serve and engage all members in order to achieve the SDGs and not pursue any regional or national interests?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

FAO was established 74 years ago, but actually, the initiative came in 1943 by honourable President Roosevelt from great America. So it is a UN organization. A UN organization, so we should follow the UN Charter. That is our basic law and from there we have to follow the Basic Texts of FAO. That is another more zoomed-in practical text. Then there are regulations and rules.

Third, under the UN system, no matter you are a big or small country, we are equal. That is why I went to the Pacific Island countries, because some countries only have less than 10 000 people, but they should not be ignored.

So, we respect that every member is equal, and represented in this body, its governance, and the decisions making ensure that no country can mislead and make sure that the concerns from different members are well addressed and are paid due attention. There are individual member's preferences. That is not so easy because we have to believe our systematic power.

That is what I consider.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

We have time for, at least, a fourth question. What concrete steps would you take to address management and oversight deficits in FAO?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Management of FAO is not simple. You know better than I do. All the issues related to FAO management from human resources to money, projects, from the external to internal, all these issues. But, when you talk about the specific management, we have to issue all those concerns to our Members first and ask the Professional Committees to propose their suggestions, their decisions. We, as FAO Director-General or Deputy Director-General are servants, we are not the boss.

It is like FAO is driven and run by Members. That is why all the power, all the mandate, should be empowered by our Members.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Latin-American, Caribbean Group. Uruguay, you have the floor.

Sr Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Siguiendo el criterio adoptado por el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe formularé al señor QU Dongyu las mismas preguntas que le hemos efectuado a los candidatos que comparecieron esta mañana. Por lo tanto, la primera pregunta es la siguiente: ¿cuál será el rol de FAO durante su gestión en favor de los países en desarrollo de renta media y media alta?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

I already mentioned in the earlier answers. FAO is a United Nations organization. But it is a professional organization. We should respond to and address all the concerns, suggestions from different regions, different countries, even different development stages, of your regions or your countries. So, that means we have to serve all the Members from developed nations, middle incomes, less developed, most developed or least developed or land locked, you name it. But as a professional organization, we have to focus on different regions and different groups that have different priorities.

We have to figure out what is your real interest. We want to assist you with all the capacities here, or with other cooperators, other key players in this planet. So, for the middle-high income countries, in my understanding, you have to upgrade your economic quality of development in the sector of agriculture, in the sector of industry, in the sector of tourism.

Your demand is, of course, different from less developing nations and, therefore, the high quality of development of your agriculture, you need innovation driving. That is essential and how to improve your innovation capability and also, new business models. Now, on the one hand, you can learn it from a

developed nation, on the other hand, also, you can learn it from new emerging economic development regions and countries.

The third, of course, you have to integrate all those new developments, new business models, to adapt to your local conditions. In that sense, FAO has a comparative advantage. We can invite different experts as you request, to assist you to develop adequate and tangible policies. Then, we help you to get affordable, reliable and advanced technology, and then of course, with that we will transfer your requirement, and not only from the technological, but to the development approach, based on the integration of value chains development because you are not in single element shortage.

We need to help you to establish a package of solutions. That is my primary consideration.

Sr Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Nuestra segunda pregunta es la siguiente: en un contexto de presupuesto congelado, ¿en qué proporción la FAO debería dedicarse a la elaboración de normas y estándares —o sea, standard settings—, y a las actividades de desarrollo en el terreno?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

During the past three months, while I have been preparing this meeting, I have read a lot of books and materials. I got a feeling that in FAO you put a lot of things in contradiction to each other. But I am a simple person. I try to get simple, one solution just based on a different stage or different parts of the whole business.

That is why, norm setting is one of our backbones, in my opinion, for FAO. When we established during past years, in 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, we did a lot of works and international standards. Early 1990s, I was personally involved in introducing the Codex and all those international standards as a reference in the national context for China.

That is very important, it is basic stuff. It is basic business, in my opinion. So, it is one for our professional organization. But, of course, we have to use this for development and also as a driving force for enterprises, for civil society to follow, even for international trade.

So, for development, of course we face a lot of development deficit nowadays in the developing nations. So once we develop the international norms, especially standards, then we have to make use of them, to push or to promote the development of less developed nations. So in that sense, the issue is just the question of the different development stages, and of course, we have to balance the proportion between two aspects.

But, in my opinion, we have to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of both aspects.

The third I want to mention for developed nations, for the less developed nations, we have to find consensus which comes first and then we can follow their prioritization to work together, not against each other. That is why we need more internal discussion, dialogue and then we will cease the confliction.

That is my suggestion. That is why I said I am the bridging between developing nations and the developed nations because China, twenty years ago, when I started out there was a lot of complaints from China, saying we are suffering from quantity, why started doing those kind of things, which maybe for twenty years later. But I said, if you do not decide now, it is a little bit late when you are ten years later and so we have to balance the two aspects.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La tercera pregunta es, ¿cómo evitar que el trabajo de la FAO en temas ambientales y nutricionales se utilice como pretexto para la creación de barreras al comercio internacional?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Just as I say, I was involved in the discussion there on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture when I attended the meeting of WTO. But I thought for environment issues, nutrition issues, we have to keep the basic standards. That is, and somehow it is good for international trade because consumers, either in

Europe, in Asia, in America, in Africa, they require the consistent supplier with certain quantity, quality, especially quality, minimum quality.

If you go to the supermarket, today you purchase one kilo tomato you pay EUR 2. The next week you want to pay EUR 2 with the same quality. For this you have to follow the standard for trade, not only international trade, domestic supermarket channel, also you have to follow the certain, basic standard. And second, you cannot make anything added to the trade [...]

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Near-East Group.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

I will ask questions as time permits. My first question is, how will you enhance the role of the private sector in order to serve the objectives of the Organization and support further funding without compromising these objectives?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

When I made my statement, I said FAO needs to open door and reform. Open door for FAO is one area we should address more on the private sector because if you look at the capital flow, technology original and even capacity building, besides government, besides the civil society, besides the NGOs and institutions, we have one strong source from private sector, especially multinational companies.

They come with investment, technology and capacity building follow their standard, international standard, because they have an international market. That is also way to drive force to help us to get smallholder farmers to connect with bigger markets, domestically and internationally.

But of course, if you want to get business done better and smoothly we need to follow responsible investment and also, keep our staff more nicely, not only to the farmers and, also to the partners. So, I think that we have to keep our staff also more traceable, in my opinion, because then we can have a sustainable cooperation with the private sector.

Near East Group

My second question is, in your opinion, do you see there is a need to restructure the Organization and how to revitalize the Regional Offices in particular the Near East region?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Facing new challenges, new priorities. I am a biologist. The principle of biology is cell function should be shifted based on cell structure. Any organization in the world, big or small, you need a restructure every three years or five years or ten years, depending on the size, the normal size or whatever their capacity or their mission. But, anyway, in principle you have to restructure.

But, how to rational restructure is another issue. Not only come from the request of one aspect, one group of Members, but you have to consider the whole picture which fits the requirement of a global agriculture and food development and our SDG mandate. That is one.

Second, also once you adjust, you have to consider the staff's feeling. Nowadays, all the FAO staff have to follow passively or actively, that is what you have to consider their feeling.

Third, of course, for the different regions. Always some regions, they want to have it enhanced or increase their staffs or representatives and some others also. Not any region says please reduce. That's why I say I had to engage and listening and I will especially respect the consensus and the decision made by our Member Countries and the Governing Bodies.

I said, if elected as the FAO Director-General, I am the number one servant for you. I am not your boss. I follow the decision, what you Member Countries are going to deliver, order to me and then I will make more efficient and more humanitarian way for restructure of the Organization. Luckily, I had three or four times of reforming in China during my 30 years more experience. You know, I started with the institutional reform in China.

So, we have to follow some set of regulations, and of course, for practical, pragmatical procedure, you have to care about the people. We are human beings, we are not animals. Once, also, I had a reform experience when I was Vice-Governor of Ningxia, and for all those intellectual persons, for TV persons, we had to also recognize them for, to meet the requirement of a new situation.

The third experience I had, was to restructure the enterprises in China: Chinese Three Gorges Dam, which was investing about USD 40 billion, with 32,000 staff. So you can see, at the beginning it was a headache. But you have to talk with different groups and then come to consensus and then you have to take care of those somehow are suffering from the reform and then you will keep them stable.

So, that is why my experience, when you restructure organization, big organization, like FAO, you need reform, you need a good policy with humanitarian and you need it stable. Otherwise reform, it is just a reform, maybe create new problems, you didn't solve the older problem. That is not a real reform.

Near East Group

My following question is, you talked about the importance of innovation and modern technology. How, in your opinion and where can we rely on these technologies to improve agriculture development?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Especially, I mentioned there are two actions. One is for tropical regions, which are composed of more than 137 countries, 94 is pure territory with tropical climate and 20, partially, even United States, China, India, Brazil, we have partial territory tropical. And then another 20, they are not located in tropic region but it has an agricultural meaning, they are tropical. I said, you have to focus the issues of regions and develop the suitable technology.

Biotechnology, cultivation technology and storage, post-harvest treatment technology, cover the whole channel and then make real things happen, otherwise individual technology, nowadays is not so easy to make a real thing. And for your region, I had a very strong experience because I spent seven years in Ningxia, which is a land-locked dry area, less than 200 mm rain in a year and very high salinity, high PH value in the water.

So, for your region, you need the water saving technology with *cultivars* tolerant to the drought. So, you have to have a labour intensive, land intensive technology. And then you can integrate all those innovations, technology innovation with innovation in management and marketing. So, in general things, innovation is not only technical innovation.

CHAIRPERSON

I pass the floor to North America Group. United States you have the floor.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

The investigation by your government of the former head of Interpol, like you, a Vice Minister of your government, revealed that one reason he was arrested was, and I quote your Minister of Public Safety, "is absolutely not allowed to make decisions without authorization." How can you assure FAO that you will make decisions without authorization of your government?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

You tell me, I didn't know that.

But, I am a Mr Qu, not a Mr Meng, definitely. I am a professional scientist. You can trace my track, yeah. And I am not a typical Chinese official, you know that, yeah. For FAO, China is a founding Member of FAO, they have followed the UN charter and FAO regulations and rules.

I think the Chinese government, they can play the role based on the FAO Basic Texts or UN Charter, that is one. Second, I am a scientist, I always do things based on my own judgement, even I am a Vice-Minister. That is why I strongly push the digital farming in China. I think it is good for Chinese people, it is good for Chinese farmers. You believe, you have to believe my professionalism because I got education from Europe, America and China.

So, I have well established the professionalism.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

Doctor Qu, a recent UN survey showed continuing staff concerns about sexual harassment and a fear of report incidents at FAO. As a Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, how did you deal with accusations of sexual harassment and can you give us an example?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

I think the sexual harassment is becoming a very internationally recognized issues. For FAO's management and governance, we have to follow the international rule, UN rules. As a Vice Minister of Chinese Agricultural and Rural Affairs, we are Chinese, we keep a little distance, and from man and woman we are not close, we shake hands, that is our custom. So I think for here, we have to be nice to each other, where you have to follow the set of rules.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

Doctor Qu, will you give up your government post as Vice Minister when you take the role of FAO, should you be elected?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Please, my friend from America. I am a qualified candidate as any other of the three candidates based on the FAO Basic Texts. Any candidate is proposed by a government, that is our regulation, right! So, please respect my own rights, because I am a person, you read my CV, you are American, you know all things what I have surrounding me.

I am the son of rice grower. I come to Rome, not like you, you fly to Rome, but I first took a train from my hometown to Beijing at that time more than 40 hours by train. But, now with the bullet train, still nine hours. So, it is not easy for me to come to Rome like lots of majority here, the Ambassadors from developed nations when they travel, they always say. We say we come to the town, but on foot, not by truck, not by airplane.

So, I think, as a son of a rice grower, I appreciate, I value what I have got and also I am willing to help, serve, offer my service for developing nations, especially. Of course, I say that, also, I offer the service for other Members. But I think people need me because I have 40 years' experience. Just 40 years ago in 1979, I was participating in national examinations. Only two percent of students from high school had the chance to go to university.

So of course, for that, I will shift my position. For sure. I will quit. You cannot keep the two positions at the same time. That is not allowed, that is a regulation of FAO. If you want to serve the FAO post, I have to quit. I must quit. I do it for the good of FAO.

That is my short answer, to you.

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

Doctor Qu, to my previous question, will you give us an example how you have handled, in organizations in which you have run, accusations of sexual harassment.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

I, simply I really do not know how to do it. But I will ask you, your advice, okay?

Mr Kevin MOLEY (USA)

I think we have our answer, thank you.

On another issue, how will you guarantee FAO's neutrality with respect to science, as a geneticist specifically, I would like to have your views on GMOs.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

You know I have for a long time worked with the scientific sector as a scientist in biology. And we, FAO, is a professional organization. We have to establish a more close cooperation with CGIAR, I used to serve as and exCo Member of CGIAR 17 years ago, and also, with other civil societies, NGOs, to get

all the professional, scientific answers, and to answer all the concerns from civil society and from the public. That is my first consideration.

Second, we have to be careful, or responsible, for any new products, not only GMO, other products for pesticide, for chemicals, even for fertilizers. We have to consider their biosafety, their environment influence.

Let us be responsible to the Society, to the world. Last but not least, we also have to exchange dialogue through the platform, professional platform, and FAO should be one of the initiators for those kinds of platforms to let the people understand each other. There is a Chinese saying, “while you think in the black room by your own, you never find an answer. When you come out of the black room and you find the sunshine, you talk with people and then you get the answer”.

So, I think, please come out from the black room. Talk with the people, talk to the public. That is what I suggest. I will be prepared to do so because I have a strong scientific background to help you, to assist you, especially partners.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the representative of the Southwest Pacific.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Welcome to the candidate. The Southwest Pacific has a number of questions for you. The first one is, what are your perspectives on the food security and nutrition challenges in the Pacific and what are your intentions for the region, if elected?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Yes. That region is different from others.

I found their food security, they import a lot of food, staple food, rice, wheat, corn and others. But that region, they have plenty of protein, animal protein, fish. But they much lack the vegetables. So, for this specific region, except Australia and New Zealand, the other island countries, we have to establish assistance for their policy, for their political willingness to get their self-supply of their food security for their localized staple foods. That is why I said in my manifesto in one sentence, there may be taro. Taro is not an internationally big crop, but in that region, taro is so important.

I do not know, somewhere, maybe did not eat a taro. But it is really good. And then help them to develop rice because they have a lot of rainfall there. But they didn't have suitable rice cultivars in Fiji, Micronesia or Samoa, all those countries.

So, I think you have to develop a suitable, tailored technology, and a policy to help them to solve the problem of food security.

Second, also, it is a far away from the target market. So, it is difficult for them to develop the cash crops to exchange their staple foods. So, we have to go there to bring the technology, even investment to enable policy in that region.

Third, I think Australia and New Zealand, you have more responsibility. You are developed nations. You have power and capability to do so. So, FAO is really dependent on your voluntary contribution.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

The next question I have is in relation to markets and trade. We would like to know what your view is on the role of markets and trade in achieving global food security and how you see FAO's role in helping countries to build their capacity to trade.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Trade and markets, for food security. Nowadays, in general in the world, we have enough capacity to produce food. But the point is and the situation in some areas, it is not sufficient. So how to solve this insufficient area and the vulnerable population? On the one hand, we have to help them to increase their comprehensive production, locally. Second, for emergency, our brotherhood, sister organization WFP is

here. They offer some emergency help. And then for sustainable suppliers, ordinary trade also is another alternative.

So, for the market, the local market, we have to build up their capacity. For the international market, we have to reduce the barrier for them to import. But at the same time, we have to help them regarding affordability because in poor regions, it is difficult to afford to import. So, that is why I really, strongly suggest you from developed members, when you have a trade surplus, you have more exports, please offer some discount, some humanitarian proportion to the impoverished areas and to the vulnerable populations.

And we can integrate all the solutions together and then cease and solve the problem of food security. That is what I think for trade and the market. Furthermore, to increase the affordability, we have to help them, one country, or several others with cash crops, to open the market for them. Especially rich countries, you have to open the market for them, to help them to increase their incomes and then they can afford to import the food.

So it is not a simple solution, when I am elected I will put that on my agenda, urgently. We will have a round table discussion with certain groups and the key players and then we try to find the most precise consensus to help them.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would like to now turn to how FAO assesses its effectiveness. So, if you were the Director-General, how would you assess the effectiveness of FAO's programmes in countries to ensure they were delivering what countries need and that the programmes were delivering value for money for all members?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Please, do me a favour. I think we need an external review, a third partner can come to review all the issues, programme running, effectiveness and efficiency over the past years, and then we will find out where we are and how we are going to do. That is one. Second, also, we have to set a timeline, a road map, and with consensus of the Member Countries and then, through the procedure of the Governing Bodies and the decision makers, we can have predictable and enforceable, tangible results.

That is, we are going to, for the next four years or eight years, ten years, because we are in the critical point for SDG2 and SDG1. By 2030, we have to end hunger and poverty, especially hunger. There is no doubt that is our bottom line. For the international consensus through the 2015 UN Resolution, that is a UN consensus. So we have no any alternative and for that, I really ask you, no matter if you are from developed or developing or even member state who is a really targeted area, we have to work together and make things happen.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

One last, quick question. How would you ensure that FAO provides evidence based advice to farmers on all options available to them for their production methods?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Agriculture is not simple. I cannot answer you in ten seconds.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the African Group.

M Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

Monsieur Qu, le Groupe Afrique a trois questions. Je vous livre la première: comment garantir que la vision africaine et son cadre stratégique, notamment l'agenda 2063, le CAADP et la stratégie de mise en œuvre de la Déclaration de Malabo, vont inspirer d'une manière cohérente et constante le programme de travail de la FAO en Afrique, et avec l'Afrique, en collaboration avec les institutions régionales africaines, en particulier le NEPAD, le Nouvel agenda de développement de l'Union Africaine, et les communautés économiques et régionales, comme partenaires de choix?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

First of all, I say to Africa, over the past years, you have had a lot of regional initiatives. I am really happy to see and acknowledge all the efforts you develop in your own way with assistance from FAO and other international organizations and of course, partially, also from Chinese assistance. I was personally involved when I was a scientist in the institute 22 years ago, and then I was Vice-President for CAAS (Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences). We also helped to train people and offered technical assistance to the demonstration centres and South-South Cooperation.

But, among all initiatives, your regional initiatives is a real backbone and interior force. Any other help should be like a horticulturist would say “we need graft on your stock” and then come to the beautiful trees. Second, I think for any specific initiative in the future, FAO should put more emphasis on more close cooperation with Africa, because Africa is in a special moment to scale up development. Africa is our future, and also is one of the priority areas for the SDG goals and also rural development. For that, I think, FAO has no doubts to marshal more resources to help you, to assist you.

