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Organización de las
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**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

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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 government 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 organization 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, bear 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 this. The FAO has been sensitising the global community about extent and severity of hunger by providing estimates of undernourished population at national, regional and global level.

FAO has also been instrumental in shaping the discourse on food security and various issues around agriculture, fisheries, forestry and other natural sources. Its knowledge products and flagship reports have been the basis of many progressive legislation and policies worldwide.

FAO started reporting estimates of hunger beginning 1968 to 1970 that 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 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 a bill to implement it. I stand before you to pledge my fullest commitment to work toward creating that vision and generating the bill to implement it through effective strategies and action.

Ladies and gentlemen, 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 bill that involved harnessing the potential of green revolution technologies through appropriate policy actions.

Ladies and gentlemen, 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 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 do 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 the 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 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 has solved this purpose. Now we need to move to a more comprehensive indicator that reveals that 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 strengthening the 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 attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sixth, I also visualise taking FAO on path towards stronger partnership and collaboration with other UN agencies, especially Rome-based agencies, civil society, academia and research institutes and the private sector.

FAO must work across stakeholders to align its goals and efforts with the changing situations and context. It is equally important for the FAO to play the role of a catalyst in forging partnership 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 the FAO involves enhancing its visibility, [recall] 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 varied 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 and yours.

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.

Excellencies, while talking of the 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 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 the 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 shared with you will give you a more detailed understanding of my involvement with 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 task involves preparing results-oriented policies. My skills in prioritisation have helped in 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 national goal of doubling farmers' income.

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 with government policy and decision-making process have continuously reinforced in me the value of democratic and participatory decision-making which I feel is an invaluable asset to lead the 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

Thank you, Mr Chand. 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, 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 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'emplois. 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 senior et moyens de gestion 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 compétences techniques, 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 out of different kind of development work which FAO did in Africa, what are the learnings – where we have succeeded, where we have not succeeded, what were the shortcomings.

So, past and history are very, very important. We should not underestimate that. So, I will begin by looking at different projects, different programmes implemented in Africa and develop learning from them.

Second, the challenges of Africa are so complex, there are so many that it will be naïve on the part of any institution to feel that it alone can address the problem of Africa. Therefore, the importance of partnership and partnership, especially with local organizations, drawing from knowledge of local people.

Let me share with you one incident. Some person from Africa told me, my friend, he said once one consultant came from some country and we were discussing this development and some people told that person they have no road 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 road, why don't you take it by rail or by aeroplanes?

So, this shows that sometimes as an outsider a person may not be having a good idea of ground reality, the circumstances prevailing on the ground, so involvement of your rich institutions, be it NEPAD, be it AGRA, be it African Rice, all those, and then coming with a strategy based on consultation with all people who have knowledge, 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 some 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 to hire 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 take it, that representation of Africa and I know there are capable people are in Africa and they will get what is due for them based on merit, based on principles laid on 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 transparent well-published criteria, procedures and I would like to have some committee of experts, some veterans of FAO to select best people for me without I getting 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 about a situation in FAO three decades ago. Yes, institutions are never static, they are dynamic. Either they grow or they decay. So, that is the fate of most of the organizations. 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 best out of the staff that is available in FAO and to attract the best talent from outside to the FAO.

That is the way that we can make an organization vibrant, we can make an organization globally recognised and globally acknowledged and meeting expectations of its people.

So, 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. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Chand. 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 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 this role in this regard?

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Excellency, at present meeting Sustainable Development Goal 2030 is, I think, the top agenda before entire global community but, sadly, among all the sustainable development goals, this SDG goal two, which is quantifiable, which is measurable, so we have seen that after 2014 there's 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 immediate priority and immediate concern of FAO should be, because rather than bringing it down, it is going out of hand – the number of hungry has started increasing – to take urgent steps, very, very urgent steps 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 that it has happened.

So, therefore, emphasis of FAO, that only while producing more food we can address food security, we can address hunger, I think this needs to be looked into. Yes, in some places, like Africa, food shortage is the main reason. But there are other reasons also which are very important – conflict, war, those kinds of situations.

So, 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 which are

happening, which are forcing people in Africa and some Latin American countries to leave their habitat, go to towns as a refugee and like that.

So, I feel that those kinds of measures also have to be brought into the actions by 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 country so that we are able to know what are the weak spots, what are the bright spots and address it 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.

Smallholder 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 overtake, small farmers will lose their levered advantage to scale, so therefore they will vanish from the scene.

