

**ERC/06/REP**

***REPORT***

Riga, Latvia,  
8 – 9 June 2006

**Twenty-fifth FAO  
Regional Conference  
for Europe**



**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

### **Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe**

First	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1949
Second	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1960
Third	-	Rome, Italy, 8-13 October 1962
Fourth	-	Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964
Fifth	-	Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966
Sixth	-	St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968
Seventh	-	Budapest, Hungary, 21-25 September 1970
Eighth	-	Munich, Germany, Fed.Rep. of, 18-23 September 1972
Ninth	-	Lausanne, Switzerland, 7-12 October 1974
Tenth	-	Bucharest, Romania, 20-25 September 1976
Eleventh	-	Lisbon, Portugal, 2-7 October 1978
Twelfth	-	Athens, Greece, 22-27 September 1980
Thirteenth	-	Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982
Fourteenth	-	Reykjavik, Iceland, 17-21 September 1984
Fifteenth	-	Istanbul, Turkey, 28 April-2 May 1986
Sixteenth	-	Cracow, Poland, 23-26 August 1988
Seventeenth	-	Venice, Italy, 3-7 April 1990
Eighteenth	-	Prague, Czechoslovakia, 24-28 August 1992
Nineteenth	-	Killarney, Ireland, 6-10 June 1994
Twentieth	-	Tel Aviv, Israel, 29 April-3 May 1996
Twenty-first	-	Tallinn, Estonia, 25-29 May 1998
Twenty-second	-	Porto, Portugal, 24-28 July 2000
Twenty-third	-	Nicosia, Cyprus, 29-31 May 2002
Twenty-fourth	-	Montpellier, France, 5-7 May 2004
Twenty-fifth	-	Riga, Latvia, 8-9 June 2006

**REPORT**  
**of the**  
**FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**

**Twenty-fifth Session**  
**Riga, Latvia, 8 and 9 June 2006**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS**  
**Rome, 2006**

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## SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Contribution of rural development in meeting the World Food Summit (WFS)/Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Region**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

1. agreed that rural development had an essential role to play for the members of the Region that were still in a process of transition with regard to their rural economies (para. 14);
2. stressed that rural development in these countries should be based on a coherent and holistic strategy, within which concerns such as social justice and sustainable management of natural resources would be integrated (para. 14);
3. suggested that the exchange of experience related to fostering rural development through the cultivation of traditional food products as well as through the preservation of national and cultural heritage could be beneficial (para. 17).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

4. noted that FAO activities were of paramount importance in assisting Member Nations in the Region in meeting the challenges of achieving the WFS target and the MDGs (para. 12);
5. noted that the role of FAO in this area was as relevant in Europe as in other regions of the world (para. 12).

### **The view of the European Region on the role of FAO as provider of global public goods (GPGs)**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

6. generally agreed that areas such as livestock transboundary disease control, food safety and guidance on land and water management to preserve the environment, constituted global public goods (GPGs) (para. 24);
7. stressed that more work was needed to ensure that the concept could be made fully operational to guide FAO in planning its regional activities (para. 24);

8. emphasized the unique role of FAO in the provision of truly global public goods, particularly in the fight against world poverty and hunger, including the pioneering work on the voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food (para. 25);
9. welcomed FAO's active efforts to link with other relevant international bodies in providing global public goods to its Member Nations of the European Region (para. 26);
10. stressed that in order to effectively provide GPGs, further collective action among governments would be necessary, and that it was important to find proper tools to foster cooperation as most decisions were taken independently by sovereign nations (para. 28).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

11. indicated that FAO should further examine its regional programmes on the basis of work carried out on international negotiations, including those on trade, keeping in mind its own mandate and its comparative advantage, and to present an analysis to the next Regional Conference for Europe in order to enable a decision on priorities in this field (para 27);
12. stressed that FAO should help build common perceptions among governments through awareness raising and provide space for collective information gathering, analysis, discussion and negotiations (para. 28);
13. felt that FAO played a unique and indispensable role in the domain of protection of consumers and of the environment (para. 29);
14. saw the normative work of FAO in plant and animal diseases as fundamental (para. 29)
15. viewed with concern any reduction in the critical mass of expertise available to the Region to monitor and guide responses (para. 29);
16. welcomed the suggestion contained in the document that FAO take a longer term perspective on evolutions in rural areas (para. 32);
17. emphasized that the reform process of FAO and the ongoing Independent External Evaluation (IEE) should be mutually supportive and the Director-General's reform should not pre-empt the IEE conclusions (para. 33);
18. stressed that an evaluation of the GPGs provided by FAO for the Region was needed, together with an analysis of the costs and benefits (para. 33).