M Seydou Cissé (Côte d’Ivoire)

Deuxième question: l'Afrique est actuellement, en général, sous-représentée au sein de la FAO en termes d'emploi. Au cas où vous seriez élu au poste de Directeur général de la FAO, qu'envisagez-vous, en tenant dûment compte de l'équilibre du genre, pour garantir que:

- a. plus d'Africains soient recrutés, en particulier les cadres supérieurs et moyens, au niveau de l'Organisation et,
- b. des opportunités soient offertes aux fonctionnaires africains pour diriger des bureaux décentralisés en dehors du continent africain?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

FAO is, I said, a UN organization. We have to follow the rules and the regulations for equity, gender equality and also regional representation. We have an action plan for FAO, for that and also for the regional representation, geographically, we have to consider, not only Africa and also others, and of course, we have to, we should keep the Africa posts as it is. But we will restructure or adjust the proportion from different levels and it is a good question, not only for Africa, we want to exchange it horizontally across regions and let the people or managers from other regions understand the issues, situations in Africa or in Asia or in Latin America.

That is very good for human resources development, especially among the middle and young fellows. When they are young, they get an experience in different regions. Later they want to move on their career to a higher post. They will create an international scenario. So, I think you raised a question which is really good for young fellows. Of course, senior ones also, we can have a more horizontal rotation or exchange of posts around, of course, all those based on the qualification around the different professional sectors. That is also because we have human resources guidelines, as Director-General, I am not personally involved in that interference. But we have to establish some kind of basic benchmark to guide the human resources development.

M Seydou Cissé (Côte d’Ivoire)

Troisième question: il y a trois décennies, la FAO fut, au niveau international, une véritable référence en termes d'expertise scientifique et de compétence technique, mais force est de reconnaître aujourd'hui qu'elle a perdu pied et tend à devenir une Organisation plus bureaucratique. Que pourriez-vous envisager pour ressusciter ce potentiel tant reconnu et ses capacités, et ce dans l'intérêt des Membres, en particulier de l'Afrique?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Thirty years ago, FAO was very good. It is good. But it is changing, the world is changing. Thirty years ago, there were not so many international professional organizations, NGOs and big multinational companies, key players, and so on. So that is why, I once said to my friends: we are facing the world, it does not mean we are not so good, it means the world changes so fast. If you do not adapt and catch up with the new wave, even if you are dinosaur, you will be extinct. That is what Darwin's evolution tells

us. So for FAO, first, we want it to be more professional which covers the requirements and concerns for all the Member Countries.

Second, we have to offer good service, professional service, because if you did not offer good service, the other players, they will fill in.

Third, we have to change our way of working. I said, I am not the boss of FAO. If elected as FAO Director-General, we will be number one servant. So as servant, we have to follow the orders of the real boss, you are the real boss, and we have to come off our high horse, because people were thinking we were very unique, high, but we have to offer real service to the Member Countries, no matter if they are big or small, rich or poor and if you can offer the value added service, the Member States, farmers, they will restore our value and they will praise our contribution.

That is my real thinking and to improve the professionalism.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of Asia group.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The Asia Group has several questions for Dr Qu, this afternoon. The first one, Agenda 2030 is just ten years away and if you assume office, the important responsibilities of eradicating hunger and reducing poverty will be on your portfolio. How would you utilize your experience and knowledge to achieve this, please?

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Thank you for your tick-tock.

The real concern for me, is whether our job is done well or not, how to measure our accomplishment. In my opinion, being in the post of FAO Director-General means you have to finish that within the next several years. But a critical time is the next four years. You know, we have to assist the Member States which have more challenging tasks to build up new strong political willingness. That is very important because if the Member States do not have strong political willingness, the other people, we are outside, we are assistants, we are promoters. We have to build up internal capacity and force. That is my first consideration.

Second, based on my experience, we have to assist all those member countries who have a larger proportion of poverty and starvation. They have to produce enabling policy. Policy not only for production, also policy for investment, policy for capacity building, policy for attracting more talent to work in their country origins, for their government, their local government, the Member Government.

That is also very important if you look at the successful story of the national members in this planet. If you want to solve starvation and poverty, the Member Countries policies play the key role.

Third is innovation, because nowadays 85 percent of the population are smallholder farmers. There is strong pressure between the population and natural resources, especially land and soil, soil and water. How to improve the efficiency and the productivity? The most economic approach is to develop technology which can improve the efficiency of bio-resources and natural resources.

Fourth, you need new business models. Nowadays we have an alternative to develop all these new business models through E-Commerce, through the share of investment, C2C investment, agriculture OEM. Because it was all the products you produced, you have to go through traditional logistics and business, through the wholesaler, retailer, it takes time and is less efficient. But now, you can produce in Asia's mountainous regions, smallholders, small farmers, and then you can sell directly to the United States, by C2C. So you can save a lot of energy and money and you can benefit both producers, farmers and also consumers. So I think for that, it is also quite promising.

Last but not least, I think for the development efforts, we have to create a platform to identify case sharing with each other, and that is why I propose an agriculture eco-zone partnership because products in the world, in this planet, farmers can share, cooperatives can share. That is more efficient, we just need to be the organizer, with local government, or with local society or association, whatever.

For wine, for tea, Carnation flowers, you name it. So that is, I think, somehow, I really agree, it is not a matter of money, it is a matter of innovation of the thinking and way of doing business.

Mr Thanaway TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

We have another two questions.

As you mentioned about our smallholders, family farmers and, also, innovations, as we know that small holder and family farmers, especially in Asia and other developing countries, are facing difficulties in accessing technical assistance and innovative technologies to tackle impacts of climate change.

How would you strengthen FAO's role in this regard and the next question, capacity building is important to assist member states. In particular, in small island developing states and also other developing countries. As such, as the rich range of capacity building centres and other knowledge sharing platform at the regional level, such as the World Fishery Universities, could provide education service to support this effort, please share you views about the importance of capacity building.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

I try to answer quickly, you have two questions.

First, I think smallholder farmers, I said we have more than 500 million smallholder farmers in the world. But we have to realise that this is a historic phenomenon. We have to have historic patience.

Second, we have to offer a special policy to integrate the smallholder farmers in way of cooperative or in way of the legal entities, legal entities of the marketing and the production. Or, you just have a linkage of contract growers with multi-national companies. So, for smallholder farmers, you have to offer the case to help them to offer them a social service.

Third, also for technology, you have to organize the field school or somewhere where they can offer night school to train the farmers, especially women, because majority now in Asia, or in all the smallholder farmers country, the majority are women. In China, it is 68 percent labour force in the countryside are women. Globally, in developing nations, more than 60 percent. So, we have to train women in the countryside, offer the financial assistance and service for the small holder farmers and for the capacity building of the small island or other developing nations, smallholder farmers capacity. We have to know what kind of capacity. Is it capacity for training, capacity for technical service, capacity for marketing service?

So, we have to analyse the specific requirement from different regions, based on different crops, different sectors. For some country it may be palm oil, for some country it is Arabic dates. So it is different products, you have different capacity building for the community level, village level. So we have to focus on one commodity and then integrate all the sectors from down to the grass roots. Then you build one brand to be promoted.

CHAIRPERSON

I now would like to give you the floor for your closing remarks, Dr Qu, you have five minutes.

Mr QU Dongyu (China)

Thank you very much, dear representatives from Member Countries. Through this hearing I got six conclusions.

First is trust. Trust among the Member Countries, among the FAO staff and among the key players which relate to SDGs. That is our common mission. We have to work together because nowadays human being's civilization is entering a new era. We have enough power, capability to finish, to end starvation. So, if we have accumulated enough trust and especially be united all the force among the Member Countries. That is first.

Second, we have a lot of missions, vision, slogans. Now it is time to take actions. That is why I had an intensive discussion with Professor Jeffrey Sachs. He now has established solution network for SDGs. He tried to coordinate all the countries who have more concrete actions, solutions. I fully agree with him. That is why FAO we want to change, to be a dynamic FAO for a better world. We have to follow that

and of course, all actions will have to get approval from the Member Countries and your consensus, and especially action more precisely, more targeting and also more effectiveness and more efficiency.

Third is transparency. That is why I came to Rome last month, and I separated five groups to listening. I said to you I have two ears, one tongue, but I did not say too much that time. I said I wanted to listen to you first, because professional approach first through the dialogue, through the careful listening. Actually, I collected more than 400 questions, but, today you only ask me about 20. So that is why I respect all your participation, especially who is not the chairperson of your region. I listened and I wrote down your concerns and I analysed. I also distributed my survey table. Some countries are not so familiar with that, and said “oh, I come here to listen to your vision”. But I said, no, I have enough patience and tolerance to listen first. So, transparency, dialogue and participatory and running by Member Countries, are not only talking. I said that was my first step.

Now, today is my second step, I will go tomorrow to listen to other small countries, poor countries, they did not have representatives here and they have an office in Geneva. I will go there. I went to small island countries in Fiji and talked with them, and they were so happy.

Fourth is partnership. Partnership not only about members and also PPP or with other international organizations, with the financial institutions. I had talks with JP Morgan, the World Bank and others, because SDGs for agriculture and rural development is not only our FAO's function. We need integration.

Fifth is value chain. Because value chain is so important for innovation, for farmers' livelihood. If you only offer a single technology, it is only beautiful paper. That was what I was so familiar ten years ago. But we want to make a beautiful story, help farmers, they can benefit from your technology, your innovation and your management. So you need the value chain development.

The last is commitment. Commitment from developed nations, from donors and all who come from the rural areas. I come to Rome, but we want to go from Rome to all the front of the rural areas in the world.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues will now a fifteen minute break. The plenary session will resume at 4:30.

The meeting was suspended from 16.15 to 16.36 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 15 à 16 h 36

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.15 a las 16.36

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle of France to join us on the podium. In fact she is with us. You have the floor for your opening remarks.

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, Mesdames, Messieurs, je suis heureuse de me présenter devant vous aujourd'hui, en tant que candidate au poste de Directeur général de la FAO. Comme vous le savez, ma candidature est présentée par la France et soutenue par l'Union européenne, et par ses États membres.

Je me suis préparée, je me suis engagée dès le mois de juillet dernier dans une campagne active et transparente. J'ai personnellement rencontré plus de 150 représentants des pays membres à haut niveau. J'ai rencontré les responsables des organisations internationales et régionales, ainsi que les agriculteurs, les pêcheurs, les entreprises agroalimentaires, les investisseurs, les opérateurs du numérique, ainsi que la société civile.

Ces rencontres ont nourri ma réflexion et mon projet pour la FAO. Aujourd'hui, je veux vous dire comment j'analyse les défis que nous avons à relever. Je veux vous décrire mon projet et l'ambition que

je porte pour la FAO. Je veux enfin vous dire pourquoi je pense être à même de devenir Directrice générale de la FAO.

Continues in English

You are well aware of the challenges we need to face. What I heard during my campaign was a sense of urgency for action. Urgency because food systems are facing considerable challenges. 821 million people continue to suffer from hunger. That number has begun to rise again since 2015, mainly as a consequence of conflict. Malnutrition affects 2 billion people.

At the same time, the epidemic of obesity and overweight continues to progress alarmingly. Demographic growth, shift in diet, climate change and the need to regenerate our ecosystems are all challenges that we can and must address.

Over the last few decades, we have considerably stepped up the amount of food production, threefold since 1960, while the world population was multiplied by 2.5. We've not yet succeeded in eradicating hunger and we have often degraded our natural resources.

The starting point lies with food systems. Faced with continued global population growth, we do of course need to continue producing more, especially in regions where food supply remains insufficient such as Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia and Western Asia.

But we do not simply need a supply driven policy. Demand for food is no longer driven solely by demographic pressure. It is evolving with the needs of an increasingly urbanised global population. Consumption is changing with more vegetable and animal proteins, more diversity and the greater taken into account of the links between food and health although much remains to be done in this area.

Moreover, we need to foster the efficiency of our food systems, reduction of waste and losses, the development of circular economy and energy saving. Agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry are essential for protecting our climate, our oceans, our soils, water and biodiversity. That is the idea behind the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development with which you are all familiar.

I was often asked about our ability to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, SDG 2 of course, but also all 17 SDG's. I have every confidence that we have solutions and that we have the will to face these challenges altogether, and where there is a will there is a way.

I would like to share with you how I envision the FAO's roadmap for the next four years. I have two main objectives. First and foremost, we need productive food systems that protect our natural resources and our resilience to climate change. Our food systems need to be more efficient in particular by reducing losses and waste.

My second objective is to develop value chains in rural areas to eradicate poverty. We must enable farmers and fishermen and women who are still too often subsistence centred to access the market. By developing the processing of agriculture and fisheries product, retail and services, including digitalisation we can create jobs and a future for young people and the women and men who live in rural areas.

I want to take action in several directions. I want to reaffirm FAO's role to put agriculture, livestock farming, fisheries and forestry back at the top of political agendas. These sectors are not sectors of the past they are our future. They provide solutions and they will play a decisive role in the success of the UN 2030 agenda. I want the FAO to remain at the forefront of scientific and technical knowledge so that it offers innovative and robust solution adapted to local contexts.

To that end, we need to forge partnerships and use digitalisation to value the scientific knowledge available in every region of the world as well as to bolster and disseminate FAO's knowledge. I want the FAO to help us to bring together governments and stakeholders, because only the farmers, fishermen and women and the private sector as a whole, will be able to transform our food system.

I want to put them back at the centre of all the FAO's activities. They bring project and solution. We need them and they need us. In order to leverage our resources, I want more synergy, and cooperation. More South-South Cooperation, more South-North cooperation, more Triangular Cooperation.

I wish the FAO to remain our common house where everyone can share their expertise and solution. I want the FAO to belong to you, to belong to all of us. And FAO faithful to the United Nation commitment.

As many of you said to me, we need to boost our technical cooperation. I want to make this programme even more relevant, more effective, and more inclusive in particular for women. I would also like to explore with you with, the Governing Body of the Organization, how we can diversify its financing sources so that we can deploy it more widely and amplify its impact. I want to scale up FAO's action for economic development in all areas.

FAO needs to help us to attract more investment in the agri-food sector, fisheries and aquaculture sectors. It must put its expertise at the service of investors in order to assist them designing and implementing responsible, sustainable and inclusive investment programmes.

Investment which will contribute to build value chains, agri-food chains that will create jobs and enable farmers and fishermen and women to access the market. FAO already works with public investors, the World Bank, the EBRD, the IFAD, and support them for a portfolio of investment around USD 6 billion per year.

I want to significantly increase its portfolio with public as well as private investors, many of whom I met during my campaign. They are willing to work and partner with us. I will support FAO's normative activities by strengthening their scientific basis and capacity building for governments to ensure a more effective implementation.

Finally, I will strengthen the corporation and the synergy between the FAO, the World Food Programme and IFAD, as well as with the other UN organizations. We need more efficiency and a more integrated approach which is the overall objective of the UN development system reform.

As I want to work with you to ensure that the FAO plays an active role in implementing this reform, I will pursue effectiveness, optimal use of our resources and compliance with the mandate and the governance of the FAO.

Why do I consider myself up to the challenge of becoming the Director-General of FAO? Over the last 30 years I have dedicated my career to agriculture, food, forestry and rural development. I am passionate about these sectors. I was born in a family of scientists. My parents were researchers in biochemistry and I love science, research and innovation.

I know what it brings to the food sector and I am convinced they contribute to decisively improving our livelihood. I have worked at the European Commission. At home, I have held leading roles in ministerial cabinets as Director-General for Food and then for the Economic and Environmental Performance of Enterprises.

As Director-General, I managed over 4 500 staff members in Paris headquarters as well as in regions. I was also elected as executive director of the European Food Safety Authority, EFSA, which I led and developed for seven years. At the end of my mandates, EFSA employed over 500 staff members mainly scientists, and relied on a network of more than 2000 scientific experts.

I am known for my capacity to implement change. I have in particular transformed the organization I have led and got my teams on board to strive towards the vision shared with partners and stakeholders. In a European and international environment, I have demonstrated the capacity to mobilise governments and all stakeholders. This was the case at EFSA when I built a stakeholder platform to enhance dialogue with partners.

In the context of COP 21 and COP 22 on climate change, I contributed to the creation of the global platform "4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate". It brings together over 200 members, including FAO, and other international organizations. I have also managed several crises both economic and sanitary crisis like BSE, foot-and-mouth disease and pests. Over my career, I have worked with ministers, commissioners and members of Parliament.

I know the FAO and its work well. I have represented my country and the European Commission at the Organization many times. As Director-General, I was responsible for the cooperation with the FAO and I

renewed the strategic partnership France has with the Organization. I also chaired the Committee of the Codex Alimentarius on General Principles.

In all the organizations that I led I created a working environment centred around commitment, result, mutual respect, trust, diversity, and gender equality. As I did over my career, I will implement policies and take concrete steps to prevent and fight all forms of harassment and discrimination at FAO. I like and I know how to create a working environment which enables each individual to give the best of their ability and deploy their talent, their boldness and creativity for the collective success.

I would now like to conclude. I am the first female candidate since the creation of FAO 70 years ago. Never a woman led this organization. As you know, women play an essential role in food systems and I am proud to represent them.

I want to be elected to work with you with all member countries with stakeholders. I want to give a new impetus to this Organization and take action. I want the FAO to be more effective, responsive, accountable and open. I envision the FAO as a provider of science-based knowledge and innovative solution. I envision the FAO as a platform for dialogue, as a hub that empowers stakeholders including investors for concrete action.

As a booster for cooperation to leverage resources, I envision the FAO as an engine for development through technical cooperation and assistance for governments, as a facilitator of food trade and as a catalyst for the creation of jobs in rural areas. Yes with the FAO we can succeed together and deliver sustainable food for all. This is the commitment I wish to make to you today. Your support is key. You can count on my listening, my commitment and my determination. Thank you for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Latin America and the Caribbean Group to pose the first set of questions to the candidate. Uruguay you have the floor.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Voy a formular las preguntas según el criterio adoptado por el Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe en el cual se ha tomado en cuenta la sugerencia contenida en el documento CL161/7, respecto a la ventaja de plantear las mismas preguntas a cada candidato ya que esto podría facilitar la comparación. Hecha la aclaración, la primera pregunta por lo tanto sería la misma que le hemos hecho a los otros tres candidatos. ¿Cuál será el rol de FAO durante su gestión en favor de los países en desarrollo de renta media y media alta?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I think it is important to the way I see the role of FAO is to ensure that you take into account the diversity of the situation of the countries, the reality of their agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture sector. You take into account their priorities and then you provide solutions, recommendations, advice, options for action that are adequate to the needs of the countries. So that's what I will do. I will ensure that the FAO is not imposing any 'one size fits all' solution, but fit for purpose solution to recommendation and advice that are recommended in particular for the category, if I may say that way, of countries that you have mentioned.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

La segunda pregunta es: ¿cómo evitar que el trabajo de la FAO en temas ambientales y nutricionales se utilice como pretexto para la creación de barreras al comercio internacional?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

For me it is clear that – first of all, trade is very important. It's a source of prosperity it's also important, it contributes to food security. I will ensure that any action that FAO is taking, is relying on sound

scientific basis and evidence. And obviously the work of the Codex Alimentarius is very important with regards to when it comes to trade.