But 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.

So, smallholders are the reality for Asia and they are going to be a reality for future also in Asia. So, how 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.

So, 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. So, 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 can't compete with them.

Second about that model is that helping these farmers through 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 market.

The third model is that linkage with the private sectors, not that private sector will take over 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, that small farmers, they enter into a contract with the 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 is a strategy 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 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.

So, I think FAO need to come up with those kind of strategies, those kind of practices for adoption by the farmer and also mechanisms like crop insurance which are affordable by small farmers. Thank you.

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 little 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)

Excellency, I read the speech of UN Secretary-General which he delivered, I think, in November 2018. He talked of repositioning UN as a 21st Century institution and the Secretary-General proposed some measures which are covered in three categories – development, management and peace.

And I feel that FAO should take a cue from there. Whatever 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 plan. Again, I feel that FAO should be doing that kind of things also. There is a need for preparing strategic plan 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 that.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

Thank you very much, Mr Chand. Our second question is on transparency and accountability. Webstreaming this hearing and Chatham House events are examples on ways 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)

Excellency, these are assets of any vibrant and strong organization. Any organization which does not follow this principle of transparency, accountability and which is shy of criticism by civil society, I think it 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 not wrong.

So, as I mentioned in my speech, that to achieve transparency, to achieve accountability is not something which is the rocket science. There are well laid down principles in books of administration - what one should be doing in HR, what one should be doing in management, communication, all those kinds of things.

So, FAO also have 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. It will just... I think that will be the natural follow-up of your attention and your conviction.

Like 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 had 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 select 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.

So, 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 government alone. We need to involve all organs of modern society in addressing needs and in addressing aspirations of the mankind. So, 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 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? Okay. 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 elections 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 medias. 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 this, 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, Excellency, 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 may be missed by FAO. Committee on Food Security sets the direction for FAO, that 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.

So, this role of 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. Thank you.

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 formuláramos 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 ahead in agriculture development. Some countries are still very, very low. 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 (Middle Income Country), that doesn't mean its problems are over.

If you are successful in adopting green revolution, you might be facing a problem of secondary *[nation]* of green revolutions, problem of overexploitation of water, problem of excessive use of chemicals, problem of invasive bees, problem of transboundary diseases.

So, I would say that merely because a country has become MIC that there is no need for FAO to do anything there, to my mind 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.

So, I think that middle income country average should not misguide FAO to ignore middle income countries. Then there are other issues related to standards, related to class, boundary kind of situation, invasive bees, microbial resistance and many others. And if you look at FAO normative work, that focusses more on those kind of issues.

So, 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 country 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)

Again, Excellency, 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 goal 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 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 feels, 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 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 in 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 programme, a programme and activities of the country level. Similarly, if there are some problems at field level, that should give the feedback for the normative work within FAO.

So, 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 normative.

So, you find there's a lot of normative standards works which has accumulated in the FAO Rome, so now for some years you allocate more for country programmes, for TCP so that this much knowledge product need to be taken there.

A situation may arise after that that 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.

So, 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 choice. And, generally, the countries which are making this contribution, I think they are not making this contribution with this 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, per specified goals, it is not available in the general funds. So I feel it should be in the role of FAO to strengthen its trust fund, so that FAO has the say 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, thank you.

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)

Excellency, most of the countries in Near East Region, depend on import to meet their food requirement. Yes, there are some countries, like Iran, Afghanistan, which meet their requirement, to a large extent, through their own production, but countries like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, so 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 ban on exports, which jeopardized food scarcity of countries like Singapore, countries like Kuwait, and other countries.

So 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 this need for international agreement 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 to Near East countries.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

Thank you, Dr Ramesh. My second question is whether 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, 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 aspects of agriculture, I always go to 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.

Excellency, 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 it is value gets eroded, so certainly it is coming down. To some extent, it was possible, through efficiency, that there is some flexibility in every system. But there are limits to elasticity, beyond a point, the plastic 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 FAO, if 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 other kind of thing.

But my own take is that, 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 start coming. People into 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, how they should. So once I told them this agroecology project in India, the Andhra Pradesh, they gave huge funding support of that.

So I feel that into this world, there is no dearth of donors. What they are looking for is, what is the suitable recipient who can deliver. So, 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 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 not 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, these are the results that we got.

And third way is, of course, sensitizing, that, look, 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 life of everyone. 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.