**Strengthening Regional Cooperation and assisting countries in controlling Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Europe, including CIS countries**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

19. agreed that HPAI could not be tackled only at the national level, but needed to be addressed through an effective cooperation at the international level (para. 37);
20. welcomed the establishment of the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) within the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TAD) to coordinate the emergency response to Avian Influenza (para 39);
21. stressed that actions at the international and national levels remain essential elements of the ongoing global efforts to prevent the spread of HPAI worldwide (para. 43).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

22. requested to receive further information on the follow-up to the Regional Meeting on Avian Influenza held in Ankara (Turkey, April 2006) and on the International Scientific Conference on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, held in Rome in May 2006 (para. 40);
23. underlined that the work of FAO and OIE in strengthening veterinary services must be supported and coordinated with WHO in order to increase pandemic preparedness in developing countries (para. 43).

**Matters arising from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the FAO Conference**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

24. confirmed its support to the Conference Resolution (6/2005) of 26 November 2005 (para. 48);
25. stressed that a substantive discussion would not be possible until a detailed and complete proposal as to how the Director-General would like to implement the reform had been presented (para. 49).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

26. urged that the proposal as outlined in the Conference Resolution 6/2005, paras. 5 and 6, which should be reviewed by the Programme and Finance Committee Sessions in September 2006, in the presence of silent observers, include details of steps already taken, the relevant financial implications and their effects on the level of resources (para. 49);
27. stressed that further reform measures, including decentralization, should neither anticipate nor prejudge the ongoing IEE process and its results, and that the IEE should provide the basis for any future structural reform proposal, taking the UN system-wide reform into consideration (para. 50);
28. highlighted that according to its mandate, FAO had to fulfil normative and operational tasks, and adequate funding from the Regular Programme should be allocated to the normative activities (para. 51);
29. expressed concern regarding the reduction of professional posts at Headquarters, as the critical mass of the Organization might be weakened (para. 52);
30. also expressed concern about the adequate allocation of human and financial resources to the Regional and Sub-regional Office in the European Region in order to fulfil their mandate (para. 53);
31. took note of the offer by the delegation of Kazakhstan to host the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia in Astana, supported by the delegations of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and of the statement that such an office should be located in one of the CIS countries of Central Asia in order to bring the technical capacity of FAO closer to this region (paras. 55 and 56);
32. also took note of Turkey's readiness to host the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia in Turkey which was supported by the delegation of Azerbaijan (para. 57).

**Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2004-05**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

33. took note that the priorities, identified within the Strategic Framework 2000-2015, endorsed at the Twenty-second FAO Regional Conference for Europe in 2000 and reiterated by the subsequent Conferences in 2002 and 2004, took into consideration both agricultural policies in the enlarged EU and its acceding countries, as well as the special needs of the countries of the Balkans and the CIS (para. 60).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

34. highlighted the importance of livestock activities in the period 2004-05 and the emergency assistance for the early detection and prevention of HPAI (para. 62);
35. expressed appreciation of the FAO/WHO initiatives and stressed the importance of the training provided related to issues of food safety, risk assessment and Codex Alimentarius (para. 63);
36. stressed that land tenure, land consolidation and land management were issues of importance for sustainable agriculture and rural development (para. 64);
37. acknowledged the important support provided by FAO in the area of fisheries (para. 66);
38. took note of the work undertaken in the forestry sector and of the close collaboration with other UN organizations and NGOs/CSOs in undertaking these activities (para. 67);
39. welcomed the important work of FAO in supporting Member Nations' development efforts through policy assistance and field operations (para. 68);
40. also welcomed the support provided for the development of rural investments in the agricultural and rural sectors (para. 68);
41. expressed concern that in some areas adequate technical assistance could no longer be provided by either the Regional or Sub-regional offices (para. 69);
42. further noted that newly emerging issues, e.g. organic farming, biotechnology and biosafety could not be addressed due to the lack of capacity resulting from the severe budgetary constraints faced by FAO (para. 69);
43. requested FAO to reconsider the recent and planned abolition of a number of posts in the Regional and Sub-regional Offices, as this could impede FAO from meeting the challenges in the Region (para. 70).