And I will ensure that we will be able to strengthen the scientific basis of its activities that will also ensure a better and more effective implementation of the rules of the Codex Alimentarius. So that we facilitate trade.

So I think it's essential that this organization, because it's part of this mandate will provide support to governments to facilitate trade. And again, every activity of the organization both the standardisation but also solution, recommendation options should be science-based.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Una tercera pregunta. En un contexto de presupuesto congelado, ¿en qué proporción la FAO debería dedicarse a la elaboración de normas y estándares —o sea, standard settings— y a las actividades de desarrollo en el terreno?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

The zero nominal growth budget is not something new. The FAO has lived with it, as far as I am aware, since 2008 and has not and rightly has made no choice in terms of whether it should only dedicate its resources to the so-called standard-setting or normative activity and technical cooperation and development. And I think we should continue. We need to be provided with the diversity of the tools you have mentioned, so normative, as well as cooperation and development activities, they are essential. They provide solution fit for purpose for the needs of the countries.

Of course in that context, we need to continue to ensure that we optimise the use of our resources, that's very important. As I mentioned in my initial statement, I wish to explore with the Governing Bodies of this organization how we can diversify the funding sources for the Technical Cooperation Programme.

I have met with a number of stakeholders, in particular here I am referring to non-profit organization foundation, which are very willing to work and partner with FAO and if the Governing Bodies of this Organization would agree this will provide possibly extra resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme. But again, I don't intend to make a choice between normative - or to give up with normative activities or cooperation and development activities, I think they are both important for the different countries depending on the reality of their needs.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Veo que tenemos tiempo para una cuarta pregunta, que sería la siguiente: ¿cómo proyecta incorporar en los trabajos de la FAO todos los enfoques y herramientas disponibles, incluida la agroecología, la innovación y la biotecnología?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I would like to stress again, that I think that considering - well first of all I know what science and innovation has brought to the food sector. They wouldn't have been able to achieve what we have achieved as I said, multiplied by 3, the amount of food produced since the 1960s without science and innovation. And I do think with the huge challenges that we have ahead we will continue to need more innovation and more science to achieve these challenges.

We will need to ensure obviously that we increase the productivity of our agriculture, particularly in some region, we maintain high productivity where it is highly productive while at the same time we ensure its sustainability and its resistance to climate change. And for this we will need to use some of the techniques or technologies that you have referred to.

We will need to improve agriculture practices to make them more sustainable and in particular agroecology can provide solution. But there are other ways to do it, conservation agriculture, precision agriculture, are also techniques that help to achieve these objectives.

Biotechnology is also very useful. I will support biotechnologies, of course, including GMO and gene editing, I think it's important. When it comes to - we will need to provide farmers with seeds which are

more resistant to drought, more resistant to certain plant pests which are more nutritious so we might also wish to use these techniques and technologies.

And of course, I will rely on science and evidence to make sure that all these techniques are bringing real benefits and protect the health of our consumers, our farmers, our fishermen and as well as the environment.

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

Una última pregunta. A pesar de su rol fundamental en la producción de la mayor parte del alimento mundial, con frecuencia el suelo no ha recibido la necesaria atención en lo referente a su uso y gestión. ¿Cómo planearía abordar este tema en las actividades de la FAO?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I'm sorry sir, I missed part of the question. You were talking about soya, and you said that it didn't?

Sr. Gastón LASARTE (Uruguay)

No, suelo.

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Soils, suelos, muchas gracias. You were saying it did not deserve the appropriate attention. Well I think FAO has made some interesting and relevant activities with the Global Soil Partnership. We'll come back to that [...]

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Near East Group.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

Thank you Mr Chairperson and we welcome Ms Catherine for our questions. My first question, you talked about the private sector. In your views, what is the mechanism to attract the private sector without enforcing their own special agenda on FAO?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN- LANÉELLE (France)

It's important you rightly mention the private sector and I stress that I strongly believe that although I will make sure that I'm leading an intergovernmental organization like FAO, you need to ensure that I will work within the framework and the guidance of the Governing Bodies of this Organization. I am convinced we need to engage more and work further with the private sector because only as I said the farmers and the fishermen as well as private sector will be able to transform the food system and deliver what we want to achieve.

Of course this dialogue should take into account what you said which is this Organization needs to remain impartial. No way that this Organization will be delivering service, or advertisement, or defend any particular commercial interest, but we need to work more and further with the private sector if we want to make a difference and to make an impact.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My second question is, as there is more and more demand by members on various issues to be implemented by FAO, and with the budget constraints that we have currently, how are you going to cope with such a situation?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN- LANÉELLE (France)

I think there are different actions to be taken and I am going to list them quickly. I think you need to ensure, continue to ensure, that we will optimise the use of our resources. I think we need also to ensure that we will be able to find, to diversify the sources of funding for some of our activities.

I mentioned in particular the technical cooperation, of course that needs to be decided and approved by the governing bodies of this organization. I think also we shall leverage our resources, cooperating and

building synergies with other key players, with other UN international organizations as I said also with investors.

I think we can build on the solution that we have identified and demonstrated in the Technical Cooperation Programme and attract investors and help them to build and to design and implement investment programme that will then help to scale up the outcome of the Technical Cooperation Programme. And that's important because we really need to scale up the good result we have already achieved.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My following question is in case you are elected, how would you utilise your experience and knowledge to address hunger eradication and poverty reduction to achieve SDG 1 and 2, given the fact that we have about 10 years to go. Time is running.

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I will work with the farmers, I will talk and work with the farmers, the fishermen, the representatives with the private sector and the government. I will gather them around the two priorities I have identified which is first building on the tools that the FAO has to increase the productivity of our agriculture while making it at the same time, more sustainable as well as more resistant to climate change.

And I will work to attract more investment to develop the value chain, to develop economic activities, processing food, retail, services linked to agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, because I think it's a way to give access to the market to the farmers and the fishermen as well as to create jobs in rural areas.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My following question is making decisions in this organization sometimes you run into a wall of rejections, by Members of course. How would you deal with that and where would you find energy and drive to continue to work with members for four years let's say, if not more?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Thank you for your encouraging words. Well, energy I have and I will work relentlessly with the Members of this Organization. I have already enjoyed it and I might not concur with you on the fact that we always disagree. I recognise that we sometimes disagree, that we have different approaches, views, but at the end of the day I think that we agree on the essential. And anyway as the Director-General of this organization, I will ensure that I will not create division. That I will gather as many countries as I can around common views and projects. That will sometimes take a bit more time but at the end when we all agree, it's so powerful.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

I have no further questions. I thank you for the special lights, Mr Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to North America Group.

Mme Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

En 2015, vous avez redéfini la vision et la mission de la Direction générale au sein des Ministères de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation. Pouvez-vous expliquer concrètement comment vous avez géré le changement durant cette transition et comment vous avez motivé le personnel pour s'adapter aux nouvelles visions?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

J'ai pris beaucoup de plaisir à travailler avec les 350 agents de la Direction générale de la performance économique et environnementale des entreprises, qui ne s'appelaient pas comme ça lorsque j'en ai pris la responsabilité. Pendant plusieurs mois, tout en maintenant la continuité des activités de la Direction générale, nous avons travaillé ensemble pour définir une nouvelle vision, des nouvelles missions, des objectifs stratégiques, et aligner ensuite l'organisation.

Et comment est-ce que nous avons fait? Nous sommes partis des besoins de ceux que nous servions. Donc, nous avons interrogé ceux que nous servions: les agriculteurs, les forestiers, les entreprises agroalimentaires et tous les partenaires de ces acteurs-là pour savoir quels étaient leurs attentes et leurs besoins, ce que nous faisions bien, et ce que nous faisions moins bien.

Ensuite, partant de là nous avons redéfini, comme je l'ai dit, la vision, la mission et les objectifs stratégiques, et nous avons aligné l'organigramme de cette grande maison, pour l'aligner à la nouvelle stratégie. C'est ce que j'aime faire avec les équipes, les mobiliser autour d'un projet, d'un cap, d'une orientation et donner du sens à l'action quotidienne pour réussir ensemble.

Mme Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

Quelle serait votre approche pour élaborer une stratégie efficace en matière de genre? Tout d'abord, afin de prévenir et lutter contre le harcèlement sexuel, et deuxièmement afin de renverser le pouvoir d'agir des agricultrices, les femmes qui travaillent dans le secteur rural?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Les femmes, on m'en a beaucoup parlé pendant la campagne. Je n'osais pas trop en parler au début, mais finalement beaucoup de pays m'en ont parlé pour me dire l'importance de la place qu'elles ont dans les systèmes alimentaires sur tous les continents, pour me dire aussi les difficultés particulières auxquelles elles sont souvent confrontées: difficultés d'accès aux ressources, à la terre, au foncier, aux ressources naturelles; difficultés d'accès aussi parfois aux forums de décision, s'agissant des questions agricoles, alimentaires et de pêche.

Donc, je crois en effet que nous devons renforcer l'action de la FAO à cet égard. Moi ce que je veux vous proposer - mais évidemment, c'est quelque chose que j'aurais plaisir à discuter avec vous, le moment venu -, ce n'est pas nécessairement un nouveau programme pour les femmes, c'est plutôt d'aller inclure, inscrire dans toutes les actions de cette Organisation, la question du genre et de voir comment dans chacune des activités, des actions et des décisions que cette Organisation prend, au service des secteurs agricoles, de la pêche et de la forêt, nous pouvons tenir compte des besoins particuliers des femmes.

Nous pouvons être attentifs à ne pas créer de nouveaux obstacles pour qu'elles participent au système alimentaire, parce que c'est ainsi, aussi, que nous réussirons mieux à atteindre les objectifs en matière d'éradication de la faim et d'amélioration de la nutrition.

Ensuite, vous avez raison de dire qu'il y a aussi les femmes dans cette Organisation. Il y a les femmes en dehors de cette Organisation que nous servons, et il y a les femmes dans cette Organisation. Si je voulais faire une réponse très courte, je vous dirais, vous avez une occasion exceptionnelle d'élire une femme, la première femme à la tête de cette Organisation. C'est peut-être un peu court. Donc, je vais compléter ma réponse.

Je dirais qu'il y a de bonnes choses qui ont été faites dans cette Organisation au regard de la présence des femmes, je crois qu'il y a un peu plus de 40 pour cent de femmes dans cette Organisation. On peut faire mieux, on pourrait monter à la moitié, puisque les femmes, c'est la moitié de l'humanité, n'est-ce pas?

Continues in English

Now when it comes to management I think we can do better. Only a quarter I think of the managers in this Organization are women. I think we can do better. We shall do better. It should be half.

Suite en français

Donc ça, je vais m'en occuper. Mais bien sûr ça doit se faire en respectant la transparence des procédures, en s'assurant aussi qu'on recrute les meilleurs talents, les meilleures expertises, et qu'on a la bonne adéquation. Il ne faut jamais renoncer à ça, c'est très important. Ensuite, vous m'avez interrogée sur le harcèlement, en tant que femme, et les discriminations plus généralement, et les abus de pouvoir; j'y suis particulièrement sensible.

J'ai une expérience dans ce domaine, car j'ai géré des organisations dans lesquelles j'ai été confrontée en tant que manager à des plaintes. J'ai géré, j'ai pris des mesures pour protéger les victimes, mais aussi pour écarter les managers qui se comportaient mal. J'ai une expérience et je la mettrai à la disposition de

cette Organisation pour m'assurer que ces situations-là ne soient pas tolérables, n'existent pas, et que les managers de cette Organisation y soient particulièrement sensibilisés et que les mesures soient prises.

Mme Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

Vous avez déjà partagé vos vues sur l'importance du commerce.

Continues in English

Perhaps I will repeat in a different way the question. I think we really do want to hear a little more about your views of how the FAO could help countries participate and use international trade as a means to address poverty and nutrition, climate action and food insecurity?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Yes, I'd like to stress again that trade is important for me. As I said it's a source of prosperity that contributes to food security. I think the role of this organization is important. With the Codex Alimentarius standards I think it's important. So I shall stress on the scientific basis of the activities of the Codex Alimentarius.

I'd like also to make sure that the Codex standards are better implemented more effectively so we need here capacity building. I think there are – there will be also new developments, I'm thinking about the development of new free-trade zone in Africa, the African Union has decided to create a new free-trade zone, just as an example that I'd like to illustrate. This is a fantastic opportunity and the FAO should help support the African Union and African countries to deliver on this free-trade zone.

Then I went to Geneva a couple of weeks ago to discuss with the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, because I think it is important. It is clear for me that trade is part of the mandate of this Organization, not of course with the same mandate as the WTO, obviously. But I think it's important to raise the awareness and the activities and build more activities in relation with this, and I discussed that and explored with the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, how we could work better in order to boost trade of food stuff all over the world.

Mme Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

J'avais une autre question sur les biotechnologies, mais vous avez déjà répondu.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Southwest Pacific Group.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

Thank you Chair and welcome to the candidate from France. The Southwest Pacific would like to ask what are your perspectives on the food security and nutrition challenges are in the Pacific, and what are your intentions for the region if elected?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I'm going to build on the work and the exchange I've already done with some, not all but some, quite a number already of representatives of the Pacific countries and I will also visit the Pacific in the coming weeks.

As I see it we have – climate change is a huge challenge in this region and we need to make sure that not only we will not lose in fact the efforts and progress that we have made when it comes to food security and nutrition, with the growing impact of climate change.

So we need to boost the work in the activities of the organization in this region on climate change and see how we can offer solution that helps maintaining the productivity of the agriculture while we have the impact of climate change. How we can build systems which are more resilient farming practices, diversify the crops also. So that's the first priority that I will see in this region.

I also realise that in this region there may be also an important challenge when it comes to nutrition which is both linked with, and of course there is a great diversity of countries in this region as in many other regions. But you have the coexistence of undernutrition as well as over nutrition if I can say that

way, obesity and overweight that has been mentioned to me when I had a working session with the commission of the South Pacific, which mentioned to me that some of the countries are the champion in the world when it comes to obesity and overweight. So that is something on which we need to foster the support, the recommendation that we provide to the different countries.

I think there is also another challenge in this country and maybe some of you will tell me it's not only in this region and of course I'll be ready to listen to that, which is how do we ensure a better presence of the Organization, FAO, in the Pacific, taking into account that this is a very, very large region with a great diversity, as well as how do we ensure also the presence of people from the Pacific in the organization, in the FAO, so that we can take into account integrate in the way this Organization works the approach, the view and the specific challenges that this region has.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

The next question we would like to ask you is, what are your priorities for building FAO's technical capacity to improve agricultural productivity and sustainability?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I think that FAO has accumulated over the last 70 years unparalleled expertise and knowledge about the solution. It doesn't mean the organization knows everything and there is here an issue we might discuss later on which is about how we maintain the scientific and technical knowledge in this organization. But the way I see it is that this organization has accumulated a sum of solutions which are very important, and that we have also showcased in for example, in the development action as well as the Technical Cooperation Programme that it works. That we have solutions to increase productivity while not compromising with sustainability and resilience to climate change.

So now what we have to do in addition to possibly, as I said, on diversifying the funding of the technical cooperation programme, is to scale up the implementation of this solution. And that's where I think that attracting more investment, public and private investment, to these sectors might be very powerful because it helps obviously to disseminate a good solution, to empower the stakeholders and to achieve the objectives they have mentioned.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

A follow-up question to the previous one is, in doing that how would you ensure that FAO provides balanced evidence-based advice on all production versions available to farmers?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I think that the way I understand the question you are raising, is in fact related to how do we ensure that this organization maintains and further develops its scientific and technical knowledge. So on the one hand, maybe I shall say that science and evidence should remain at the core of our activity because otherwise it's very dangerous, we can make big mistakes. So any recommendation, any work that this organization is developing should be based on science and evidence.

At the same time and maybe I come back to my first point, I think that we need to ensure that this organization remains plugged into the knowledge which exists all over the world. I think there are many innovations and much new knowledge which is produced in many regions of the world, in many countries, and that's where we need to make sure that we forge partnerships and ways so that the organization get access to this knowledge which is also fit for purpose because it's coming also directly from the countries from the region.

And here I am obviously not talking only about the North but also the South. I think that many, many new solutions and innovation nowadays come from the South. So we need here to forge more partnerships and plug the expertise of the organization into the scientific community all over the world.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

We'd also like to ask you, how you would assess the effectiveness of FAO's programmes in countries to ensure they are delivering what countries need and that the programmes are also delivering value for money for all Members?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I think it is important that we include in the different programmes that we are developing, when it comes to technical cooperation or development activities, that we include systematically an assessment, or we include the fact there is need to assess the outcome as well as the impact and see how the objectives have been met and if not that we learn lessons from that experience. And I guess this is something FAO is not discovering in 2019 and I am not the first one to say that I guess, but I think as far as I can see from some of the reports made by the Bureau of the Inspector General, as well as the MOPAN assessment although there has been progress, I think we can do better. And I think it's important when it comes to the Technical Cooperation Programme just to illustrate what I'm saying, I think it is important because it is today a bit underutilised. So there may be also reasons why it is underutilised and it is important that we learn lessons from and we assess as part of the management cycle of programme and activity.

So I make sure that we stress this and we put systematically in activities and programmes the assessment, the lessons learnt so that we feed then our future activities with these evaluations.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Africa Regional Group.

Ms Anna-Marie MOULTON (South Africa)

The Africa Group is asking basically the same questions to all four candidates and I will continue in that vein to a large extent. First question, how would you ensure that Africa's vision and strategic frameworks such as Agenda 2063, CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme), and the Malabo Declaration Implementation Strategy would inform in a coherent and sustainable approach FAO's work with and in Africa with African regional institutions namely NEPAD and the regional economic communities as partners of choice?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

First of all, I'd like to stress that I have met with many representatives, including ministers of African countries, and I was very much impressed by the fact that many of them had a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve, clear policies, objectives, strategies and were requesting, requiring FAO to help them to operationalise these policies and strategies and provide support so that they deliver success. So that's very important. So it means starting with the needs, the policy and the priority of the countries.

Then I realised how important it is also the activities of regional organizations in Africa as well as the African Union. And that's why I met, for example with the African Union, met with commissioner, Josepha Sacko, to see, to explore with her and with the African Union, how we can ensure that FAO is more and more supportive to their work. That's where we have discussed in particular the creation, the entering into force of this new free trade zone where I think there are many opportunities for the continent to develop.

So the way I see it – and I met also with NEPAD, with the executive director of NEPAD – so the way I see it is that in fact it's a fantastic, we are lucky that we have both this national policies, strategies but also we have regional as well as strategies from the continent. And you mentioned Agenda 2063, the follow-up of the Malabo Declaration, the CAADP, and FAO needs to work with this region and the continent also to leverage the resources and the work and deliver more effectively when it works also with the countries.