But Excellency, I can share with you that when I took over as Director of National Institute of Agriculture Policy, after two years, people who wanted to give money, they were coming to me, they want to give their money.

I was making choice about whom to choose to get this money. So it depends, that if you are able to deliver, people will be coming to you. But until then, really, that you need to win trust of the donor, you need to convince them about the cause, and also, about 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 to be, to take 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, that voluntary donations, voluntary contributions, which are coming to FAO are important for FAO. But those should not be linked to a particular positions.

The position in FAO must be filled based on the criteria, that these persons, within the norm decided by FAO, will be delivering, or will be helping FAO, to maximize their output. I think that a reasonable member also do not insist too much on this.

Excellency, I think time is over, better I can share that example with you, 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 of reporting those incidents to Management. I wonder if you could describe to us how you would lead organizational change, and 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? Thank you.

Mr Ramesh CHAND (India)

Thank you, Excellency. 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.

So I feel that we need to encourage the staff in FAO, that if they have a problem, they should have this confidence in their Director-General, in their superiors, that they can make 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 said in law, that it is not only important to deliver justice, but justice should also have 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 – 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 still easy, only with stroke of the pen.

But the second issue, Excellency, 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 share of women in agriculture is rising, as men are moving out in search of jobs, and doing their business.

So this burden falls more and more on the women, it is already happening. Now it is a matter of, 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 in 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 different group of people.

It is people of her own class who will be there in that institutions. 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 a easy task, it is a historical, I think, inequality, which we need to address gradually. But as I mentioned, if there is a bill, we can do it.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

Ramesh, 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 the 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 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 organized private sector. That is the situation.

So I think there is a need for attracting investment, but responsible investment in agriculture. If we want, that farmer is linked to modern value chain, then without involvement of private sector, either you have a farmer/producer company, or you have to make private sector as 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 international market, then value change is the route for that. And who are the people who are operating 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 job of government 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 the trade. Then you just find that a farmer who is selling his produce at a throwaway price, the farm average price get integrated with global prices.

So these are the ways. So if, through this linkage with 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 addressed food security.

And today, there are so many examples of these kind of things. Earlier, 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 rule of the game, we can involve private sector, we can increase their participation, and this is how we can link smallholder to global market.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

I recognize we do not probably have 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 member of 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, Dr Chand, 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 Pacific is, natural hazards. Sometimes, cyclones, sometimes floods, sometimes, sort of storms. So, Pacific regions are much more exposed to natural calamities, than the rest of the world. So we hear that every other day somewhere you find some kind of natural calamity hitting those regions.

So 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 calamity in a particular island, one can make suggestions about what could be the best farming system in that kind of situations.

If I take example, probably then, it will be more clear. If in some islands, you are getting frequent floods, therefore, field crop 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 regions. Similarly, if on an island, you are getting more cyclones, then tree may not be the right choice.

It may be some creepers, it may be 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 kind of things, then you will just find that 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 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 Pacific and island economy, they have to bear the brunt of 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. Excellency, I have not looked fully at what kind of programme, 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 which 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 economy, they may be small, but for FAO, it is one country, and you are one member out of 193 or 194 members. So 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 be having 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.

So if you will find that the local situation improve, there are venues for economic activity in that country, even this kind of distress migration will also get reduced.

So I feel that FAO need 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)

Thank you very much, Dr Chand. 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. So how you tackle interest of the producers, how to help, you help producers to have larger share in consumer dollar, or price paid by the consumer, in today's world these are the major concerns.

Today, population of 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, last four years, globally also, you find that these prices are depressed.

So 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 agriculture sector. So 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 how come 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 market very, very important.

Today, there are so many problems with trade. You all people know that in WTO, we could not reach an agreement, negotiations are going on for so many years, for very, very long periods. So 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, that today, there are so many variations from smooth trade, that is happening. So 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)

Excellencies, it has been a great experience for me to speak before you, and to learn about your concerns relating to functioning and activities of the FAO. And how the new Director-General can serve you better. But I conclude, after listening to you, is that both you and I share a common vision of 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 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.

Excellencies, 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 global community complacent about the availability of food in future. Official development systems for agriculture is not keeping pace with the rising challenges in agriculture.