**Date, Place and Main Theme(s) of the Twenty-sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

44. welcomed the renewed offer extended by the Delegation of Austria to host the next (26<sup>th</sup>) Regional Conference in 2008, and also welcomed the offer extended by the Delegation of Armenia to host the 27<sup>th</sup> Conference in 2010 (para. 72);
45. noted that the agenda of future Conferences would include a standing item on "Global and Regional Emergency Issues" which would address issues relating to emergencies and their impact at global and regional levels and FAO's role in dealing with such matters in support of Member Nations (para. 73).



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## INTRODUCTION

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1. The Twenty-fifth FAO Regional Conference for Europe was held in Riga, Latvia, on 8 and 9 June 2006 at the invitation of the Government of Latvia.
2. The List of Participants is given in [Appendix A](#) to this Report.

## OPENING CEREMONY

3. The Director-General of FAO, Mr Jacques Diouf, welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed appreciation to the Government of Latvia for the generous hospitality and excellent facilities that had been provided for the Conference.

## ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

4. The Conference unanimously elected the Minister for Agriculture of Latvia, His Excellency Martins Roze, as Chairperson of the Conference. In his opening remarks, he welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed his pleasure of hosting such an important event. He mentioned that this Conference was meeting immediately after an assessment of the objectives and format of the Regional Conference for Europe by the Executive Committee of the European Commission on Agriculture as mandated by the previous 24th Regional Conference. He particularly welcomed the new Member Nations in the Region, Belarus and the Russian Federation. He also welcomed Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which had requested to participate in this and future conferences, and underlined that the grouping of all of the CIS countries in one region would enhance regional cooperation. He stressed the importance of the Conference being organized in a country which had evolved from a country receiving support to a donor country.
5. The delegates of the following countries were unanimously elected as vice-chairpersons:
  - Mr Romualdo Bettini (Italy)
  - Mr Gudni Bragason (Iceland)
6. Mr Zohrab Malek, Ambassador of Armenia to FAO, was elected Rapporteur.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

7. The Conference adopted the Agenda, as given in [Appendix B](#) to this report, and the Timetable for the session.

## STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

8. The Director-General delivered his Statement to the Conference, the text of which is attached in [Appendix D](#) to this report.
9. The Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, Mr Mohammad Saeid Noori Naeini, also delivered a Statement, the text of which is attached in [Appendix E](#) to this report.

## **OUTCOME OF THE 34<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE (ECA)**

10. The Rapporteur of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of ECA informed the Conference that ECA had deliberated on its agenda, noting that no controversial points were raised on the various items. The conclusions and recommendations of the discussion on Items 4 and 5, which were the object of the technical preparation for the Conference, were submitted for endorsement to the Conference, and are attached as Appendixes F and G to this report.

### **CONTRIBUTION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MEETING THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT (WFS)/MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN THE REGION<sup>1</sup>**

11. This item, introduced by the Secretariat, highlighted the fact that poverty was of more concern in areas of non-EU countries of Europe and that food security in the most rural sub-region (Central Asia) had deteriorated. The document outlined the progress of countries in meeting their international obligations in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

12. The Conference noted that FAO activities were of paramount importance in assisting Member Nations in the Region in meeting the challenges of achieving the WFS target and the MDGs. The role of FAO in this area was as relevant in Europe as in other regions of the world.

13. The Conference also welcomed the numerous instances of cooperation between FAO and other international and bilateral donors.

14. The Conference agreed that rural development had an essential role to play for the members of the Region that were still in a process of transition with regard to their rural economies and that have a considerable number of undernourished persons due to poverty. Rural development in these countries should be based on a coherent and holistic strategy, within which concerns such as social justice and sustainable management of natural resources would be integrated. The EU experience with rural development had shown that an active rural development policy could play an important role in restructuring the provision of local services, diversification and community involvement. Many lessons could be learned from the experience of the EU rural development policy and pre-accession instruments (e.g. the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development, or SAPARD).

15. The Conference also noted that rural development should pursue the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) already introduced in low and middle income countries of the Region, since poverty reduction efforts were clearly necessary. However, pro-poor rural development policies and strategies also needed to be adopted in order to ensure that the poor also benefit from economic growth.

16. The Conference also took note of FAO's cooperation with the European Commission (EC) and was reminded of the European Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union through which neighbours of the EU were offered a privileged relationship, building upon mutual commitment to common values.