So there is no opposition for me, it's just helping to be more effective and I intend to strengthen the relationship both with regional organizations, as well as with the African Union.

Ms Anna-Marie MOULTON (South Africa)

The second question, Africa is currently grossly underrepresented in FAO in terms of employment. If elected to the post of Director-General and taking into account the issue of gender, what are you going to do to ensure that more Africans are employed especially in middle management and Africans are also assigned to lead the centralised offices outside Africa?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

It is a very important point and a very sensitive one. If we want this Organization to remain our common house it is clear that it needs to make sure, we need to make sure, that we maintain or improve the representation, a fair representation of our regions and countries of this organization. And I know it's very sensitive.

I've had an experience of leading and managing a European organization. There were only 28 member states but still you have to make sure that while you recruit the best talent, the best experts, the most adequate profiles, you ensure that you keep and build the diversity of the representation of the different countries in that case, of Europe. That's very important.

And it's at all levels. And as you are saying it's not only you know, the junior positions. You need to be able to see at a glance that middle management positions, senior management positions, reflect the diversity of the world, of the approach, of the views, of the realities of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and aquaculture. So I think here I would be tempted to propose, because it's not just short-term action. It's not just talking. You need to walk the talk. And here I am not sure the FAO has built yet a strategy or a policy that would address both on the short and the medium term this issue which is how do - what is the expertise, knowledge, and the talent that we need to have in this Organization in the next 10 to 15 years?

How are we going to get access to the best talent while at the same time ensuring that we have a fair representation? And that's something that you don't just build with publishing a call, and then just regretting that you had no candidate from an African country.

You need also to build through partnerships, through the advertisement of the calls and the job offers. Through also the traineeships, through the scholarships, through also working with countries, how you are going to be able to raise the visibility of the organization, attract the talent from all regions of the world and prepare the future. So that's something I will propose, I would like to build a policy, a specific strategy dedicated to knowledge management, talent and expertise, which will include of course the fair representation of nationality. In that context, I will not forget gender, of course.

Ms Anna-Marie MOULTON (South Africa)

Next question: Should you be elected Director-General and during your tenure, how will FAO marshal its resources including institutional capacity and technical expertise, to specifically address the issue of agriculture, and especially agro-processing emerging as a significant contributor to generating job and entrepreneurship opportunities for Africa's youth and rural populations, and Africa's securing levels of food production necessary in moving towards the Zero Hunger target, while on the other hand reducing dependence on food imports?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

It is a very vast question, so maybe I will try to address it in a very specific manner. I would say, again, it is about optimizing the use of the Organization's resources; ensuring that we can for technical cooperation as well as development activities diversify the funding of the funding sources; leverage our resources; more cooperation with other UN agencies, other organizations, partnership, work with investors because it helps to scale up our efforts; so this would be some of the key points that would help to work in a context where I reorganize that this Organization has important resources but there are many expectations. So you need to make sure that you are going to leverage the resources that you have by cooperating, building synergies and working also with partners including the private sector.

Ms Anna-Marie MOULTON (South Africa)

I think time is basically up.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the Asia Group, Thailand.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

Dr Geslain-Lanéelle, we would like to start with a follow-up question from the previous one on soil, not soya that you missed to answer. Soil is an important resource for agriculture and often neglected element

of agricultural productions, food system and climate system. What is your view on FAO's role to address on sustainable soil management and soil pollution?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

So now it's about soils? Thank you. So you are right in saying that collectively we've paid not enough attention to soils. Although this very general statement is not true if we consider the fantastic work that in some countries, some farmers, have done in relation with soil.

And here I refer to some farming practices which are extremely - that I have personally observed in many continents, in Africa, in Asia, on the American continent, too, where there has been fantastic farming practices to further develop healthy soils.

So, the Global Soil Partnership that the FAO has built should be enhanced. I think it is a good initiative. I also think that the work of the "4 per 1000 platform", which is an international platform including FAO but also many governments, as well as international organizations is important. It is a platform for research but it is also a platform for action where, in fact, we share experience.

And I have participated in some of their workshops and seminars, recently in Johannesburg, for example, where I found that there were excellent initiatives that were adapted to the local context. So this is the kind of initiative that we should support and enhance.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The second question is: Smallholders and family farmers and fishers, especially in Asia and other developing countries are facing difficulties in accessing technical assistance and innovative technologies to tackle impacts on climate change. How should FAO strengthen its role in this regard?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

It's an important question. Smallholders represent an overwhelming majority of the farmers in the world, so they also contribute significantly to our food security. So we need to focus our energy and our resources. Not saying that the other ones do not need our attention, but I think that it is important that we support all the smallholders. And here, there are many ways, of course, to achieve what you say which is how do we help these smallholders to get access to advice, training, and to build their capacity.

There is one innovation, which I think can bring a lot to this, which is digitalization. And it has already started, although there is a lot to be done. But I think that this is a fantastic innovation, a very transformative one. It's not just another innovation because for the price of a phone call, you can access many information and services. It has already started, I have met with many start-uppers but also farmers who are already using these digital services and I think that here FAO has a role to play to make sure that we work with governments, as well as a digital stakeholders so that we develop connectivity in rural areas, so that also we ensure that we make these techniques and technologies affordable.

I'm thinking about, you know, the cost of mobile phones for very poor smallholders, very vulnerable. It is important that we find solution there. And then it can be fantastic because it helps to provide them service, access to the market, advice, alerts on animal health, plant health, problems. And then FAO could also put at the disposal of the entrepreneurs in this area its knowledge, its expertise so that it disseminates more effectively the knowledge and the expertise it has. And helps entrepreneurs to build new services that help farmers and, in particular, the poorest and the smallest holder.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

I have another follow-up question on climate change. As we know that many international organizations are doing important work on climate change, how would you differentiate FAO's role based on its comparative advantage?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I think, you are right in saying that climate change is making the headlines and there are many organizations regional and international working on this, which is also necessary since we need to take bold action. I think FAO is responsible for the development and the success of sectors who are providers of solutions for climate change. I am thinking, in particular, about agriculture and forestry. Of course,

they are also contributing but they are providing solutions for climate change and they are also the sectors that are immediately and already affected by climate change.

So, the way I see it is that since FAO has initiated work in this area, it should maybe use all the forums where climate change is being discussed, adaptation, mitigation, to make sure that these sectors, agriculture, fisheries, forestry have a voice because they can provide solutions and they need to be supported. That's the way I see the link between FAO and climate change.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Observer for Thailand)

The next question is: Capacity building is important to assist Member States, particularly the small island developing states, and also other developing countries. As such, the establishment of capacity-building centres or other knowledge-sharing platforms at the regional level, for example, the World Fisheries University, could provide education and technical service to support this effort. Please share your views about the importance of the capacities.

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I see the role of FAO in the fishery sector as very important, very preeminent both in terms of helping to promote and support both governments as well as stakeholders in implementing the code for responsible fisheries.

But there is also a particularity in this sector, which is the importance of regional commissions, which are responsible for conservation and management of fisheries resources. That is very unique. What is also unique, and maybe I shall highlight that, because we've talked a lot about how we should work with the private sector, many of these regional organizations include representatives of fishermen and women, which I find very useful.

I think that we need to continue to support and to strengthen the support of FAO through this regional commission and, not only helping to manage, on the basis of scientific evidence, the resources but also to build more capacity in the countries...

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the representative of the European Regional Group. Finland, you have the floor.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

The European Regional Group has the pleasure to put the last questions of this long day. So, Madame Geslain-Lanéelle, our first question is on the governance structure of FAO. How should the system of delegation of authority and reporting lines be built?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Mon expérience d'encadrement supérieur me conduit à dire qu'il est important dans une organisation de cette ampleur, de cette taille-là, d'avoir un système robuste de délégation de responsabilité, de l'autorité donc du directeur général aux différents managers.

Donc, un système de cascade de délégation de pouvoir, avec des mécanismes de «reporting» et de contrôle, évidemment. Mais ce qui est important, dans une organisation comme celle-là, c'est de s'assurer qu'on donne un pouvoir, des responsabilités aux managers; qu'on utilise le principe de subsidiarité; que les décisions soient prises au niveau le plus adéquat et pas tout en haut; à chaque niveau, sa responsabilité, avec évidemment une chaîne de commandement claire, des mécanismes de «reporting» et de contrôle.

C'est important si on veut être efficace et si on veut aussi éviter la bureaucratie; ça évidemment, c'est une chose contre laquelle il faut se battre en permanence et mon expérience de 30 ans dans les services publics, à la fois français et européens, m'amène à dire que c'est un combat qui n'est jamais fini.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Our following question is on partnerships. What are the relevant partners and actors with whom FAO should strengthen its cooperation over the next four years and why?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Il faut travailler avec les gouvernements. Il faut travailler avec les organisations régionales et internationales. Plus de coopération, d'efficacité, je l'ai dit, les agences des Nations Unies, le PAM, le FIDA, mais aussi le PNUD, le PNUE que j'ai rencontrés, le HCR, l'OMS, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, les organisations régionales, l'OIE que je n'oublie pas, il faut aussi travailler avec tous les acteurs, c'est important. Il faut qu'on parle avec les acteurs, il faut qu'on travaille avec eux, sans perdre de vue qu'on n'est pas là pour défendre des agendas et des particuliers, ni des intérêts commerciaux. Donc, il faut plus de coopération, plus d'ouverture, plus de dialogue et plus de transparence avec tous ces acteurs-là.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

The following question is on management and oversight. What concrete steps would you take to address the deficits in FAO's Human Resources Management that the Inspector General has identified?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Dans le rapport auquel vous faites référence, donc le dernier rapport du Bureau de l'Inspecteur général, il y a effectivement un certain nombre de recommandations, en particulier sur la question de la gestion des ressources humaines, et notamment, si je me souviens bien, il y a quelques observations sur la nécessité d'améliorer la bonne adéquation entre les profils recherchés, les besoins de l'Organisation et les recrutements qui sont opérés.

Je crois que plusieurs managers de l'Organisation ont fait état d'inquiétudes qu'ils avaient sur la qualité et l'adéquation d'un certain nombre de personnes recrutées par rapport aux besoins de l'Organisation.

Donc cela rejoint ce que je disais tout à l'heure sur la manière dont je traiterais ces sujets. C'est effectivement de concevoir une politique, une stratégie, pour cette Organisation, de gestion de la connaissance, des talents et de l'expertise qui permette de traiter ces questions-là à court terme, mais aussi à moyen terme.

Une Organisation comme la FAO, qui est une Organisation de la connaissance, a absolument besoin de renforcer sa stratégie et d'avoir une vision à court et moyen termes sur ces questions-là.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

The following question is: How do you want to improve FAO's accountability system?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

D'abord, je pense qu'il faut renforcer... No, I will speak English, sorry. First of all, I think it is important to strengthen everywhere in the Organization and in relation with the governing bodies' transparency, access to information.

Then, when it comes to accountability, I think that what is important is that the Governing Bodies of this Organization are provided with sufficient, but not too much, information that is sufficient, well-presented information, taking into account, of course, the strategies, the priorities that we have defined and what we want to achieve.

And here I think when it comes to - having worked, in particular, over the last months very thoroughly on the budget of this Organization, I think that we can make it more easy to use and we can improve the accountability and strengthen the result-based management of this organization. So I will take action on this particular subject.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

A question on repositioning as a UN development system, how does FAO need to change to deliver under the new system?

Mme Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

D'abord je pense que la FAO, en tant qu'Organisation des Nations Unies, ne peut pas rester à l'écart de cette réforme du système de développement, dont l'objectif est plus d'efficacité, plus de synergie, plus d'impact, plus de coopération, ce qui va effectivement dans le bon sens. C'est une réforme importante,

voulue par le Secrétaire général et donc cette Organisation doit résolument s'engager dans cette action-là. Il faut qu'elle le fasse évidemment dans le respect de la gouvernance de l'Organisation.

Donc je serai attentive à travailler étroitement avec les organes de gouvernance. Je serai aussi attentive à faire en sorte qu'on soit constamment à la recherche de l'efficacité. Je ferai en sorte aussi qu'on s'attache à ce que cela produise des solutions gagnant-gagnant pour tout le monde, pour l'Organisation et pour le travail de coopération avec les autres organisations des Nations Unies. Je pense en particulier à un sujet qui est assez délicat, qui est la question de la présence de l'Organisation dans les différents pays.

J'y suis attachée, au niveau régional, au niveau subrégional, au niveau national, j'ai entendu beaucoup d'entre vous me dire que c'était très important. Je pense que dans beaucoup de pays que j'ai visités, je pense encore récemment à l'Afrique du Sud, on a des bâtiments qui regroupent les différentes organisations des Nations-Unies, quand c'est possible, c'est bien. Mais je note aussi que dans certaines situations, ça pourrait contribuer à accroître les coûts.

Il faudra être attentif à ce point-là, et donc une fois de plus, je serai attentive à travailler en étroite relation avec vous, à faire en sorte qu'on recherche l'efficacité et qu'on n'accroisse pas les dépenses dans la mise en œuvre de cette réforme. Mais une fois de plus, la FAO ne peut pas rester à l'écart de cette réforme-là.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

One last question: What actions would you undertake to overcome the divide among FAO Members?

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

I will gather, I will work, and I will build consensus and I will gather as many countries around the project and my priorities.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Ms Geslain-Lanéelle for her closing remarks. You have five minutes.

Ms Catherine GESLAIN-LANÉELLE (France)

Ministers, Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentleman, I would like to thank you for today's exchange. I will continue to listen to all of you as I have done in recent months.

Becoming the Director-General of FAO, first and foremost means being at the service of all. It is neither a country nor a region that will lead the Organization. You can count on my enthusiasm, my professional experience, my leadership, my ability to mobilize teams and partners around the shared vision and project to the benefit of the 194 Member Countries. I will be accountable to each and every one of you. I will be a driving force for new initiatives in close cooperation with you, with the governing bodies of this Organization.

My guiding principles will be cooperation, openness, transparency and innovation, all forms of innovation. I will listen, I will develop a result-based culture, empower teams and mobilize their talents. I will create a working environment, which will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or abuse of power. I will build indicators in this area, in order to be transparent and accountable to you on the progress my action will deliver.

I will ensure that FAO remains our common house, an important United Nations Agency, which helps us to succeed where everyone feels that their voice is heard, that they are respected, recognized, supported, and fairly represented.

Wherever you live, in a small island affected by climate change, in a forest or a coastal area, in a semi-arid region with insufficient agriculture productivity, in a very productive region where you need to restore the quality of water or soil, in a region affected by animal disease or plant pests that damage your production capacity or in a region where you aim at developing your exports, I want FAO to assist each country to find and implement science-based and fit for purpose solutions.

I want to be elected to work with you, with stakeholders, with investors, to transform our food systems and make them more sustainable and efficient. Together, we will roll out robust, innovative, and locally appropriate solutions. Together, we will bolster a technical cooperation and empower stakeholders. Together, we will attract more investment to create jobs in rural areas. Together, we will deliver sustainable food for all. This is the commitment I wish to make to you today.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen that brings us to the end of today's very interesting session.

We will reconvene tomorrow morning at 11.00 hours in the Red Room for the Adoption of the Report, followed by the item on *Developments in Fora of Importance for the mandate of FAO* and the Debrief on the Field Visit to Asia.

The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 18:01 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 01

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.01

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
12 April 2019

The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 11.15 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 11 h 15
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 11.15
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Eighth Meeting of the 161st Session of the FAO Council to order.

We start this morning with the Adoption of the Report. Please ensure that you have the relevant document before you: CL 161/Draft Report.

I now invite Ms Jiani Tian, Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to present the report.

Ms Jiani TIAN (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

It is my great honour and pleasure to work with the Members of Drafting Committee for the 161st Session of the Council.

I will briefly report our work to the Council. The Drafting Committee was held on 10 April at 15.30 hours for only one session. It lasted about five hours. We made our best efforts to stay as close to the discussion and the conclusions of the ICC in the plenary.

In particular, we were very careful to drop the parts for which it was very difficult to reach consensus. In this regard, we strictly followed the verbatim and ICC's conclusion and we tried to avoid repeating or reopening the debate and making changes to the substance.

The work of Drafting Committee went quite smoothly because of the collective wisdom of Members and the excellent job done by our distinguished ICC, Mr Mehboob, for the very precise conclusions from the plenary.

The Members of the Drafting Committee were: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Cape Verde, Chile, Egypt, Finland, India, Japan, Kenya, Romania, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, in the spirit of the consensus, they were constructively helpful and kindly supportive throughout the whole session.

It was a very joyful experience to work with all of you. We just have a very light editorial change in the paragraph under item 7, paragraph 1 point e). It's on page eight of the Draft Report, the second line, taking into account that the internal audit findings, all the items should be "expressed their concerns" on the findings, not implementation, we strictly stick to the verbatim.

So, now the change should be, "expressed their concerns on the findings of the internal audit." Sorry for these very small editorial changes but we already reached consensus in the Drafting Committee.

My sincere appreciation also goes to our Secretariat and the messengers and interpreters for their hard work. Without you we would not have been able to achieve this result very smoothly and efficiently. Again, I thank you and I recommend to adopt the report en bloc.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to extend my appreciation to you and to the Members of the Drafting Committee for the excellent work done. As suggested by the Chair, would the Council agree to adopt the Report en bloc?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Of course, any linguistic observations should be communicated in writing to the Secretariat for inclusion in the Report.

With this, the Report of the 161st Session of the FAO Council is adopted.

I now invite the Director-General to address the Council.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Khalid Mehboob, Independent Chairperson of the Council, Members of the Council, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, let me start by commending all of you for another successful Council.

As I said last Monday, it was really important that the Council reach a consensus, not only on the level of the regular budget but on many other issues.

The Council has done it with a recommendation on the regular budget level for the third consecutive time.

Congratulations to all of you.

I would like also to thank all of you for welcoming the proposal to allocate more funding to promote nutrition sensitive and sustainable food systems with a focus on tackling obesity. And also more funding to foster innovation, including digital and information technologies, which are new areas for FAO to develop.

I think that with this we, the Secretariat and Members together, have prepared a very comprehensive and robust programme of work and budget for the next biennium. This paves the way for the next Director-General to start his or her functions with FAO's moving forward, based on a clear strategic objective and a solid framework.

Let me also commend the Council for the decision to develop a draft conference resolution on AMR as well as for endorsing the resolution on sustainable agriculture approaches, including agroecology. These two resolutions are a good example of how FAO membership and management can work together successfully to address sensitive matters.

I am also pleased that the Council has agreed on the way forward to develop a strategy on biodiversity before 2020. This will be a key instrument for FAO to promote sustainable agricultural practices as well as an important contribution to the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Furthermore, I want to thank the Council for welcoming the establishment of an award in relation to Zero Hunger, especially awarding actions from civil society. I hope this award will inspire people and institutions in the fight against hunger and all forms of malnutrition around the world.