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 delivering zero hunger planet. With an agriculture knowledge bank with 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, ladies and gentlemen, 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 [...] gives me the hope that you will elect a Director-General who will make the FAO matter, who will make the FAO deliver, who will make the FAO more visible, and will transform the FAO at the 21st century. I look forward to seeing you all again in Rome, next June. Thank you very much.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

We now have Mr Davit Kirvallidze of Georgia with us here and I now give the floor to him for his opening remarks. Mr Kirvallidze?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

Honourable Chairman, Ministers, Ambassadors, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman, distinguished Guests and what is very important, the organization staff here.

I know hunger personally, and it draw me to form. 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 the organization. We meet at a moment of tremendous transformation in the world. Even as technology powers newer 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 were the organization 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 every culture. Not just expanding production, but enhancing methods of production. Sound data should drive decisions at the organization 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 the organization as the opportunity organization, where we provide countries and communities with the tools to do more than put problems on pause. The Organization will help them see and sieze possibilities.

The 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 the organization. Many innovative people contribute to the organization 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 Organization's structure.

The least tapped resource in most international bodies is its own staff. They know what reforms work and what does 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 the organization 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, the organization has mobilised 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 skill 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 the organization. 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 the organization'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. The Organization 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 applying 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. The Organization, I believe is one that 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 on the past, forward on policies, standards, and targeted development initiatives. My goal is to ensure that food security in the organization are 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 the organization can be ineffective in this.

As a minister of agriculture, I know how an entity like the organization 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 as 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, that is definitely 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 of. 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 organization's 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 the organization. I will deliver to you, to you member states, a modern Organization that maximises its impact where it matters most. My approach as Director-General will to be 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 for 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 the organization ready dedicated to not only allaying fears but inspiring hope and strategically seeding opportunities. With your support we can power a future wherein 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 together.

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, the organization'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 the organization will be kept on track in fulfilling its core mandate?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The fact 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. The Organization has its vision and the organization has its mission. The Organization has its staff and the organization has you, member states. We have decided where we need to go. There are different instruments that are going to lead towards this way. Going to be more activities on standards, more activities on development, empowering staff, staying aligned with UN reforms to empower more our staffs 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 the organization'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. The Organization has also its portion of this. And they all are having their findings, result and recommendations. The principal role of the organization, 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 the 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 on 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 changes.

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 and properly done. We contribute in this difficult process. Properly done we can lower the carbon emission. This is also the 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 the organization is facing at the moment and how would you address this issue?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

The biggest challenge is we are all here and talking about more than 800 000 million people to be still hungry. About people who face malnutrition. We are talking about children who are stand, 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 all by its way, we are losing these people.

I do not know how often you are meeting with farmers. I am just back from Africa working in a wide field with many farmers there. Next I have been in the Latin Americas. Many people even do not trust any more there is going to be some assistance. And this is not only about the organization.

I want to emphasise, the world is changed, the early stages of development days 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 are wish to sit and speak about this.

But there is something that is very important, that if you want to be effective donor and if you want to be really reflecting those challenges that I am asking now that the organization faces, we need to imagine our self 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 the organization 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 that 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 the organization 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 the organization strengthen its role to this regard?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I mentioned that coming from a small country. And I am coming from a country where there is an abundance of the 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 problem is 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 a 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 choice, because living without choice is a living without hope.

There are different methods working with small farmers. Most important thing for them as 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 we can 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 the organization's 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 the organization representing my country to IFAD and WFP. And that was a time where my country was through 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.

The Organization 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 I would pay serious attention to 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, the very intensive cooperation to strengthen, I want to underline, to strengthen, not to overlap. Because sometimes donors have 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 the organization, IFAD, World Bank, or ADB, or any other organization on bilateral matter, steps on the 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 the organization 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 governors structure of the organization. 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, then refer how I will start working here should I am elected and mandated by you.

The very first, is my approach to the organization's professional staff. To go there and to see their opinion what works and what not. Because one, is what we see from outside and one is from inside. I can tell you right now that delegating power is something that is part of my management structures.

It is no way that we could continue managing in the way that command economy was many years ago, but I was a part of that. It is not effective. It is not efficiency and we need to clearly divide and delegate power not only here in this is stadia 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 just not only decision about how to travel and when to travel is just a matter of discussion of weeks and weeks.

But I have seen a project they are waiting for kick off, approved projects, for more than a year. This would never happen. I can promise on this. And one more thing that I want to add for you, that it was not asked on your question, this is a transparency. Transparency is something that build 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 going to be no hidden and confidential issues on any direction.