17. Several Member Nations further expanded on the above considerations. It was suggested that the exchange of experience related to fostering rural development through the cultivation of traditional food products, as well as through the preservation of national and cultural heritage could be beneficial. Such activities could add to the attractiveness of rural areas and support employment through tourism.

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<sup>1</sup> ERC/06/3.

18. One delegation noted that land reform was a key factor in the sizeable reduction of food insecurity in its country.
19. One delegation stressed that two other issues were important for FAO's approach to rural development. First, at the 2002 World Food Summit: *five years later*, nations were called upon to build national alliances against hunger. Second, the FAO voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food were also important as a reflection of an FAO-specific approach.
20. Another delegation acknowledged the important contribution of the Regional Office for Europe to rural development assistance in the Western Balkans and noted that there was a need for coordination of assistance between FAO, the World Bank and the European Union.
21. The representative from the UNDP Regional Office noted that she would facilitate contact between the UN country teams and FAO in order to foster collaboration, considering FAO's limited country presence in the Region.
22. A representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation<sup>2</sup> for Europe intervened on this item.

### **THE VIEW OF THE EUROPEAN REGION ON THE ROLE OF FAO AS PROVIDER OF GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS<sup>3</sup>**

23. The Chairperson, H.E. Martins Roze, Minister for Agriculture of Latvia, opened the discussion of the Ministerial Round Table by indicating the difficulties faced by transition countries such as Latvia, and expressed appreciation for the support received from FAO in assisting his country in the agricultural sector. In general, Europe faced considerable challenges in terms of environmental pollution, climate change, regional conflicts and transboundary diseases, all domains for which FAO's contribution was crucial. The Minister also stressed the role of FAO in combating poverty and hunger, e.g. through the development of voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food. For the European Region, he saw the role of FAO as particularly critical in fostering cooperation among Member Nations to control dangerous animal diseases and ensure food safety. He then invited discussion on the document prepared by the Secretariat, which he found concise and provocative.
24. The Ministerial Round Table welcomed the document, and agreed that the concept of Global Public Goods (GPGs) was helpful as a basis for discussion of FAO's role in the Region. There was general agreement that areas such as livestock transboundary disease control, food safety and guidance on land and water management to preserve the environment, constituted global public goods. However, more work might be needed to ensure that the concept could be made fully operational to guide FAO in planning its regional activities.
25. Member Nations emphasized the unique role of FAO in the provision of truly global public goods, particularly in the fight against world poverty and hunger, including the pioneering work on the voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food.
26. The Ministerial Round Table agreed that FAO was essentially providing global public goods to its Member Nations of the European Region and welcomed FAO's active efforts to link with other relevant international bodies. However, some members indicated that FAO could coordinate more systematically with other UN agencies, as well as with NGOs and the private sector. Much of the discussion focussed on the priorities within the GPGs.
27. Member countries of the EU indicated that GPGs were increasingly guiding the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with an increasing part of the direct payments made to farmers being

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<sup>2</sup> Held in Riga on 5 and 6 June 2006. The statement is attached as Appendix H to this Report.

<sup>3</sup> ERC/06/4

now explicitly linked to the achievement of specific health and environment objectives. Reference was also made to the preliminary conclusions of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods, a working group established by France and Sweden, which strived to sharpen the definition of GPGs and their implication for Official Development Assistance, and was concerned that few developing or transition countries had a real say in decisions at the global level; international negotiations, including those on trade, should be more inclusive and not lose sight of GPGs. FAO should further examine its regional programmes on the basis of such work, keeping in mind its own mandate and its comparative advantage, and to present an analysis to the next Regional Conference for Europe in order to enable a decision on priorities in this field.

28. Member Nations stressed that in order to effectively provide GPGs, further collective action among governments would be necessary. Since most decisions were taken independently by sovereign nations, it was important to find the proper tools to foster cooperation. To this end, FAO should help build common perceptions among governments through awareness-raising and provide space for collective information gathering, analysis, discussion and negotiations.

29. Some delegations highlighted that the protection of consumers and of the environment was pivotal, and felt that FAO played a unique and indispensable role in this domain. This was particularly true for plant and animal diseases, where the normative work of FAO was seen as fundamental, and any reduction in the critical mass of expertise available to the Region to monitor and guide responses was viewed with concern. One delegation voiced concern that as a consequence of successive real cuts in the Regular Programme budget, FAO's role in Europe could be affected by the reduced resources assigned to its decentralized structure in Europe, and this could lead to a loss of confidence by its Member Nations in its capacity to fulfil its task in Europe.