Since the onset of the Zero Hunger programme, I have been highlighting that this is not a government issue. It is not the government who eradicates hunger but the whole society. So, the participation of civil actors, including farmers, is essential and I am happy that now FAO will publicly recognise their support.

DIRECTOR GENERAL

Excelencias, Señoras y Señores. Me gustaría terminar mi alocución en español. Como saben, esta es la última vez que participo en una sesión del Consejo antes de la elección del nuevo o nueva Directora General, o Director General. Quisiera destacar que en estos más de siete años creo que hemos logrado cambiar la forma de trabajo de la FAO, especialmente respecto a la asistencia técnica que brindamos a los Países Miembros.

Antes el trabajo de la FAO en terreno era bastante limitado, teniendo por base casi exclusivamente recursos del Programa de Cooperación Técnica. Asignábamos algunos recursos propios como una especie de *seed money*; preparábamos un proyecto piloto, máximo alrededor de unos 300 000 dólares. Y si los resultados de esas experiencias eran recomendables, intentábamos aprobar un proyecto mayor de unos tres millones financiado por algún donante o por el propio gobierno del país.

Ahora esa dinámica ha cambiado radicalmente. Hemos hecho una gran inversión en la descentralización reforzando, sobre todo, las oficinas regionales y subregionales. Para dar una idea del éxito del proceso de descentralización respecto a la movilización de recursos, debo decir que en 2018 más del 90 por ciento de las contribuciones voluntarias que recibe la Organización son movilizadas en el terreno, de forma descentralizada. Repito, menos del 10 por ciento se moviliza acá en la sede.

Además, hemos buscado trabajar cada vez más en asociación, no solamente con otras agencias del Sistema de Naciones Unidas, pero también con el sector privado y con organizaciones de la sociedad

civil. Incluso, nuestras principales publicaciones, como el SOFI, por ejemplo, ahora son elaboradas en colaboración con otras agencias y organizaciones.

Todo ese esfuerzo ya está siendo reconocido. Permítanme referirme nuevamente a la reciente evaluación del *Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network* (MOPAN), y leer una parte de ella. Empiezo: “la FAO ha fortalecido su desempeño en términos de una gestión operativa más sólida y un mayor compromiso con las asociaciones. Internamente, eso ha sido acompañado por cambios profundos y la forma en que la FAO organiza su trabajo.

Implementar esas reformas mientras se opera con un presupuesto regular de crecimiento cero ha requerido una adaptación significativa. Externamente, el nuevo enfoque ha reforzado el compromiso de la FAO con la descentralización y el trabajo en asociación. Esas reformas aún están en marcha y llevarán algún tiempo implementarlas por completo. La evidencia de la evaluación sugiere que la FAO es actualmente altamente valorada entre sus socios.” Fin de la cita del reporte de MOPAN.

Creo que eso significa, entre otras cosas, que ya no estamos limitados a pequeños proyectos piloto, como si fuéramos una ONG. La FAO es reconocida como una organización internacional. Somos ahora una agencia que apoya a sus Miembros a elaborar, implementar proyectos, grandes y pequeños, y programas especialmente en lo que se refiere al impacto del cambio climático sobre la seguridad alimentaria.

Por ejemplo, con respecto al Global Environment Facility (GEF), la FAO mantiene actualmente una cartera de 179 proyectos en 132 países con un valor de USD 710 millones. Y la semana pasada hemos sometido nuevos proyectos al GEF por un monto de más de USD 200 millones. Con relación al Fondo Verde para el Clima, estamos apoyando actualmente más de 50 países. La FAO ha sometido seis grandes proyectos al Fondo Verde este año. De ellos han sido ya aprobados por valor de más de USD 200 millones.

El hecho es que la FAO tiene hoy mayor proyección, reconocimiento en el escenario internacional.

Quisiera concluir destacando que cuando asumí el puesto de Director General, hace más de siete años, dije que “no iba a poder hacer nada, excepto lo que podríamos hacer juntos, el Secretariado y los Países Miembros.” Yo creo que podemos decir que juntos estamos construyendo una nueva FAO. Muchas gracias por el apoyo recibido.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Item 12. Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

Point 12. Évolution des débats au sein d’autres instances intéressant la FAO

Tema 12. Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO

CL 161/INF/4

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, as the Council draws to an end I would like to express my appreciation to the Members, to the Director-General, the Senior Management of the Organization and the Secretariat, in particular those behind the scenes, for an excellent session.

The Council has once again reached consensus on the budget level for 2020-21 – a significant achievement.

This exceptional outcome is an example of the excellent spirit of consensus that underpins the work of the Council and strengthens the governance process, thereby strengthening the Organization as a whole. As ICC, and previously as Chairperson of the Finance Committee, as well as member of the Finance Committee and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, consensus has always been my overriding objective.

Our joint commitment and efforts towards consensus building have been strengthened through our regular and informal consultations on a number of key issues that have provided opportunities for frank and open discussions, and have resulted in renewed and increased cooperation and trust amongst Members and between Members and the Organization.

In this regard, my appreciation also goes to the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups for the excellent manner in which we have collaborated, in particular through our shared desire for improving the working methods of the Council. These working methods, which we have implemented over the past sessions, have decisively contributed to an improved decision making process.

The same team spirit has also permeated our proceedings at this Council session. For this, my appreciation goes to all the Members of the Council. There has been a marked improvement in the interventions, mostly Regional Group statements, which are now more focused on constructively addressing the issues submitted to Council for consideration.

This is a somewhat historic session as it is the last one together with the Director-General, Mr José Graziano da Silva. This prompts me to look back over the excellent collaboration that has marked our work together since I took office. Director-General, I wish to thank you for the collegial and constructive manner in which we have collaborated.

Finally, I once again wish to convey a special word of appreciation to all the staff working behind the scenes who have ensured the smooth functioning of the session and of course my appreciation also goes to the Secretary-General and to the Assistant Secretary-General for all the support provided.

We will now continue with item 12, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information only. The relevant document is CL 161/INF/4.

After item 12 we will have the debrief on the field visit to Asia, which took place at the end of 2018.

I also wish to inform the Council that a request has been received from the FAO Staff Bodies to address the Council. The statement will be delivered after the briefing on the field visit.

The Council will be given presentations on FAO's participation and contribution in other international fora which are of relevance to FAO's mandate.

Following the delivery of all the presentations I will open the floor for questions.

The first topic on "Global Initiatives to Support Countries in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Monitoring: Recent Decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG SDGs)" will be presented by Mr Pietro Gennari, Chief Statistician.

While we search for Mr Gennari, who should have been here, we will move to the second presentation. Our second speaker today is Mr Manuel Barange, Director of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Resources Division, who will make a presentation on the "International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science Policy Nexus", which will be held in Rome from 19 to 21 November 2019.

We will take a brief pause.

All of the members of the Secretariat are now here but before I proceed, I see Brazil has asked for the floor.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

This is the second time we have to face this awkward situation of the Council waiting for the Secretariat.

We all understand that it should be a normal and obvious procedure. If someone from the Secretariat is going to address the Council, they should be here earlier and not make the Council wait or, which is even worse, interrupt the session in order to wait for the Secretariat.

This is the second time I make this kind of intervention. I regret having to make this kind of intervention but it's becoming normal procedure. I'd request that you stress the importance of a normal and professional attitude from the Secretariat towards the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree and will ensure that this is not repeated.

The first topic on “Global Initiatives to Support Countries in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Monitoring: Recent Decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG SDGs)” will be presented by Mr Pietro Gennari, Chief Statistician.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician)

I would like to update you on two key meetings that took place last month that will have an important bearing on FAO and SDG monitoring.

Firstly, the ninth Interagency and Expert Group (IAEG) on SDG indicators meeting took place from 25 to 28 March.

The IAEG approved the methodology of SDG indicator 14.7.1 on economic benefits of sustainable fisheries, which was the last FAO-relevant SDG indicator still under development. With this decision, countries are now able to report on all 21 indicators under FAO custodianship.

Another key topic discussed was the 2020 Comprehensive Review of the SDG Indicator Framework. Preliminary informal consultations will be held until June 2019, whereas between July and August there will be global consultation regarding the new proposals. In principle, there is a possibility of adding, deleting, or replacing SDG indicators, but trying to keep the overall number of SDG indicators unchanged. Additional indicators will only be considered if they already have an established methodology and data available for most countries.

Within this context, the IAEG has begun scrutinizing SDG indicators that have an approved methodology but no country data. Of the FAO-relevant indicators, 2.4.1 (sustainable agriculture) and 5.a.1/5.a.2 (women’s access to land) have been identified, and FAO has been asked to prepare a data collection plan by May 2019.

The second meeting is the 50th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which was held in New York from 5 to 8 March 2019. The Commission is the apex entity of the global statistical system, bringing together the Chief Statisticians of Member States and international organizations.

Among its key decisions, the UN Statistical Commission: requested the IAEG-SDG to continue its work on data disaggregation to fulfil the ambition of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind; called for an immediate strengthening of the existing mechanisms of coordination of the UN statistical system to improve global SDG reporting; stressed the challenges that many countries still face in producing SDG data and reiterated the urgent need for increased resources and coordinated statistical capacity-building; supported the establishment of an innovative funding mechanism to respond in an efficient manner to the priorities of national statistical systems, with a goal to mobilize both domestic and international funds.

More specifically on the proposed funding mechanism, the Commission agreed to the establishment of a fully demand-driven Development Data Funding Facility based on country priorities and focused on statistical infrastructure and cross cutting data sources.

This Funding Facility would thus complement sectoral funding mechanisms that support the production of specific SDG indicators, like the ones established at FAO.

In terms of governance, the Steering Committee would mainly comprise members of the UN Statistical Commission, whereas the Secretariat would be housed in the World Bank to facilitate the mobilization of International Development Assistance (IDA) funding, following the model of the “50 by 2030 initiative”.

The Funding Facility will be launched at the third UN World Data Forum in October 2020, in Bern, Switzerland. The “Bern Network on Financing Data for Development”, of which FAO is a member, is actively working to organize this event.

I would now like to turn to the progress made by countries in reporting on FAO-relevant SDG indicators since the beginning of the process. Firstly, as we can see on this graph, the number of SDG indicators under FAO custodianship for which data have been globally reported has steadily increased over the past three years, from 10 in 2017 to 16 in 2019. This increase is mainly due to new data being released for recently upgraded indicators.

This second graph shows that the average number of countries reporting on the 21 SDG indicators have also risen steadily, going from 29 percent in 2017 to 42 percent in 2019. These average figures mask the fact that for seven of the FAO-relevant SDG indicators, the average share of reporting countries is less than 15 percent. Data gaps are therefore still vast and progress is insufficient to ensure that the majority of countries, but especially developing countries, will be able to monitor all SDG indicators in the next few years.

One of the key tools that FAO has deployed to tackle these data gaps and identify key national priorities for capacity development is a global SDG Data Gap Assessment. The survey was sent to all National SDG focal points in December 2018. To date, 109 countries have completed the questionnaire, which primarily collects information on: the overall coordination mechanism for national SDG reporting; capacity gaps and plans to produce each of the 21 SDG indicators under FAO custodianship; and data availability of basic food and agriculture statistics underpinning the 21 indicators, and periodicity of main data collection tools.

The results of the questionnaire are currently being examined, and the full report will be released in May 2019. Preliminary analysis, however, reveals that key data collection vehicles such as farm surveys, household surveys, forest inventories, fish stock assessments are not regularly conducted in the majority of countries and 63 percent of countries requested assistance for strengthening institutional and technical capacity and supporting more regular data collection.

Moreover, even when such data collection tools are carried out regularly, they do not collect the data needed for producing the FAO-relevant SDG indicators. This, at the same time, represents an opportunity to ensure greater country coverage of SDG reporting, as these survey tools could be easily upgraded to include the FAO indicators and we have 73 percent of countries requesting technical assistance to upgrade their national surveys.

In yet other cases, the basic data for compiling the SDG indicators are available, but are not transmitted to FAO because of the lack of coordination among the data producers at national level.

A number of ongoing initiatives, funded by both corporate and extra-budgetary resources, are already supporting countries in SDG monitoring, but are certainly not sufficient.

Overall USD 3.8 million in corporate resources have been leveraged over the two last biennia to cover the most urgent needs and priorities, and in particular develop e-learning courses, organize regional trainings and technical assistance missions, and for communication and outreach activities.

A further USD 2 million in corporate resources were mobilized through regional and country-level technical cooperation projects

Regarding extra-budgetary resources, a number of initiatives such as The “Voices of the Hungry” project for food security statistics, the “50 by 2030 initiative” for farm-related statistics, the Global Forest Resources Assessments and the GEMI project for water-related indicators, have been successful in mobilizing donors’ support. However, these initiatives only cover a limited number of countries and pertain to only a limited number of SDG indicators.

Overall, it is clear that these initiatives are either insufficient in coverage or too specific in scope to ensure that all countries will be enabled to produce all 21 SDG indicators within the next few years and use these for national policy making. A more comprehensive and integrated approach is needed to address the challenges highlighted by the SDG Data Gap Assessment. To this end, FAO has developed an integrated strategy on Measuring SDG Progress that focuses on five main areas: development, testing and documentation of methods; development of Statistics Strategic plans that align with the SDG Indicator Framework; supporting the implementation of new cost-effective data collection tools; supporting countries in upgrading of existing data collection tools to produce FAO-SDG indicators; and improving analysis and use of FAO-SDG indicators in decision-making.

For supporting its implementation FAO has developed a Multi-Donor Umbrella Programme, which builds on and integrates all the above-mentioned specific extra-budgetary initiatives.

This Umbrella Programme, which has been included in FAO's 2019 Business Development Portfolio with a budget of 21 million, has already received USD 1 million out of the FAO's Multipartner Programme Support Mechanism in 2019.

A roundtable will be organized in June 2019 to garner further support and all resource partners will be invited to attend.

CHAIRPERSON

Our second speaker today is Mr Manuel Barange, Director of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Resources Division, who will make a presentation on the "International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science Policy Nexus", which will be held in Rome from 19 to 21 November 2019.

Mr Manuel BARANGE (Director of Fisheries and Agriculture Policy and Resources Division)

Good morning, Excellencies, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen. Let me first tell you something personal. I have been at FAO for three years as Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture, but for the previous 25 years as an academic, as a government researcher, I've always looked at FAO as the source of information, as a place where information is analysed, assessed, interpreted and communicated to countries and to the broader community in order to facilitate the link between evidence and policy development.

This symposium intends to do exactly that, mark a time where we feel it's important to establish a number of principles and a number of evidences on the link between science and policy.

This symposium was endorsed by the 160th Session of the FAO Council, as most of you will remember, in December 2018, and the reason for it is because we feel that fisheries is at a crossroads. A crossroads because on the one hand we had record production of fish in 2017 as well a record amount of consumption worldwide.

There are increased expectations on oceans as a provider of food at a time where we need to, by 2050, feed between 9.5 and 10 billion people, and an increased recognition of the role of fish and fisheries, in food security and nutrition. On the other hand, there are profound concerns in many of us over the state of the marine environment, including pollution, and plastic pollution in the ocean in particular, overexploitation, as 33 percent of fish stocks are over-exploited, and biodiversity loss.

For this reason, to analyse this crossroads, we want to have this symposium that tries to answer a number of questions. This will be very much a technical symposium that will try to analyse what the status of both global and regional fisheries' sustainability is, using the SOFIA Report. This report is the most-accessed publication that FAO produces every two years, also in the context of SDG14, indicator 14.4.1, that specifically deals with sustainability of fisheries.

We need to analyse what the challenges are to improve the sustainability of fish resources at global, regional and also local levels. Several challenges exist, from policy challenges, including technological, institutional, market and consumer challenges, particularly in the area of climate change, which is changing the availability of resources for many of us.

Thirdly, we want to analyse what constitutes evidence and how do we ensure an evidence basis for decision-making at a time when the volume of information is exceeding the capacity of any individual and organisation to assess and validate one at a time.

Fourthly and perhaps the most important one, what society expects from marine and inland fisheries in the 21st Century.

The symposium will have eight sessions, which are very simple in the structure. Two keynote addresses to set the scene followed by panel discussion on the items. The sessions will take into consideration that sustainability is a three-legged stool composed of ecological, social and economic sustainability, which need to be addressed concurrently, and furthermore that sustainability in Fisheries operates in the context of the broader sustainability issues of other sectors, and nature as a whole.

The symposium is organized and run by FAO but we are building a partnership of institutions and organisations around the world that see the need to provide support to this symposium. This partnership

includes Members, intergovernmental organizations, civil society and the private sector, who have all been consulted on the design and description of the sessions. They will also be consulted on the types of questions put towards the panel members and following keynotes addresses.

The symposium will not be a one-off event and will not occur in isolation. The session descriptions are already published on the web, with registration opening in May 2019.

Importantly, there will be two immediate outputs expected from the symposium. Firstly, the adoption of a report, which will be presented to the 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries in July 2020, just six months after the symposium has taken place. Secondly, we aim to incorporate the main conclusions and recommendations of the symposium, into a high level declaration to be submitted to the Committee on Fisheries, the Bureau of the Committee on Fisheries, for discussion and development in order to present it at the 25th Anniversary celebrations of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which takes place during the Committee on Fisheries 34th Session.

It will not escape you that this is a very important moment. It has been a quarter of a century since the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was agreed to, which has been the basis for most of the management development that has taken place around the world over the last 25 years. Appropriately, we will use the opportunity for a celebration of a high-level declaration that countries can support and endorse, particularly answering the question what do we want from fisheries in the 21st Century.

CHAIRPERSON

The next speaker is Mr Marco Sánchez Cantillo, Deputy Director of the Agricultural Development Economics Division, who will make a presentation on the “State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World”, collaboration amongst Rome-based Agencies and other UN Agencies.

Mr Marco SÁNCHEZ CANTILLO (Deputy Director, Agricultural Development Economics Division)

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, today I will be briefing you on the state of the production of the report “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” which is popularly known as SOFI within FAO. For that, I will be giving you a little bit of background so that you understand the logic towards the report that we are producing in 2019.

The 2017 edition of this report marked the start of a new era in monitoring progress towards achieving a world without hunger and malnutrition, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The scope of the report was broadened to include a focus, not only on food security, but also nutrition, for monitoring SDG 2 implementation. With this expanded scope, FAO together with IFAD and WFP, reached out to UNICEF and WHO in the UN system to bring them on board to collaborate in preparing the SOFI report. The report contains two parts, I will be briefly speaking about each of them.