Ms Aulikki HULMI (Finland)

And our third question is on innovation. How do you see the balance between traditional and local knowledge including actual ecological practices and new technologies including IT and biotechnology?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

I see it perfectly well. I was first farmer in Georgia who introduced innovations and new technologies. And I want to tell you briefly about this because I think we still have at times.

I was surrounded by old traditional farmers. And when we started to do different, and that was not extremely different, but it was different. We put a 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 warehouse. Different way of using plant protection, chemicals.

We had been like cornered by everybody first year, but 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 need to be informed and educated about essence of A, or B, or C innovations, where they can get it.

And here is a role of extension service that are very important and crucial. This is a bridge between us, between ministries and between farmers in the field. Because this is a knowledge distribution, this is an advice. And wherever extension service works well, there is no problem with innovations, there is no problem with agroecology. Agroecology is they are applying principles of ecology to agriculture. This is all life about. It includes everything. It includes everything because this is we could speak about ecology of soil, we could speak about ecology of cattle, we could speak about ecology of apple.

And this is very important, because do not knowing the specifics of those factors they are affecting the particular body we are talking about, we may get a mistake. So, the role of agroecology I say that 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.

Farmer is a conservative. Actually everybody who works there, mainly they are conservatives. Recommendation is not enough. It is my personal experience. A recommendation is working only when we follow with the success stories. We can show the neighbour farmers, the farmer who is a leader that already did 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)

That should not be just only ticking the box. That should be inclusive process in every programme. In every programme, in every activities 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 that programmes delivered. And I do not have the time to tell my story that 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 to be. 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.

So, we need to maintain active partnership 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 private sector is there, especially with public-private partnership, that is sustainable, that is business driven, that is for 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, exactly this 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 such kind of examples more 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 of the 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 up divide 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 alone standards without development, so it might be just the paper, we just need to know why we are talking of that.

And instead of like 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 pledge full commitment to this very important thing. Because without standards there is no trade. Without trade there is no access to the food. Without access to the 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 is that in terms of bringing good knowledge there when it is properly done and it is excellent. But it makes people like me, minister by that time, really thirsty, ready to go. I know already what to do. But there is no water. There is no water to drink.

So, what we need here, we need to make sure that our development work here is fully funded, but that to be a step to the forward. Foundation to the forward to attract private capital to implement projects based on the 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 interest 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 contribution could be earmarked and non-earmarked. That is one thing. But there is another thing. We prefer to work in the future in the manner that first we developed together with you all programmes and projects and next we will go and ask funding. Not vice versa that there is the money first and then we are thinking what to do with it. That you all now there have been such cases.

This is from my point of view 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 the organization's work in environment and nutrition side is not a barrier to the trade.

That is an interesting question. What is the work with the environments? 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 going to be plenty all, 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 so, that I need to explain to anybody here in this respected audience what does it mean. 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 work to explain to farmers what is that, I would say that it is vice versa, it is going to strengthen our aspiration in this direction.

Responsible and sustainable use of forest. It could also strengthen. I give you an example, so we had a very massive chopping out 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 Chestnut Producers Association and helped them to find a market in Europe to sell their chestnuts.

So, they have been earning money on crops instead of timber. So, those people who previously were chopping trees out 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 job.

CHAIRPERSON

And now I pass the floor to the representative of the Near East Group. Kuwait you have the floor.

Mr Yousef JHAIL (Kuwait)

My first question is: In your views how would you address the organization's 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 that [...] I do not think so. 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 a century, 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 organization's role and what they did here.

In such a situation when you have immediate response first, to assist people with food here is our sister organization WFP, that leads on this.

From my standpoint the organization'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 and they feel that there is assistance coming that is rightly directed. To make also, more simpler, I would say, so instead of just providing them food enough to pass over the next season, the organization should advocate and mobilise donors, and the organization has done it successfully in a few countries that I witnessed, to bring all donors at the table and help farmers to restore their livelihoods.

Is it animal husbandry, is it planting material, is it seed, is it 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 establish back 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 very discretion of the particular country to provide, 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 is also a role of the organization to bring this to the attention of everybody. Because if the organization 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 about small family farmers. I said about their future. I said 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 for, 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 the finance.

Without access to the finance and let us 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 that. 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 successful dealing with small and family farmers.

They need right input supply. Input supply, it is a complex system. So that to be quality and that to be a 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, 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 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 private sector in small scale farmings. They need access to the market. They need to know like the question, previously a question from my respected colleague from Uruguay, they need to know what does it mean to work with the environment. That respecting the environment it 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.