30. Some delegations indicated that normative activities, though essential, were not sufficient to achieve the desired GPGs. Capacity building at country level was also indispensable, and the value of TCP projects was noted by several Member Nations, particularly in the CIS region. Some concern was expressed on bureaucratic delays and the difficulty for FAO to respond on a timely manner to countries' urgent needs. Also in the Region, there were countries where women worked in, or were dependent on, agriculture and the rural sector, and were exposed to discrimination in different aspects. This was an area which FAO should also highlight in its activities at both the local and the regional levels.

31. Some Member Nations offered to share their expertise and experience, notably in implementing reforms to foster economic transition or in the process of acceding the EU. The Conference noted that much expertise was indeed available within the Region, and that intergovernmental cooperation should be further developed.

32. Member Nations welcomed the suggestion contained in the document that FAO take a longer term perspective on evolutions in rural areas. Coordinated analytical work on such changes would assure that national policies were based on relevant and factual information.

33. Member Nations emphasized that the reform process of FAO and the ongoing Independent External Evaluation (IEE) should be mutually supportive and the Director-General's reform should not pre-empt the IEE conclusions. In particular, an evaluation of the GPGs provided by FAO for the Region was needed, together with an analysis of the costs and benefits.

34. A representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation for Europe<sup>4</sup> intervened on this item.

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<sup>4</sup> Held in Riga on 5 and 6 June 2006. The statement is attached as Appendix I to this Report.

## **STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTING COUNTRIES IN CONTROLLING HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) IN EUROPE, INCLUDING CIS COUNTRIES<sup>5</sup>**

35. Under this item, introduced by the Chief, Animal Health Service, FAO Animal Production and Health Division (AGA)/FAO Chief Veterinary Officer, the Conference was informed on the situation regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and the H5N1 virus, particularly in the European Region, and its evolution in 2006. The FAO activities, within the global partnership of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission (EC), were also outlined.
36. The Conference welcomed the document and expressed appreciation regarding the broad nature of FAO activities to support its Member Nations in preparedness planning and control of HPAI.
37. The Conference agreed that HPAI could not be tackled only at the national level, but needed to be addressed through an effective cooperation at the international level.
38. The Conference took note that the European Community was working in close collaboration with the World Bank, the Senior UN Systems Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, OIE, FAO and WHO.
39. The Conference welcomed the establishment of the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) within the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TAD) to coordinate the emergency response to Avian Influenza.
40. The Conference requested to receive further information on the follow-up to the Regional Meeting on Avian Influenza held in Ankara, Turkey, in April 2006, and concerning the International Scientific Conference on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, held in Rome in May 2006.
41. The Conference took note of the Senior Officials' Meeting on Avian Influenza and Human Pandemic Influenza, held in June 2006, hosted by Austria on behalf of the European Union, the European Commission (EC) and FAO. The main objective of this meeting was to initiate stocktaking on the current global situation regarding Avian Influenza and Human Pandemic preparedness planning and of the specific funding requirements, as well as the further strengthening of the international partnership in this field.
42. The Conference took note that the European Commission (EC) was contributing €46 million to the Avian and Human Influenza Facility (AHIF) as part of the pledge undertaken at the Beijing Conference in January 2006, and that the EC had channelled funds via the AHIF. This Facility covered countries in Asia and the countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, supporting individual country action plans in order to promote country ownership and form the basis for a policy dialogue and encourage multi-sector reform.
43. The Conference stressed that actions at the international and national levels remain essential elements of the ongoing global efforts to prevent the spread of HPAI worldwide and underlined that the work of FAO and OIE in strengthening veterinary services must be supported and coordinated with WHO in order to increase pandemic preparedness in developing countries.
44. Several Member Nations outlined their individual action and prevention plans regarding HPAI.