Part 1, in a nutshell, provides the latest estimates and evidence on progress towards ending hunger and ensuring access to food security, which is SDG target 2.1 and ending all forms of malnutrition which is SDG target 2.2. In the past two years, part 1 of SOFI noticed that after a prolonged decline, the number of chronically undernourished people in the world was on the rise. The number of undernourished people was estimated to have increased to 821 million in 2017. SOFI 2019, will help us understand if this unwelcomed trend is proven to be sustained. The prevalence of severe food insecurity, based on the food insecurity experience scale, FIES, was introduced in 2018, to provide an estimate of the proportion of the population facing serious constraints on their ability to obtain safe, nutritious and sufficient food. The estimates are based on data collected by FAO using the FIES in more than 140 countries worldwide.

In 2017, close to 10 percent of the world population, was exposed to severe food insecurity. The prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity, also based on the FIES, will be introduced this year to provide an estimate of the proportion of people experiencing, not only severe levels of food insecurity, but also moderate constraints on food access that affect quality of diet. This is SDG indicator 2.12 of the global SDG monitoring framework.

Part 1 will also present the latest estimates and trends of nutrition indicators that form part of the SDG monitoring framework and indicators, that refer to global nutrition targets, agreed by the World Health

Assembly. Part 1, of the last two years, have shown or have drawn special attention to the alarming situation of rising rates of child overweight and adult obesity in more regions of the world. Last year, SOFI showed how food insecurity contributes to overweight and obesity, as well as undernutrition.

This year, for the first time, the link between food insecurity and multiple forms of malnutrition, with special attention to overweight and obesity, will be examined through the lense of national survey data sets complimented with conjugated statuts. Furthermore, evidence of the successive failure of policies to combat overweight and obesity will also be presented.

Now I talk about Part 2, which, on the other hand, provides an in-depth themed analysis of the underlying factors and drivers behind the observed food security trends that are reported in Part 1. And it also links progress towards improved food security and nutrition to other SDGs. In the last two years, SOFI has pointed to three key drivers behind the recent increase in hunger, including three, conflict, climate and economic slowdowns and downturns.

In 2017, SOFI underlined that the failure to reduce world hunger and malnutrition was closely associated with increasing conflicts and violence in several parts of the world. And that efforts to fight hunger and malnutrition must go hand in hand with those to sustain peace. In 2017, last year, SOFI showed that increasing climate variability and extremes are also a key force behind the recent rise in global hunger and one of the leading causes of severe food crises, calling for urgent action to scale up and to accelerate climate resilience policies and programmes.

This year, Part 2 of the report will look closely at the third key driver, economic slowdowns and downturns. It will focus on the evidence and the policy and programming implications with regard to four issues. One, the role of economic slowdowns and downturns in affecting people's incomes and with this, of course, food access. Second, how aggregated economic shocks and stresses are currently being triggered or intensified by other key drivers of food security and nutrition, including, of course, conflicts and climate. Third, how poverty, inequalities and marginalization are shaping outcomes from economic growth to food security and nutrition. And, last but not least, the fourth point, how to ensure that inclusive economic growth also leads to extreme poverty alleviation, reductions of inequality and sustained improvements in food security and nutrition.

With only 11 years remaining until the SDG target date of 2030, the importance of SOFI 2019 cannot be stressed enough. The report will be officially launched together with our SOFI partners, in one of the special events during the 7th session of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, in New York, in July 2019. The analysis on economic slowdowns, poverty and inequality, increase the relevance of the report to the HLPF 2019, theme of which is "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality". In this sense, SOFI 2019, will be strategically positioned to inform the High-level Political Forum and provide key advice and messages on food security and nutrition.

CHAIRPERSON

The next presentation on "Update on the Global Compact and UN Network on Migration" will be presented is Ms Junko Sazaki, Director of the Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division.

Ms Junko SAZAKI (Director, Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division)

As you know, the Global Compact was approved last year in Morocco. The world is getting smaller, people move around. In this background, in 2017, the Organization celebrated World Food Day with the theme 'Migration' with the presence of Pope Francis.

In 2018, FAO launched the SOFI report with the theme "Migration". And that is the background that the United Nations system also with the Secretary General, launched the UN Network on Migration, where the old agencies are supposed to work and then collaborate to help the government to implement Global Compact.

In this background, I would like to say what the Organization's role is. In this global forum, the Organization has been supporting Members in addressing the rural dimension of migration and its implication for rural populations, agriculture and food systems.

At global level, in 2019, the Organization will support Members in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, supporting them in developing the action plan and then also the policies, with the leadership of the resident coordinator at country level.

FAO will contribute to the work plan and working group of the UN Network on Migration and will participate in the Global Forum for Migration and Development, which is called GFMD. Furthermore, it will contribute to government led round-table discussions on Harnessing Migration for Rural Transformation and Development.

I would like to talk about the Global Compact. As you must know very well, this was adapted at the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakesh last year, December 10 2018. It was subsequently endorsed by an overwhelming majority at the United Nations General Assembly last year. And the adoption of the Compact, represents a recognition that migration is a global reality that is best managed under international cooperation.

This is the epoch making and the first time the Global Compact is ensuring safe, regulated and orderly migration in line with the SDGs. The Organization expresses its commitment to support the Member States in implementing the Global Compact and also called for increased attention to the rural dimension of migration.

FAO together with WFP, UNHCR, UNDP, had a joint side event there addressing the diversity of migrations through the sustainable rural development and food security.

In terms of implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, the Organization has finalised the FAO Migration Framework. You can see the picture right there at the corner. That ensures greater collaboration and coordination on migration at the global, regional and country level strengthening the coherence of synergy across the Organization.

And the FAO's Migration Framework presents the Organization's vision on rural migration and also spells out the rationale for the Organization's engagement on migration and also the main area of work along the migration cycle.

The framework presents very clearly, the objective of the Global Compact for Migration, and also more relevant to the FAO's work and a direct link to the Organization's thematic areas and especially also related to strategic programme objectives.

The implementation of the Global Compact is a state led process at the national and regional level. The Organization is already starting to apply the Organization's corporate Migration Framework supporting the sub-regional effort to improve cooperation on migration and achieve the objective of the Global Compact.

The United Nations Network on Migration was formally launched at the Intergovernmental Conference in December, in Marrakesh, in Morocco. The mission by the Secretary-General is to ensure effective timely coordinated United Nations system wide support. All the agencies work together to support the Member States in the implementation of the Global Compact.

There are 38 Members including the Organization, and an Executive Committee of United Nations agencies are UNDESA, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC.

The UN Capacity Development Building Mechanism means that we will be supporting the member states for capacity development itself in a coordinated effort. And also, the Migration Compact Fund will be launched in June this year.

The Organization will participate in selected working groups and UN Capacity Development Building Mechanism to make sure that the rural and agricultural dimensions on migration are taken in to consideration.

According to the IFAD Report, about 40 percent of remittances are sent back to the rural area. This is a guesstimate but we believe it is very important to address the rural dimension and diaspora communities, and make agriculture to be seen as an attractive investment, creating job opportunities for young people.

CHAIRPERSON

I now call upon Mr George Rapsomanikis, Senior Economist in the Trade and Markets Division, who will make a presentation on “Food Security and Agriculture under the G20 and G7”.

Mr George RAPSOMANIKIS (Senior Economist, Trade and Markets Division)

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to present to you the FAO’s engagement in the inter-governmental groupings during 2019.

As per established practice since 2011, FAO continues to provide support to the Group of 20 and the Group of 7, in their work on food and agriculture and development. Upon request by the presidencies of these groups, the Organization provides technical input, evidenced-based policy advice and proposals for concrete actions in the area of food security and sustainable agriculture.

In doing this, FAO coordinates with other United Nations agencies to improve the impact of the UN as a whole within the mechanism which is set up by the United Nations G20 Sherpas under the Secretary-General and Head of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Our work with the G20 has borne fruits in the form of global initiatives in food and agriculture. The agricultural market information system is a platform that enhances food market transparency by providing reliable and timely market and policy information.

The Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) has a secretariat of ten international organisations and is housed in FAO. AMIS works closely with a group on Earth observations, global agricultural monitoring, which coordinates satellite monitoring observation systems in different regions to enhance crop production projections.

The Platform for Agricultural Risk Management (PARM) enhances capacity to make risk management an integral part of policies in developing countries and PARM is housed in IFAD.

The Tropical Agricultural Platform focuses on the development of national capacities for agricultural innovation systems in the tropics and it is hosted in FAO. The technical platform on the measurement and reduction of food loss and waste is managed by the Organization and IFPRI and aims at enhancing information sharing for development metrics and policies to minimise food loss and waste.

And finally, ICT in agriculture, is an initiative that aims at promoting the discussions on digital technology applications in agriculture in the G20 and other fora. Activities on ICT and agriculture are reported by China, Germany and FAO.

In the Group of 20, Japan has assumed the Presidency in 2019, and at their request, the Organization is supporting the discussions of the G20 agricultural deputies. The work stream will lead to the G20 meeting of agricultural ministers that will be held on 11th and 12th of May 2019, in Niigata City, in Japan.

FAO, in collaboration with OECD, led the preparation of technical input to inform discussions among the G20 members. The Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia, IFAD, WFP, IPRI and the WTO all made contributions to the joint submission of a technical report on sustainable, productive and resilient agri-food systems.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will assume the G20 Presidency for 2020, and FAO is committed to supporting Saudi Arabia in the same way as it did with previous G20 Presidencies.

Turning to our work in supporting the Group of 7, the Organization is currently working towards a study on agricultural resilience to natural disasters. This work is carried out by FAO, IFAD, WFP and OECD to support a commitment made in 2017 by the G7, under the Presidency of Italy when discussions focused on agricultural risk management.

France has assumed the G7 Presidency for 2019, and we will hold a G7 Ministerial Meeting on development and education on the 4 and 5 of July 2019. Under this work stream there will be special focus on rural youth employment in the Sahel.

At the request of the G7 Presidency and to support discussions among the country members, a technical report on actions to promote rural youth employment in the Sahel has been jointly prepared by the RBAs, the Rome-based Agencies, and has been submitted to the G7 Food Security Working Group.

The United States of America will assume the G7 Presidency for 2020, and the Organization will continue to provide these inter-governmental groupings with technical input on agriculture, food security and nutrition and issues on which the Organization has a comparative advantage.

CHAIRPERSON

Our last speaker today is Mr Samuel Varas, Director of the Information Technology Division, who will make a presentation on “Digital Technology Innovation”.

Mr Samuel VARAS (Director, Information Technology Division)

It is a pleasure to be here today to talk about FAO’s approach to Technology Innovation.

I would like to structure this presentation in three major areas, one is the technological change, second the impact in the area of agriculture and food, and third, the technological innovation, how we can capture all these changes to support Members.

First, let’s go to the technology. We are in a time of accelerated technological change, with the terms ubiquity, anytime and anywhere being commonly used; with more reliable communication networks, where the 5G is one of the latest advances. The computational power grows exponentially in terms of storage and processing. The estimation of today’s storage is 1,700 exabytes, 1 exabyte is a million of terabytes. We have witnessed the first photo of a black hole this week, where millions of data (radio signal - 8 petabytes) and high-speed networks allowed to build it. Satellite images are becoming more precise and frequent, allowing their use in a routine way. This linked to the Internet of Things, where billions of sensors will be available to capture data and execute actions, are changing the way we work. This big data and the analytics behind are creating a capability to analyse any type of data almost in real time create a new scenario. The use of artificial intelligence allows us to receive advice and delegate decision making, reaching extreme automation in terms of robotics.

Hyper-connectivity is expanding fast, while physical-digital integrations, IoT, big data, augmented and virtual reality, and machine learning are changing our entire systems of living and thinking. Digitalization or de-materialization brings opportunities to create, combine, replicate and recreate things at very low cost.

We are moving from Information Technology (IT) approach to Operation Technology (OT) approach, where with hyper-connectivity and digitalization we can operate in a remote way something in almost real time.

What’s the implication for agriculture and food? Agriculture is undergoing a digital transformation, and this is happening now. Technological disruption using this exponential technology, such as cloud computing, big data and analytics, high precision remote sensing, artificial intelligence, blockchain, mobile technologies, Internet of Things, and robotic joined to hyper-connectivity will require a new way of approaching the agriculture and food sectors.

This transformation process will bring benefits, such as increased productivity, resilience and adaptation to climate change, improvement of food system, and new jobs associated to services. However, at the same time, there are risks that should be mitigated and incorporated into solutions we are going to deliver such as cybersecurity, property rights and data regulation, digital divide, youth and gender inclusion, and loss of traditional jobs.

Technology innovation is the mechanism to create products and services in creative and innovative ways, leapfrogging and avoiding business as usual, and building new public and private market opportunities using public and private goods, products and services in a sustainable way. For example, agriculture and food value chain could create an approach to facilitate sharing information, aiming at transparency, intermediation and simplification, reducing cost and improving time to market.

The data can provide real-time insights into people's wellbeing; target aid interventions to vulnerable groups; enable more agile, efficient and evidence-based decision-making; and better measures in progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

New frontier technologies and applications will bring possibilities to leapfrog and change paradigms to improve the programme delivery. However, traditional ITs (mobile and traditional applications) have a great potential only if we find the best way to create a good business model.

Finally, affordable access is needed, as well as better training to improve the e-literacy and reduce the digital divide, increasing inclusion of youth and gender. All these areas are waiting for solutions.

So, what are the areas of work to focus on? First, we are focusing on internal improvement of the processes and creating an innovative culture. To try to impact in the efficiency and compliance. Second, support and promote technologies in our programme delivery with a cross cutting vision. We have digital portfolios to deliver in many countries, we have solutions working with partners, like a telephonic analysis in terms of irrigation systems. We are working with water productivity and also we are working with rural areas engines. And third, supporting and influencing governments to adopt these technologies, for example we are setting an e-Agriculture initiative where we have already seven countries in the Asia-Pacific area.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to promote technological innovation as well as open innovation to increase the number of start-ups for countries, entrepreneurs and partnerships with public and private sectors to promote new inclusive and productive solutions. Business as usual is no longer valid.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings us to the end of this morning's plenary meeting. We will reconvene at 14.30 hours and continue with the debate on the presentations delivered, followed by the briefing on the field visits and the statements by the representatives of the FAO staff bodies.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

Simplemente quería consultarle, pues teníamos dos comentarios para hacer. Uno sobre el tema de las estadísticas y otro sobre el Simposio de pesca, si es el momento ahora o se hace en la tarde. Es muy breve, pero, tendríamos que dejarlo aclarado.

Mr Takami NAKADA (Japan)

I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the introduction on the G20 agriculture ministerial meeting. Please allow me to give some supplementary explanation on it.

CHAIRPERSON

We have to adjourn the meeting now because we do not have interpretation. It will be available after lunch. As I said, we have to adjourn and continue the debate in the afternoon. My same comment follows Argentina's request.

Ms Cathrine STEPHENSON (Australia)

I would just like to acknowledge and thank the Director of the Information Technology Division. I noticed he was here when we were due to start this item. And for that I thank you for the courtesy.

CHAIRPERSON

The meeting is adjourned. We will reconvene at 14.30 hours.

The meeting rose at 12:39 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 39

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.39

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-first Session Cent soixante et unième session 161.º período de sesiones
Rome, 8-12 April 2019 Rome, 8-12 avril 2019 Roma, 8-12 de abril de 2019
NINTH PLENARY SESSION NEUVIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE NOVENA SESIÓN PLENARIA
12 April 2019

The Ninth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.40 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La neuvième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la novena sesión plenaria a las 14.40
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 12. Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO (continued)
Point 12. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO (suite)
Tema 12. Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO (continuación)
CL 161/INF/4

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, I call this Ninth Plenary Meeting of the 161st Session of the Council to order.

We will continue with item 12 *Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO*, and I open the floor for any questions and comments on the presentations delivered before the lunch break.

I have a list of speakers so I give the floor to Argentina.

Sra. María Cristina BOLDORINI (Argentina)

En primer lugar, deseamos agradecer las presentaciones de la Secretaría sobre los distintos temas que nos han parecido muy fructíferas e importantes. Desearíamos hacer un comentario respecto a uno de los indicadores de la primera presentación.

Hay un indicador que es el 2.4.1 que se refiere a la proporción de área agrícola bajo agricultura productiva y sostenible. Sobre este indicador, nosotros ya hicimos una referencia previamente en varias reuniones, en la reunión del Comité del Programa y en varios encuentros, porque tenemos una preocupación sobre cómo se ha elaborado este indicador y también cuáles fueron los elementos que se tuvieron como base para su desarrollo. Sobre este punto, nosotros queríamos manifestar que vamos a hacer llegar unos comentarios sobre la nota conceptual que ha preparado la Secretaría. Este es un punto.

Con respecto a la presentación sobre el Simposio sobre pesca, agradecemos mucho la presentación, ya que nos parece que realmente es una temática de la mayor importancia para todo el Organismo y también para la Argentina, nosotros apoyamos muchísimo las actividades en el Comité de Pesca y creemos que este es uno de los temas pilares de la FAO. Nos pareció interpretar que del Simposio se desearía elaborar, o como resultado del simposio, por un lado el informe del Presidente del Simposio y por otro lado una declaración de alto nivel. Si yo entendí bien —porque como fue muy rápida la presentación, tal vez hubo una malinterpretación de parte de nuestra delegación—, nosotros queríamos manifestar que hay un tema legal que siempre nos observan desde la Argentina y lo queremos manifestar., Esto es, destacamos la importancia de los simposios para toda la Organización porque participan, además de los Estados parte, una infinidad de actores que pueden enriquecer el tratamiento de un tema.

Pero, desde el punto de vista jurídico, creo que tendríamos que reflexionar sobre la conveniencia de una declaración de alto nivel emanada de ese Simposio. Simplemente, lo queríamos manifestar y luego lo conversaremos en el foro apropiado en el marco de la Organización.

Mr Takami NAKADA (Japan)

On delivering food security and agriculture on the G20 and G7, our director gave some supplementary explanation on it. First of all, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the introduction of the G20 Agriculture Ministers meeting.

As you know, Japan holds the presidency of G20 this year. We are holding the G20 Agriculture Ministers meeting from 11 to 12 May in Niigata, which is famous for its production of delicious rice, seafood and many excellent rice wines, Sake, and it also embraces a geosite.

This is the first meeting among the G20 dedicated to Ministers this year in Japan. We have chosen the sustainable agri-food sector, emerging issues and good practices as the main theme throughout the meeting. Under this theme, we will ask Ministers and participants for candid discussions on the extent of their experiences and information on some major issues such as fostering innovative human resources and new technologies, forecasting on food value chains, facilitating farmers and others in the food value chain, ensuring benefits to stakeholders and pursuing possible contributions to the achievement of the SDGs.

From 5 to 7 March, we held the first meeting of agriculture deputies in Tokyo, and through working with representatives of each country, and organizations, we had fruitful discussions throughout the meeting.

We would especially like to express our deepest gratitude to FAO for giving technical support on current trends and discussions in international society in the field of food security, agriculture pest disease and so on. We would like to ask FAO for continuous support to ensure the Agriculture Ministers meeting will be concluded successfully. Through hosting the meeting and delivering outcomes we would like to contribute to finding a solution to global challenges in agriculture and food sectors.

