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of  
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Organisation  
des  
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pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## COUNCIL

**Report of the Joint Meeting of the  
Ninety-fourth Session of the Programme Committee  
and the  
Hundred and Tenth Session of the Finance Committee**

**Rome, 22 September 2005**

### Table of Contents

	Pages
Matters requiring attention by the Council	ii
Introduction	1
Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda	1
Item 2: Programme of Work and Budget 2006-07	1
Item 3. Review of Programme Planning and Budgeting: Practices in and Experiences of other International Organizations	2
Item 4. Savings and Efficiencies in Governance: Assessment of alternative arrangements for the meetings of the CCP and COAG	3

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## Matters requiring attention by the Council

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### *Matters requiring discussion and/or decision*

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	Paragraph
Programme of Work and Budget 2006-07	4 - 9

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### *Matters for information*

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	Paragraph
Review of Programme Planning and Budgeting: Practices in and Experiences of other International Organizations	10 – 12
Savings and Efficiencies in Governance: Assessment of alternative arrangements for the meetings of the CCP and COAG	13

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## **REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE PROGRAMME AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

Rome, 22 September 2005

### **Introduction**

1. The Committees submit to the Council the following report of their Joint Meeting.
2. The following Members were present at the meeting:

#### **Programme Committee**

##### Chairperson

H.E. E. Wermuth (Netherlands)

##### Members

Mr A.R. Ayazi (Afghanistan)

Ms J. Barfield (Australia)

Mr J. Melanson (Canada)

H.E. M. Arvelo Caamaño (Dominican Republic)

Mr G. Nair (India)

Mr F.B. Zenny (Jamaica)

Ms W. Dikah (Lebanon)

Mr J. Ramli (Malaysia)

Mr G.G. Lombin (Nigeria)

Ms M. Mohapi (South Africa)

#### **Finance Committee**

##### Chairperson

Mr R. Seminario Portocarrero (Peru)

##### Members

Mr A. Bakayoko (Côte d'Ivoire)

Mr A. Zodda (Italy)

Mr S. Yokoi (Japan)

Ms L. Al Saqqaf (Kuwait)

Ms A. Bryant (New Zealand)

Mr A. Ashraf Khawaja (Pakistan)

Ms A.M. Baiardi Quesnel (Paraguay)

Mr A. Beattie (United Kingdom)

Mr J.M. Cleverley (USA)

Ms V. Mutiro Takaendesa (Zimbabwe)

### **Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda<sup>1</sup>**

3. The Agenda for the Joint Meeting was approved.

### **Item 2: Programme of Work and Budget 2006-07<sup>2</sup>**

4. In the light of the reports from the respective Chairpersons on the deliberations in each Committee, the Committees jointly addressed the PWB 2006-07 documents. Regarding the budget level, the Committees acknowledged that a consensus would not be reached at this stage and, accordingly, decided to focus on the Supplement containing the reform proposals of the Director-General.

5. In response to queries made by the Committees, the Director-General clarified some aspects of the reform package including: a) that the work of the proposed division on diseases and pests of plants and animals was intended to deal only with transboundary problems, building on the successful EMPRES experience; b) that the placement of agro-industries in the Natural Resources, Technology and Sustainable Development Department was to emphasise

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<sup>1</sup> JM 05.2/1

<sup>2</sup> (docs. C 2005/3; C 2005/3 Sup. 1)

infrastructure requirements in rural areas; and c) that the Department of Alliances and Rural Livelihoods was meant to respond more adequately to the decisions of the World Food Summit: five years later and that inclusion in this Department of coordination of gender and equity activities would facilitate synergy with other social issues dealt with by the department. The Director-General also provided information on the resources to be made available to the expanded group of Sub-regional Offices.

6. The Committees endorsed the timely initiative from the Director-General to present extensive reform proposals aimed at a stronger and more responsive Organization. They emphasized the necessarily dynamic nature of a process of adaptation to changing contexts and new demands. The Committees and the Director-General agreed that the proposed reforms and the Independent External Evaluation of FAO should be mutually supportive, and both fit under a reforms umbrella.

7. The Committees underlined that little time had been available to analyse the proposals with the required depth. They stressed the need for additional supportive information to deepen understanding of their import by the Membership at large and facilitate their consideration at the next Council and Conference. The Committees recalled the specific requests made in this regard in their individual sessions.

8. In order to ensure a better understanding and broad ownership of the reforms by the Membership, and to be able to reach a consensus on the reform proposals by the council and at Conference, the Committees underscored the need for continued dialogue and sharing of information in a collaborative effort with the Secretariat. This process should make use of all possible avenues. They also recognized that the pace and effectiveness of the reforms would depend upon the eventual budget level to be decided by the Conference and ways to meet transition costs.

9. The Committees agreed that the Membership would need to ensure a process to consider and monitor further developments and follow up, including an implementation plan (embracing financial, programmatic and organizational aspects, as well as a timeframe) developed by the Secretariat to give effect to the decisions by the Conference.

### **Item 3. Review of Programme Planning and Budgeting: Practices in and Experiences of other International Organizations<sup>3</sup>**

10. The Committees appreciated the useful information provided in the document on practices in a sample of other UN system organizations. They agreed that the findings confirmed the influence of different management cultures in these Organizations and the resulting diverse approaches. At the same time, useful lessons could be drawn, pointing to potential simplification of FAO's planning and budgetary practices, as well as to possible improvements and much desired enhanced effectiveness of the related Governance process. In particular, the Committees reiterated the importance of finding practical solutions to eliminate the "disconnect" between substantial planning efforts and eventual decision on the budget level.

11. Some Members offered a number of suggestions on how the scope and format of FAO's set of planning documents and its overall programme budget process could be adjusted, drawing on the reported experiences in other Organizations.

12. The Committees requested the Secretariat to prepare a document for the next Joint Meeting containing possible options for a streamlined and improved planning process, so as to facilitate initiation of an effective dialogue among Members. They underlined their expectation that the Independent External Evaluation of FAO should also address these important issues.

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<sup>3</sup> Doc. JM 05.2/3

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#### **Item 4. Savings and Efficiencies in Governance: Assessment of alternative arrangements for the meetings of the CCP and COAG<sup>4</sup>**

13. The Joint Meeting reviewed the paper prepared by the Secretariat to describe and assess the results of the arrangements made in 2005 for back-to-back sessions of the CCP and COAG, and to examine the option of merging the two Committees (document JM 05.2/4). Some Members agreed with the conclusions of the document and endorsed the back-to-back arrangements for the CCP and COAG, while other countries expressed a wish to have more information on the policy and logistics issues related to an eventual merger of the two Committees. The Joint Meeting agreed to request the Secretariat to prepare another paper on these issues, for presentation at its next session.

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<sup>4</sup> Doc. JM 05.2/4