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<sup>5</sup> ERC/06/5

45. The Conference took note of the activities of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) related to HPAI and particularly the collaboration with FAO and other international organizations.
46. A representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation<sup>6</sup> for Europe intervened on this item.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 33<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE FAO CONFERENCE<sup>7</sup>**

47. The Director-General introduced this item for discussion and informed the Conference that following the decision made by the Thirty-third FAO Conference in November 2005, the Organization would begin implementation of the reform with the establishment of Sub-regional Offices in the African Region and Central Asia. He stressed that FAO would also need to raise an additional US\$15 million in voluntary contributions in order to cover the transition costs of the reform. He informed the Conference that a revised Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2006-2007 had been presented to the 114<sup>th</sup> Session of the Finance Committee and the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the Programme Committee in May 2006 in Rome. He also stated that in the African Region, negotiations had been initiated regarding the location of additional Sub-regional Offices (SROs). He mentioned the possible relocation of the Regional Office for Europe as well as the establishment of an additional liaison office in the Region, further to continuing negotiations and consultations with Member Nations to assess the feasibility of the most acceptable sites. He further informed that in relation to the reform at Headquarters, the number of departments would be maintained at eight and that there would be a need for a more balanced level of staffing among the departments. He underlined that FAO reform was a parallel and a mutually supportive process with the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) and the UN system-wide reforms.
48. The Conference welcomed the initiative of the Director-General to enhance the transparent process of a consultative dialogue among the membership by putting this item on the agenda and in tabling reform proposals, and confirmed its support to the Conference resolution of 26 November 2005.
49. The Conference stressed that a substantive discussion would not be possible until a detailed and complete proposal as to how the Director-General would like to implement the reform had been presented. The Conference welcomed the proposal of the Director-General to present a specific and complete proposition on how to implement his proposals as outlined in the Conference Resolution 6/2005, paras. 5 and 6. The Conference urged that this proposition, which should be reviewed by the Programme and Finance Committee Sessions in September 2006, in the presence of silent observers, include details of steps already taken, the relevant financial implications and their effects on the level of resources.
50. The Conference stressed that further reform measures including decentralization should neither anticipate nor prejudice the ongoing IEE process and its results, and that the IEE should provide the basis for any future structural reform proposal, taking the UN system-wide reform into consideration.
51. The Conference also highlighted that according to its mandate, FAO had to fulfil normative and operational tasks, and adequate funding from the Regular Programme should be allocated to the normative activities, but that FAO should also have the capacity to undertake its operational task despite its budgetary constraints, and requested a strengthening of cooperation with other relevant organizations.

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<sup>6</sup> Held in Riga on 5 and 6 June 2006. The statement is attached as Appendix J to this Report.

<sup>7</sup> ERC/06/6 and RC/2006/1

52. The Conference expressed concern regarding the reduction of professional posts at Headquarters, as the critical mass of the Organization might be weakened.
53. The Conference also expressed concern about the adequate allocation of human and financial resources to the Regional and Sub-regional Offices in the European Region in order to fulfil their mandate.
54. The Conference took note of the increased delegation of authority to decentralized offices.
55. The delegations of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic welcomed the reform and the proposal to establish a Sub-Regional Office for Central Asia, and stressed that such an office should be located in one of the CIS countries of Central Asia in order to bring the technical capacity of FAO closer to this region.
56. The delegation of Kazakhstan confirmed its offer to host the Sub-Regional Office in Astana, Kazakhstan and the delegations of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan supported this proposal.
57. The delegation of Turkey expressed its readiness to host the Sub-Regional Office for Central Asia in Turkey, which was supported by the delegation of Azerbaijan.

### **REPORT ON FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION 2004-2005<sup>8</sup>**

58. Under this item, the Secretariat outlined the activities in the European Region in the biennium 2004-2005 and highlighted that with the membership of Ukraine, Belarus and the Russian Federation, the number of countries had increased to 52, including one member organization and the five Central Asian Countries.
59. The Conference welcomed the document provided by the Secretariat and highlighted that the work of FAO in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was of paramount importance to the Region.
60. The Conference took note that the priorities, identified within the Strategic Framework 2000 – 2015, endorsed at the Twenty-second FAO Regional Conference for Europe in 2000 and reiterated by the subsequent Conferences in 2002 and 2004, took into consideration both agricultural policies in the enlarged EU and its acceding countries, as well as, the special needs of the countries of the Balkans and the CIS.
61. The Conference welcomed the collaboration with international organizations, regional and national institutions as well as NGOs/CSOs and encouraged FAO to further develop and strengthen these relationships.
62. The Conference highlighted the importance of livestock activities in the period 2004-2005 and the emergency assistance for the early detection and prevention of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. It further welcomed the technical assistance provided to the livestock sector within the framework of the Global Livestock Early Warning System (GLEWS) and the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and other Transboundary Diseases (GF-TADs).
63. The Conference expressed appreciation of the FAO/WHO initiatives and stressed the importance of the training provided related to issues of food safety, risk assessment and Codex Alimentarius.
64. The Conference stressed that land tenure, land consolidation and land management were issues of importance for sustainable agriculture and rural development.