Finally, Japan plans to hold the Nutrition for Growth N4G summit in Tokyo in 2020, and plans to deepen discussions on food systems. Whilst the details will be provided later, Japan would like to ask for the cooperation of all countries.

Mme Isabelle OUIILLON (France)

Merci à chacun des intervenants pour leurs excellentes présentations. J'espère que nous pourrions avoir les «powerpoints» après notre réunion.

La France souhaite partager quelques éléments d'information avec les membres du Conseil s'agissant du G7 qu'elle préside. Le G7 a pour thème transversal la lutte contre les inégalités, à travers notamment la lutte contre les inégalités de destin (en favorisant particulièrement l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, l'accès à l'éducation et à des services de santé de qualité); la réduction des inégalités environnementales en protégeant notre planète et en préservant notre biodiversité; et enfin, le renforcement de la dimension sociale de la mondialisation, y compris à travers les politiques de développement et l'action pour la paix.

Le Sommet des chefs d'État aura lieu du 24 au 26 août à Biarritz.

Auparavant se tiendra une réunion des Ministres du développement le 4 juillet à Paris et celle-ci sera consacrée au Sahel. Des discussions sont prévues dans ce cadre autour des enjeux d'emplois décents pour les jeunes en milieu rural et de lutte contre la malnutrition, et vous l'avez dit, les trois organisations romaines ont fourni un document de fond pour appuyer ces travaux du G7, alimenter les réflexions et les débats, et nous en remercions chaleureusement la FAO, le FIDA et le PAM.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Le Congo souhaite d'abord remercier tous les intervenants, qui nous ont présenté d'excellents exposés. J'ai deux, sinon trois questions d'éclaircissement à poser pour mieux appréhender les sujets qui ont été développés, notamment, sur le premier exposé concernant l'initiative consistant à appuyer les pays sur les objectifs de développement durable (ODD). Deux choses ont été soulignées, la première les ressources financières, la deuxième, le renforcement des capacités. J'ai noté en particulier que sur le système de communication de rapports, à peine 15 pour cent des pays ont répondu pour transmettre leurs données.

Maintenant, un certain nombre de causes ont été soulignées, les lacunes notamment. J'aimerais vraiment, afin de mieux comprendre, savoir quelles sont les lacunes qui ont été remarquées au niveau des pays, et comment la FAO entend les combler? Je sais que cela a été dit, mais j'aimerais noter les principales lacunes, et quelles sont les suites qui ont été données.

Le deuxième point, concernant la même présentation, touche à la mobilisation des ressources. Vous avez dit avoir besoin de mobiliser 21 millions, mais jusqu'à présent à peine un million l'a été. En conséquence, une table ronde sera organisée à cet effet. Pouvez-vous nous décrire le processus, comment cela se passera-t-il au cours de la table ronde en question?

La deuxième question concerne le symposium international, notamment la pêche durable. J'ai noté avec attention les questions de pêche, qui sont en quelques sortes liées à l'économie bleue. Ma collègue de l'Argentine m'a précédé sur la question. Il y aura donc un rapport et il sera soumis au Comité des pêches. Il y aura également une déclaration de haut niveau, et je pense que là aussi il faut vraiment commencer d'ores et déjà à la préparer parce qu'un bon nombre de problèmes seront soulignés.

Aussi, est-ce que les questions de l'économie bleue seront abordées à travers ces symposiums? Comment peut-on se préparer dans ce cadre-là? Pour nous, pour le développement du bassin du Congo, c'est une question primordiale et j'aimerais avoir quelques indications à ce sujet.

Enfin, la dernière question porte sur le rapport SOFI 2019. J'ai écouté avec une attention particulière les informations sur les causes, comme nous le savons tous, de l'augmentation du nombre de personnes affamées, due aux conflits, aux changements climatiques et au ralentissement économique. Je sais que les conflits et le changement climatique ont été traités et que cette année le ralentissement économique sera la question centrale.

Est-ce qu'après avoir traité ces trois causes, il y aura un rapport? Peut-être en 2020 et il traitera de la question de ces trois causes réunies? Ou bien comment évoluent les autres questions, notamment celles du changement climatique et des conflits? Est-ce que ces causes, qui étaient auparavant principales, commencent à être surmontées? Ou sont-elles toujours au centre des préoccupations concernant la question de l'augmentation du nombre de personnes affamées dans le monde?

1Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

My questions are only directed at the Chief Statistician. First of all, I would like to thank him for introducing this item. This question is only for clarification. In the paper that was submitted CL 161/INF/4, paragraph 3 refers to “innovative global funding facility”. In his statement he mentioned development data funding facility. I presume the two are the same? If he could please clarify that.

Then it said this so-called innovative global funding facility would be channelled to the World Bank through the International Development Assistance (IDA). Well with IDA, usually the technical component of investment projects comes under grant. Will this be under the grant element of IDA? And if it is under the grant element, then second development countries are excluded, because some upper income developing countries have no access to IDA.

Then in paragraph 4 it says, “a new strategy for statistical capacity development” to develop in the field. What is this? Is this a strategy? Or is it a sort of funding arrangement to finance capacity development? I presume the 21 million refers to this but I am not so sure.

The third question, the Chief Statistician mentioned that there will be changes in addition and subtraction from a number of indicators. But he mentioned that the overall number will remain the same. Does he refer to the overall number of 254?

Sorry one last question. SDG 17 target 17.18. It refers to this area, data monitoring and accountability. And there are 5 indicators given there. Is there any progress in these 5 indicators, that indicator 17.18.1 to 17.19.2?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretariat for this amazingly rich wealth of information that has been provided to us and the intervention that preceded mine clearly showed there is appetite in the membership for discussing substantive topics, maybe what has been dealt with in this session would justify a full new session of the Council.

I really hope that from the next Council on, the important fora, will be brought back to the first day of the Council.

Having said that allow me to share with you a thought or a doubt that has come to my mind listening to what we heard before lunch. When FAO deals at policy level with issues pertaining to migration or sustaining peace, or even agroecology or innovation for agriculture, you name them, what are we talking about? Does this fall within the TCP area or does this fall within the so-called standard-setting area of FAO's work and mandate?

Like for genetic resources, IPPC, Codex, and so on and so forth. Or maybe we are missing something here. When FAO gets involved in G7, G20 activities giving its extremely useful and required contribution, for instance, is it standard-setting, is it TCP, or are we maybe missing something.

We are missing a third important category to adopt or to discuss: sort of FAO and global public goods, FAO in global policy areas, that's just food for thought for those who wish to entertain themselves in these types of philosophical questions.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I would first like to thank all the presenters. I would like to raise a question on resource mobilisation. I would have wished to have received from the Secretariat, in providing this information, information about South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation.

We know in 2019 there have been many areas, many countries, and many projects in this regard and we would have wished to have heard more about this type of cooperation. I believe we, as members of this Council, should be informed on this level. On the other hand, I have a question regarding the ICTs, my question is regarding the decentralised and regional offices, will they be constrained by the same activities much as in the headquarters?

CHAIRPERSON

Since there are no other Council members asking for the floor I go to the observers, Bangladesh. Bangladesh is not in the room. I go to United Kingdom.

Mr Neil FOURIE (Observer for the United Kingdom)

I would like to echo our French, Italian and Jordanian colleagues' appreciation for the presentations that were done before lunch, and also express the hope that they will be uploaded to the Members Gateway.

The United Kingdom welcomes FAO's collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) and other partners on the important flagship publication "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)" and thanks FAO for the presentation today.

We note with concern the continuing negative global trend on hunger and malnutrition that was first highlighted in the 2016 "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World". Reporting shows a reversal in progress particularly against SDG2 and that, based on this trajectory, the world will not meet the SDG targets related to food security and nutrition.

Clearly more needs to be done to address this worrisome trend, and ensure global and coordinated action across all stakeholders is key. We consider collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies as a crucial part of this coordinated effort to get progress towards SDG2 Zero Hunger back on track.

We look forward to the launch of this year's 2019 SOFI report in New York at the time of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2019. We encourage the RBA Principals, together with UNICEF and WHO, to increase the international focus on the need to step up and do more to address SDG2.

In this light, we also take the opportunity to underline the importance of RBA collaboration where that adds value, and look forward to hearing about progress made by the Rome Based Agencies in developing joint country strategies; a regional action plan for the Sahel; and a joint results framework to monitor progress and impact on the ground. We hope that such a framework can be made available to Members in the coming months ahead of the next informal joint meeting between the governing bodies of the three agencies.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your contributions. I will now ask the speakers to respond to the issues raised and start by passing the floor to Mr Gennari.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician)

I will take the questions as they have been submitted and first address the question of Argentina on indicator 2.4.1. Specifically the process on how the indicator was developed and the elements on which it is based.

First of all, I need to clarify that the mandate to review and decide on the methodology of the SDG indicators was given to the UN Statistical Commission and the IAEG through Resolution 70 of the UN General Assembly in September 2015 (A/RES/70/1).

This is based on the presumption that the national statistical offices act as coordinators of the entire statistical system and for this reason they are invited to build a network of focal points at country level and to nominate a nationalised SDG Coordinator for this purpose.

The list of SDG indicators was approved by the UN Statistical Commission and by the UN General Assembly in July 2017. The methodology for indicator 2.4.1 was approved by the Inter-agency and Expert Group meeting in November 2018 and approved definitively by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2019.

This happened after a long and broad consultation process, which lasted over 2 years, and which involved different institutions at country level. We had the first technical meeting in December 2016 to which we invited a number of countries.

An expert group meeting in April 2017 was held, which was followed by group consultation in October 2017 in which all nationalised SDG focal points received the proposal and were asked to comment on this. Also FAO governing bodies were involved in this discussion and in particular the methodology of indicators, was presented to the Committee on Agriculture in October 2018. The response from the Committee was positive asking FAO to continue to develop the indicator set.

In terms of elements on which it is based, it is based on 11 sub-indicators that cover economic, environmental and social dimensions on agricultural sustainability. This, as I mentioned, was developed with a long consultation trying to refine and limit to a minimum list of indicators because the previous proposals of course were much more inclusive and broad. So posing a heavy response burden on countries.

We are working with a group of countries now to see how the indicators can be implemented in specific country situations especially when the typical farm size is very large like in Argentina or other countries that of course have specific concerns on the implementation of indicators. I invite Argentina to be part of this technical working group that is working with the IAEG for this purpose.

Concerning the questions of Congo, of course the presentation was rather short. We had very little time to expand on the different components of the presentation but of course I would be happy to provide more material and additional information on this aspect of financial resources and capacity development.

In terms of shortcomings at country level, as I said we have done this SDG gap assessment, I am not sure if Congo has replied to the SDG Gap Assessment. The survey was also extended to Congo. We are analysing now the results and what I presented were preliminary results, we will be able to provide a more detailed report in due course. We hope to be able to do it in May. And this will be widely shared.

In my presentation, however, I have already identified three main factors that are hindering countries' capacity to report on SDG indicators. One is the fact that the main data collection instruments are not conducted regularly in countries, especially agricultural surveys. In Africa, there are very rarely proper agricultural surveys conducted, but also other types of surveys are not regularly conducted in countries.

The second point is that even when these surveys are conducted they do not cover all the SDG indicators and this offers an opportunity for upgrading this survey by introducing specific models that can cover this indicator.

The third problem, the key third problem, is an institutional problem and the problem of coordination among the data producers at country level. FAO works on all these three issues with specific initiatives and more generally with this umbrella programme that tries to tackle different problems at the same time.

The other question was on how the roundtable will be organised. We are working with our Technical Cooperation Department to reach out to donors and to invite some countries to present their experience of working with FAO in developing statistical capacity. We are trying to find the best date in which to

maybe organise this meeting, maybe back to back with other events in which we can guarantee the presence of the maximum number of Members.

Concerning Afghanistan, I mentioned about the funding facilities, yes it is one of these global instruments that are proposed. The initiative for this funding facility is with countries in particular the high-level panel on capacity development of the UN Statistical Commission.

So international regions so far have not been part of the discussion. It is mainly a country led initiative. FAO has requested to be part of this group that is let's say preparing the proposal for the funding facilities and now at the latest stage we have been invited. Yesterday there was a meeting of the Bern Network which will prepare, as I said, the UN World Data Forum in 2020. But there is still a long way to go before we find a fully developed proposal.

This global initiative complements as I said, more sector initiatives that try to target specific indicators and so they are not replacing other types of initiatives like the FAO initiatives.

In terms of the comprehensive review, as I mentioned again, the principles for the comprehensive review in particular, there is pressure from the IAEG which is country based again, are set by the countries and the idea is not to add additional response burden to countries because the list of indicators is already very ambitious and wide.

And so yes the idea is to maintain the overall number of indicators within the current number. The current number is variable because it depends on if you count on also the sub-indicators. There is not a unique count of the total number of indicators.

In terms of target 17.8, yes there are a number of indicators that have not been reported yet. We have to see if this year we will be able to report on them. The responsibility is not with FAO; it is with United Nations Statistics Division and Paris 21 for reporting on these indicators. So I am not familiar with all the developments in this area.

Mr Manuel BARANGE (Director, Fisheries and Agriculture Policy and Resources Division)

I would like to first thank both Argentina and Congo for their helpful comments and it is my pleasure to clarify a very logical and valid concern particularly of Argentina and then address the question from Congo.

Of course the symposium is a technical event and a declaration is a political outcome. So the connection between the two is not linear. There is no intention for the symposium to write the declaration or to even comment on the declaration. The intention is for the declaration to be drafted by the Secretariat and through the Committee on Fisheries bureau, and therefore the Members, to be developed in the way that it needs to be developed.

The role of the symposium is to provide clarity on a number of technical issues for example what are the gaps of knowledge that we have so that it influences the declaration. But it is not written by the symposium and I think I have to apologise if I gave the impression that the symposium was actually the mechanism to develop that declaration.

Having said that, we think the declaration of course is for the countries to consider but we feel we mustn't overlook the enormous opportunity that we have in bringing several hundred experts around the world to FAO, 6 months before the 25th anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

And that opportunity is essentially to reflect on how the world has changed in the 25 years since the Code of Conduct was adopted in October 1995. In terms of, for example, the growing role of fish and fisheries for food security and nutrition, recognising the successes and the challenges, the increasing role of regional fisheries management organizations, the arrival of new technologies, issues that allow us to in fact not replace the Code but to reinforce the value of the Code to, if you wish, alight the Code and reinforce its role globally and its relevance globally.

So we think this is the opportunity but the connection between the symposium and the declaration is not linear, and I'm sorry if I gave that impression.

Moving on to the comment from Congo and I appreciate very much the positive words the Ambassador had to say. I think that what is important is that you mentioned about starting the declaration, the writing of the declaration, early on and I completely agree with you.

In fact, the Secretariat will start preparing the background for this declaration very soon. It will not be completed in any draft form until the symposium because of the reasons I have explained but it is something the preparation of which precedes the symposium. It's very important.

With respect to Blue Economy I completely agree with you Ambassador. The Blue Economy is underpinning the symposium overall. This crossroads that we face when on the one hand we have this increasing demand for fish and fisheries product that really is fully embedded in the concept of the Blue Economy and the expectation for the Blue Economy.

I also mentioned that sustainability of fisheries is connected to sustainability of the broader sectors and by that I refer to coastal sectors. So the Blue Economy again is connected to that. So while the words Blue Economy are not listed in any of the sessions, they are underpinning each one of them and very much would be, I am convinced, part of the declaration. So I hope that helps clarify those two issues. I thank you again for making them out to me.

Mr Marco SÁNCHEZ CANTILLO (Deputy Director, Agricultural Development Economics Division)

I have a question from our distinguished delegate from Congo. So essentially it points to clarification with regard to the report, the SOFI report being on conflict in 2017, then the SOFI report being on climate in 2018.

This year we are saying we will tackle the key driver of the rising uptick in hunger, which is economic downturns and slowdowns. So the question from the delegate is, what's coming next after that? Are we going to have a report that looks into the three key drivers altogether and the interaction? I hope I am reading your question properly.

So let me just briefly say that in the SOFI of last year in fact we already started to distinguish climate events that were affecting hunger in places with and without conflict. So starting from last year SOFI was pretty clear in putting very, let's say, reliable statistics on cases, countries where we have seen the interaction of both conflict and climate events.

So this year and as we speak I was actually looking into one of the draft chapters of the SOFI for this year. I am very glad to share with you that this is the report where we try to pack everything up, and at the same time unpack everything in the sense that this year we will try to identify where economy chokes are being intensified and escalated by conflict and also by climatic events.

But at the same time we want to understand the other side of the coin which is, in which cases conflict itself is the driver towards economy chokes, and also when climate extremes of variability are also acting as one trigger for economy chokes.

So in response to your question we hope that this year is the year where SOFI can really put the three things together at the same time.

Ms Junko SAZAKI (Director, Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division)

Thank you very much, especially the Italian representative, you have mentioned about migration and the policy issues and also the funding sources. In terms of migration at FAO in ESP, we are funding this project initiative with a trust fund arrangement. Thanks to your government, we have USD 1.5 million for the migration work and social protection value chain in Kenya, which is ongoing. And also it is thanks to Italy, that we have just completed a project in 2018 of USD 2.5 million.

This is a project with Ethiopia and also Tunisia looking at youth employment issues. So these are the trust fund arrangements. Then also the policy issues intervention at global level in terms of migration, again we are supporting the development of the Global Compact on Migration.

FAO has been acting as a co-Chair of the GMG, Global Migration Group, consisting of UN agencies. Then this year we are also supporting the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration as a member of the UN Network on Migration.

The country level, this is a core part of this year's challenge and work under the leadership of the regional coordinator, that each country team will be supporting the government Member State for developing the action plan and policy suit.

Our country representatives there and the headquarters division will be supporting countries in terms of the coherence of migration policy and rural development and agriculture. That is the clearly stated FAO migration framework. That will be the important work of 2019 of our division and FAO.

We are also supporting the agriculture stakeholders, rural development stakeholders for them to bring up the importance of rural issues in migration. For example, how to make agriculture attractive with employment opportunities for young people and then also paying attention to the issues such as the seasonal migrant that usually happens in agriculture, and how we can make migration be their choice, not forced migration. So policy support is very clearly stated again in the FAO migration framework.

Mr George RAPSOMANIKIS (Senior Economist, Trade and Markets Division)

I would like to thank the members for appreciating our work with intergovernmental groupings. There is a lot of work we do on policy support and policy advice at country level but quite a lot also at the global level. And this work we do at the global level is presented as a matter of course by our flagship report, 'the State of', series. Our engagement in the international fora and our work with intergovernmental groups.

In the G7 and G20, together with IFAD and WFP, we engage to mobilise their attention for global development challenges and for the needs of the most vulnerable countries. And I think that this is reflected by the number of initiatives I presented to you before lunch which are supported by the G20 and managed by the RBAs.