And there is one final point I want to stress. These all must remain useless if there is no human factor. If the small farmers, they do not know that we care about them, if they 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 restaurant to celebrate success of any more projects and they stay with their problems still there.

Human factor is the most important. That is what should drive this. No robot can replace 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 the 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 the organization's budgets 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 spending in particular, it is irresponsible answer. So, I would say that. And I know many ways, it is not only there, I have a problem of budget in my family, so and I am just dealing with that. So, that 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 the organization increase farmers' access to tools and technologies including biotechnology?

Mr Davit KIRVALIDZE (Georgia)

As I mentioned, the best way to access for farmers to anything, to any tools, any innovations it is a way that they should observe it. They need to see and get information of what is this about and see it in action. I have never seen any farmer who refuses that, so, and I can tell you one quick example.

So, new technologies also means like a special thermometer then you plug in the soil and it gives you projections. So, I bought this thermometer was a farmer back in the last century and put in my farm. And everybody was joking on 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 is going to be night frost. I told them, listen, take care about this. Ah, they said, there is no night frost. So 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 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 the Organization 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 borderline, in between, of food safety and food quality.

Food safety is something, though I am genetically an agriculturist. I was born in the family of 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 how I see the ample room for the private sector just to work on this just putting the quality labels, just right titling should be assured. The Organizations 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 the organization 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.

So 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 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 this 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 for 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 story, not because I'm doing something miracle. Just when I promise you something about to be shock against harassment, I have done in my life, so I will not allow anyone, if I'm here, to do it here or anything where I can stand.

CHAIRPERSON

So I think that's, we move on to the next group. I thank North America for their questions. I now pass the floor to the South West 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 of 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 could tell you what because I had a lengthy discussion with your representatives on this, shared my opinion. Of course we're going to do more and better on bilateral discussion 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 to be raised on a very high level on every UN and non-UN summit and all parties concerned to be involved in this.

Let's go to a particular direction. Fisheries are like 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 small, 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 the 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 are very important. And I am inclined to explore this opportunity with World Tourism Organization, if this happens, to work hand-in-hand on the benefit of country 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 have fought 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.

I promise I am going to consider that. As for programmes now, of course definitely. There will be many fair, very fair selection of the programmes and not only programmes, I don't want to ask 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 campaign of attracting private investments in agriculture and food sectors in your countries. This is the way to future, otherwise we cannot catch it up. I can assure that I know what does it mean for a small country to be neglected. I know it very well.

I know what does it mean for 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 does it mean, and as I was explained to divide equally, to 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 just need to make sure that everybody, but that happens if only if you are personally more active. Because there is going to be no declined denied initiative from my side if it comes to the 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 undertake, how do 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 very strict result based monitoring system. I mentioned just single report or nice photo is not a result. It's not a result. We just need to make sure that we are satisfied and I tell you honestly so, 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 it up on because they are accountable to their parliaments. And they need to go back to report to their parliaments, that when I gave allocated to your X 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 donor must appreciate that we are getting success and how am I going to ensure? I am easy on travel, I will go and see how it goes, how people are satisfied and how they are meeting required targets that was initially set. Because first thing is to set it rightly, to have a vision. Because nothing is wrong that bad vision correctly executed. We should make it our vision clear on every project is proper.

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 help 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 a human. It's a human. I don't go to it separately. I don't play 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 is also, because it is my, 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 not.

This is a way 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, 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.

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

Allow me to thank Mr Kirvalidze for his presentation. And 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 with the person who has projects in many African countries, who has visited not all of them yet, but we are proud with private input distributor dealers network we established in Africa, and I can tell you what we can do just 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 finalise with the world leader machinery producer. This is a real result I'm talking; 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 we will work hand by and to you with every initiative that is envisaged to increase Africa. I don't want any more similar book, like William Easterly 'The White Man's Burden' to be produced again about our jobs.

Algeria

For 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 very broad definition. I meant also these ones that FAO to 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 starts 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 in our work and they eventually benefit back not only on the continent, but on 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 sustainably could be finished by food distribution. It is emergency and on emergency, temporally 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 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 they are 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 ecology is completely different we are acting against agri-ecological principles. That means this natural body named soil, was established and grown in 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 tried not to read. I understand we are all talking about food security, 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 see Africa 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 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 for agriculture.

And I can share with you my experience and tell you that if you want to have a 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 a 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 to 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 excitement 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 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 for. 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 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 be 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 has 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