Mr Samuel VARAS (Director, Information Technology Division)

Thank you very much for the question coming from Jordan. I can confirm our work is with the local offices. We start working with the regional ones and some major offices, but our model is working with them, with some guidance coming from here, trying to work in a joint way with them.

We are not trying to concentrate the innovation here at our desk. I think that innovation is where the people are, and we are advancing and putting staff in the field to do that.

CHAIRPERSON

This concludes item 12 of the Agenda, which was presented to Council for information only. The list of presentations will be included in the Report and the PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the FAO Members Gateway.

Mr Salah AL TARAWNEH (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I have a question for Mr Varas and to the other colleagues. On 6 March, there was a meeting on statistics and we spoke about the global strategy for agricultural statistics and the link with FAO. This strategy, which includes over 50 countries, does not include any country from the Near East.

So I think the expert has not answered our question. The countries in our region really need statistical databases. I was responsible for statistics in the Ministry of Agriculture in Jordan, and databases that strengthen statistics are very important. In our opinion this database in Jordan could perhaps be part of your strategy. Couldn't that be the case?

Mr Samuel VARAS (Director, Information Technology Division)

I absolutely agree, but was not aware of this. I have taken note and will provide the answer at the next session of Council.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician)

Just to respond to the question of Jordan. We actually work with Jordan on a number of initiatives. Concerning the global strategy, a regional plan was done for the Near East, but there was, unfortunately, no donor that was ready to fund this, even within the region. We did try to develop a plan and have it funded but this was not successful. We worked closely with ESCWA in this regard.

Concerning the connection with the IDA funding, to complete my response to Afghanistan, it is a matter of donors' requests matching funds in order to expand possibilities and scale up capacity development efforts. IDA funding provides an opportunity to match the resources provided either by the private sector, foundations or by countries, to increase the amount of funding.

Of course, this has limitations in terms of countries that can be assisted with these interventions, as only certain countries are part of the IDA. It is for this reason that we are trying to complement this trust fund, which is at the World Bank, with another fund established at FAO, to try and address the needs of countries that cannot be assisted with IDA funds.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment? I see none. This concludes item 12 which was presented to us for information. As I said earlier, the list of presentations will be included in the report and the PowerPoint presentations we have seen will be posted on the Members Gateway. So this concludes item 12.

Debriefing on Field Visit to the Philippines and Indonesia (26 October to 3 November 2018) by Senior Officials of Rome-based Permanent Representations

Compte rendu sur la visite de terrain effectuée dans les Philippines et en Indonésie (26 octobre-3 novembre 2018) par des hauts fonctionnaires de représentations permanentes sises à Rome
Informe oral acerca de la visita sobre el terreno realizada a Filipinas y Indonesia (26 de octubre-3 de noviembre de 2018) por altos funcionarios de las Representaciones Permanentes en Roma

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Council will now be debriefed on the Field Visit to the Philippines and Indonesia by Permanent Representatives, which took place from 26 October to 3 November 2018, and I invite Ambassador Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to FAO, who participated in the field visit, to deliver a presentation on the field visit.

Mr Yaya Adisa OLAITAN OLANIRAN (Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to FAO)

Let me start by saying that the report is available, so we are not going to go step by step on what has been written, because it is available. We just want to give you a flavour of what happened in the field and also, the motive, and the essence of the field trip. And I want to say that everyone of us in this room should find time, at one time or the other, to go on a field trip with colleagues.

Before that trip, most of my colleagues standing behind me, I did not know their names. I know their faces, we are friendly, we chat, but it is on this trip that we got to know each other better. And I can assure you, as a result of this, we have formed a bond that is really, really strong. And in our discussions and interventions, we have seen the need for this. And I want to say that, everything did not happen by chance. Let us give the glory to the Lord God Almighty, who wakes us up every day. We take a lot of things for granted, but He is there to look after us. I will thank the Lord.

I want to also thank the Governments of the Philippines and Indonesia, the Director-General, the Director of OSD, and her excellent staff. The preparations were excellent. There were lapses here and there, but since we came back, we have had opportunity to interact and discuss them and we have come to the conclusion, with them, and with the promise that what has been discussed and that is of value to improve field trips, will be incorporated into the trips that will come later. So I want to say a big thank you to all of you.

This is a trip that was very, very gender balanced. In fact, not exactly balanced, tilting to the side of the women. Five women, three men. But you may not find five women behind me (on the podium), because two of them have left their positions that took them to Asia. One has gone back to Thailand, the other one is on another assignment.

Now, incidentally, MOPAN reports that the Director-General, in fact, this morning, confirmed one of the things that we found as being very, very important, for FAO to begin to move away from small demonstrative project, and go to things that are a lot bigger.

Now, so I thank my colleagues, and I appreciate them. And you know the funny thing, they also thank me, and gave me a name. Do you want to know it? I will tell you, I will tell you. They call me the public face of the team.

We visited two middle income countries. These are huge countries, with thousands of islands. Transportation was a challenge. We probably spent more time in the air, than on the land. But because of the relationships that we developed, we were able to support one another, so that the stress was not too much. But believe you me, age does catch on, because at a point, I went down. And thanks to my colleagues, who really were there for me, especially Roy. Roy became my doctor, as well as my chaperone.

So, for sure, a lot of work goes into preparing these trips. The headquarters, and then the Regional Offices. In the Regional Offices, you can really see real hard work by the FAORs. The relationship between them and the Governments, and the other agencies, were excellent. They could get whatever they want by snapping their fingers. And you could see that it was a pre-arranged thing, the body language was excellent, and people really worked together, making sure that the policy of Government is what they work on.

So like I said, we had two middle income countries. Very big countries which involved dense population. Therefore, in the arrangement for us to do the work well, we were given police escorts, and that is why we were able to navigate the trips. The drivers were just careful, and I believe they knew nothing would go wrong. So I want to thank them, too, even though they are thousands of kilometres away.

Now, I will just highlight four points, these are recommendations. Now, we went to the market in Manila, where you have, in the market, public scales. If you bought something, and you believe you have been cheated, you can put it on there on the public scales to tell you. I had an experience here in one of the cafeterias, this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr Chair, for not letting me do this earlier, I would have missed that opportunity about the scale. I bought something, I had a regular meal, there, and I know how much I pay. Today, I was asked to pay double, and I said, why? She said, because the chips they put in was not part of the pepper roll, and the potato. I said, no, I used to buy it, this is the amount. Eventually she said... I said, okay, get me somebody who can speak English. When our Chilean people behind me said, okay, look, pay EUR 6 and go away. But it underlines one thing, that in the Philippines, they have taken the question of honesty seriously, even in the market place.

Secondly, we met with the Minister for Agriculture, who was a practical farmer, and from what he was telling us, you can know that he knows his onions. As if that were not enough, we were given a demonstration on the drone accessing many things. Initially, it looked, the drone - it can be flown from anywhere, but then when we realized, that in one of the storms, they lost 40 million coconut trees, it was clear to us why the demonstration was necessary.

In the Philippines, the whole tour was crowned by an exemplary thing. We visited a senator whose budget for the NGO she was running, was a lot bigger than that of the Regional Office of FAO in the Philippines. I think we should think about this. There is a lady, and she went to the grass roots. That is a model that we can copy.

Indonesia, again, we had four highlights. The rice, and tilapia farm, and the fish were doing something extra to keep them healthy. The fish were eating up all the larvae of mosquito, therefore there was no serious cases of malaria. You can see the agriculture and health nexus working there.

One of the points that really brought FAO, clearly as an extraordinary partner, happened in the live market, slaughterhouse, and there was an investigation centre. Whereby you find the local people realizing that their relationship with FAO, and what they need to do, and how to do it, helped them, and they keyed into it, making progress. And definitely, they were on top of avian influenza, whenever it showed up.

We rounded up that with a visit to, again, what we thought that was not quite related to FAO, but then, it was visiting a farm in Bali, where it was an agroforestry farm cultivating salak. Salak is a fruit, it is

very delicious, and it has been transformed through the value chain, as cotton industry. So many things were made out of it.

Now UN reform. We had the opportunity to speak with the country Chair and they were at loss as to what to do, expecting the UN headquarters to give instruction to the resident coordinator, and also receive farm directives from the different organizations, including FAO. I think that is an area that we have to work upon, and get the bridge properly established. Overall, we were able, not only to get to know each other better, we were also able to conclude that the need to understand FAO in the field should always be a top priority for us.

Chairperson, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, time will always be a constraint.

Ms Maria Araceli ESCANDOR (Philippines)

We would like to express our thanks for the very good presentation of the distinguished Ambassador Olaniran, thank you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation to the field visit. We see that you were happy, so we are also very happy, thank you.

The Philippines welcomes the visit. It exposed members and gave understanding of the initiatives of FAO on the ground. Especially from archipelagic countries like the Philippines and Indonesia. Indeed, we have 7,107 islands, and we understand there are some challenges in going from one island to the other. But I hope the fresh fruits and tuna compensated for those difficulties.

Well, as mentioned by the Ambassador, and impressed on the slideshow, the Rome-based team called on our Minister of Agriculture, Mr Emmanuel Piñol, on October 30, and as well as on Senator Cynthia Villar. I was fortunate to be present in the meeting with the Agriculture Secretary, and where the FAO representative, Mr Jose Fernandez, shared that the visit created greater awareness on the realities and implementation of the projects, both for FAO, the Government, and also for the beneficiaries. On the part of the members, they heard the best practices, like the drones, and public weighing scales and at the same time, practices that may be needed to be avoided.

On the part of the Government, we shared observations on the possibility to adapt the same approach, or recalibrate them. We think that it was a very fruitful, and productive trip, and hopefully a fun and enjoyable one too, for the delegates. We commend FAO for this successful field trip.

For future visits, we could still improve some aspects of the preparation. May we suggest an early coordination of the visit, both in the headquarters, and country level, and close consultation with concerned Government authorities and stakeholders. The Philippines recognizes its strong partnership with the FAO, and as such, we want to maximize every opportunity to engage for concrete actions.

Mr Saad MOUSSA (Egypt)

Actually, I would like to express my happiness for this visit, and I want to congratulate the Ambassador and his delegates. And actually, I would suggest in the future that FAO can actually increase the number of such visits, particularly to developing countries. One more enquiry I need to ask about. You did mention, Sir, in your presentation, salak, what is it? Is it fruit or a vegetable?

Mr Yaya Adisa OLAITAN OLANIRAN (Permanent Representative of Nigeria to FAO)

It is a fruit.

Mr Saad MOUSSA (Egypt)

And let me also say, Ambassador, that you have a good face, and a public face, you also have a good smile, thank you, Sir.

Mr Gerry INDRADI (Observer for Indonesia)

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Indonesian delegation would like to use this opportunity to express its sincere appreciation to the FAO for the strong and lasting partnership between the Indonesian Government and the FAO. We particularly would like to thank the FAO for the recent initiatives, including the field visit to Indonesia last year.

In November 2018, the FAO and several delegations of FAO Member States had a field visit to Indonesia. The delegations were received by the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, who underlined the importance of collaboration and cooperation between the Indonesian Government and FAO. Particularly on sustainable agriculture, food security, nutrition, fisheries, as well as small scale farmers' welfare.

The field visit to Indonesia could not be more timely, as last year, 2018, marked the 70th anniversary of Indonesia's relationship with FAO. We hope that the field visit shows the strong partnership between Indonesia and FAO. The Indonesian Government expects this partnership can last to another 70 years, and beyond. We would like to thank, once again, FAO, as well as the participants of the field visit, for their recommendations resulting from the field visit to the Philippines and Indonesia.

And, Mr Chair, let me also share with you, and the other delegations, another initiative based on Indonesia's partnership with FAO. The Regional Conference on Strengthening Southeast Asia's Food Security, Nutrition, and Farmers' Welfare, through the UN Decade of Family Farming, was held on 4 and 5 April 2019, in Jakarta, in collaboration between the Indonesian Government and the FAO.

The Regional Conference was attended by FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Coordinator for Asia Pacific, Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan. Two Indonesian Ministers, and one First Minister, the Secretary-General for Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development, attended the conference. Representatives from Republic of Korea, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Vietnam, Japan, FAO, IFAD, and the WFP, also participated in the conference.

The objective of the conference was to discuss between countries in the region, on what we, as Members of FAO, can contribute to the implementation of UN Decade of Family Farming. We believe that the implementation of the UN Decade of Family Farming hinges on Member States' commitment to offer concrete contributions to the implementation of UN Decade of Family Farming. In this regard, one of the key areas that was highlighted in the conference was South-South and Triangular Cooperation. We believe that the UN Decade of Family Farming is a golden momentum for FAO Member States to help each other. Based on this spirit, the Regional Conference adopted a joint communiqué. Later on, the Asia Regional Group will share the joint communiqué to the International Steering Committee as a contribution to the Global Action Plan on UN Decade of Family Farming and also during the launch of the UN Decade, in May of this year.

In closing, Mr Chair, we would like to, once again, thank the FAO for their support to Members, including Indonesia.

Mr Yaya Adisa OLAITAN OLANIRAN (Permanent Representative of Nigeria to FAO)

Thank you very much, the Philippines, Indonesia, my dear brother and friend, Egypt, I appreciate you. I missed one very important point and that is that the countries that were on the delegation were Algeria, Australia, Chile, Jordan, Nigeria, Norway, Thailand and United States of America. You see that there are eight but the continents are seven. So, Nigeria was self-sponsored, in case the audit wants to query that.

CHAIRPERSON

That concludes this item. We now move on to the next item, which is the statement of the staff representative, who will deliver a statement. Mr Skoet.

Statement by a Representative of FAO Staff Bodies

Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO

Declaración de un representante de los órganos representativos del personal de la FAO

Mr Jakob SKOET (President, AP-in-FAO)

Mr Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Secretary-General of the Conference and Council, Distinguished delegates, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Staff Representative Bodies are grateful for once again being granted the opportunity to speak before the Council. Our statement during your session is always an event that we take very seriously. We consider it a precious occasion to share with you the views, perspectives and concerns of the staff

we represent. We value these opportunities because we believe that communication, cooperation, dialogue and trust among all the stakeholders are essential for a well-functioning and effective Organization.

We wish to acknowledge with appreciation the attention paid by the Council to some of the issues of major concern to us. Specifically, we would like to refer to some of the decisions taken by the Council at its 160th Session, such as: the request for a review of the staff mobility programme; the request for a review of the independence of the Ethics Office, Office of the Inspector-General and ombudsperson functions; and the request to FAO Management to conduct a staff satisfaction survey in 2019.

We also appreciate the support expressed by the Council for the implementation of measures, including training, to prevent harassment and sexual harassment in the work place and ensure that the true magnitude of the problem can emerge.

The attention of the Council to matters of concern to staff is of great encouragement for us.

To those of you who have listened to our statements over the past years, it will come as no surprise that we consider our relations with the Management of the Organization to be very poor. On the last two occasions when we addressed the Council, we stated that we did not expect to see improvements in staff-Management relations under the current leadership of the Organization. Today, unfortunately, we can only confirm the assessment we made then.

Some of you will recall the Independent External Evaluation in 2007 and the resulting call for a Culture Change in FAO. The current Administration has succeeded in eroding, if not ignoring, many of the recommendations that aimed for improved relations between staff and Management. Widespread fear, lack of open dialogue and disrespect for staff prevail and continue to permeate our working environment and culture. Staff morale remains at historically low levels.

Therefore, we prefer to look forward. This will be an important year for FAO, for its staff and for the Staff Representative Bodies as a new Director-General will be elected and take office. As the Joint Inspection Unit stated in a report issued in 2012 on staff-Management relations in the UN specialized agencies and common system: “the attitude of the Executive Head serves as a critical factor in the success or failure of staff-Management relations in an organization”. We look forward with optimism to working together with a new Management of the Organization in what we hope will be a better climate of cooperation. In our view, there is much to be improved. Let us just emphasize a few key areas.

Of major concern to staff are the closely interlinked areas of recruitment, promotion and career development. Many staff members have serious misgivings about the clear trend of declining career opportunities as posts are being systematically downgraded when they become vacant and recruitment and promotion decisions are becoming increasingly opaque. The 2018 Annual Report of the Inspector General pointed to significant weaknesses in the Organization’s practices for appointment of professional staff, which diminish the technical suitability of appointees. Also, the recent report on FAO by MOPAN pointed to a perceived lack of transparency and/or arbitrariness in some recruitment procedures. For the General Service category in headquarters, the global recruitment of locally hired staff is of particular concern because it undermines the UN Common system principles and goes against FAO’s own rules and regulations. There is a need for a comprehensive review both of procedures for recruitment and promotion and of the current practically non-existent policies for career development.

Another critical area is the Geographic Mobility Programme for Regular Programme staff, which is inflicting damage on professional staff and on the technical capacity of the Organization. A survey conducted by the Association of Professionals in 2018 documented some of the problems, but these have been ignored by Management. We hope that the review requested by the 160th Session of the Council may help to develop a revised mobility programme that enhances the technical capacity of the Organization while reconciling this with the aspirations and circumstances of staff. In the meantime, we can only repeat the call we have already made to Management for a halt to all non-voluntary mobility, pending a review of the Programme.

The final area that we would like to highlight are the internal justice and conciliation mechanisms. One problem is the serious shortage of human resources suffered by the Appeals Committee, which, in spite of the hard work of its members and support staff, leads to long delays. Furthermore, the frequent

refusal of the Director-General to accept the recommendations made by the Appeals Committee when in favour of appellants forces them to seek redress at the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization. Indeed, in a large number of cases the Tribunal has ruled in favour of the appellant when a similar recommendation by the Appeals Committee had been rejected by the Director-General. We also note that grievance and conflict resolution procedures such as mediation appear to have been abandoned. On the other hand, we welcome the decision to separate the function of Ombudsman from that of Ethics Officer, as we had repeatedly requested. We hope that an independent and adequately resourced Ombudsman function will be established and that it will help resolve many of the work-related conflicts that most regrettably continue to occur in FAO.

Let me conclude by saying that we are hopeful and optimistic for FAO and for its staff. We look forward to working constructively with a new Management to make the Organization a better working place for all staff and at the same time make the organization more effective in carrying out its mandate. We are convinced that a motivated workforce that is treated with respect, trust and dignity, coupled with strong and effective staff-Management relations, are in the interest not just of staff, but also of the Organization and its Members.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the end of our proceedings.

Before we close, allow me to thank all the staff who have worked behind the scenes to ensure a smooth running session: meeting services staff, documents desk, audio-visual technicians, interpreters and translators and their support staff, reports office, verbatim team and editors, messengers, protocol aides and security staff.

I also wish to thank all of you for your participation. For those staying in Rome, I wish you a restful weekend and for those travelling, I wish you a safe journey home.

I declare the 161st Session of the Council adjourned.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 16:06 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 06

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.06