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<sup>8</sup> ERC/06/2

65. The Conference also recognized the valuable work in this area in Central and Eastern Europe and the exchange of experience on land consolidation with Western European Countries.
66. The Conference acknowledged the important support provided by FAO in the area of fisheries and welcomed the establishment of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE).
67. The Conference took note of the work undertaken in the forestry sector and of the close collaboration with other UN organizations and NGOs/CSOs in undertaking these activities.
68. The Conference welcomed the important work of FAO in supporting Member Nations' development efforts through policy assistance and field operations. It also welcomed the technical support provided for the development of rural investments in the agricultural and rural sectors.
69. The Conference expressed concern that in some areas adequate technical assistance could no longer be provided by either the Regional or Sub-regional Office. It further noted that newly emerging issues, e.g. organic farming, biotechnology and biosafety could not be addressed, due to the lack of capacity resulting from the severe budgetary constraints faced by FAO.
70. The Conference requested FAO to reconsider the recent and planned abolition of a number of posts in the Regional and Sub-regional Offices, as this could impede FAO from meeting the challenges in the Region.
71. The delegation of Hungary confirmed their offer to host the FAO Regional Office for Europe and stated that they would cover the costs of the transfer.

### **DATE, PLACE AND MAIN THEME(S) OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**

72. The Conference welcomed the renewed offer extended by the Delegation of Austria to host the next (26<sup>th</sup>) Regional Conference in 2008. The Conference also welcomed the offer extended by the Delegation of Armenia to host the 27<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe in 2010. The Conference agreed that both offers should be conveyed to the Director-General for decision, in consultation with the Members of the Region.
73. The Conference noted that the agenda of future European Regional Conferences would include a standing item on "Global and Regional Emergency Issues" which would address issues relating to emergencies and their impact at global and regional levels and FAO's role in dealing with such matters in support of Member Nations.
74. The Conference noted that the Secretariat had provisionally scheduled the dates of the 26<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe from 4 to 6 June 2008. It also noted that if these dates were not to be agreeable to the host country, then the country would have to communicate in writing its renewed offer to host the Conference, as well as proposals of new dates.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

75. None were raised.

### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

76. With some amendments, the text of the draft report was adopted by the Conference.

### **CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE**

77. On behalf of the Director-General, the Regional Representative for Europe expressed deep appreciation for the warm and generous hospitality which the host Government had extended

to all delegations. In particular, she extended her deep gratitude for the support which the host Government had extended to the delegations from the low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) in the Region by providing travel and accommodation for two persons from each of these countries; support which undoubtedly resulted in enhancing overall participation in the Conference.

78. The representative from Armenia wished to place on record, on behalf of his delegation and on behalf of the other nine delegations from LIFDCs, wholehearted appreciation for the unprecedented support which the host country had extended; support which was greatly welcomed by the countries involved and without which participation would not have been assured considering the acute financial constraints which they were experiencing.

79. On behalf of the Conference, the representative from Austria communicated sincere appreciation for the generous and cordial welcome the host Government had accorded to participants and for the excellent facilities that had been provided.

80. On behalf of the Government of Latvia, the Chairperson paid tribute to the active participation of all delegations which had allowed the Conference to conclude its heavy agenda in a timely manner. In particular, he referred to the lively exchange of views which had taken place during the Ministerial Round Table, and expressed the hope that future Conferences would continue to experience a high-level and enhanced participation from all the members of the Region.

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**APPENDIX A**

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**  
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**LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES**

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## **APPENDIX B**

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### **AGENDA**

#### **I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

#### **II. STATEMENTS**

4. Statement by the Director-General

#### **III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

5. Contribution of rural development in meeting the World Food Summit (WFS)/ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Region
6. The view of the European Region on the role of FAO as provider of global public goods
7. Strengthening Regional Cooperation and assisting countries in controlling Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Europe, including CIS countries
8. Matters arising from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the FAO Conference
9. Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2004-05

#### **IV. OTHER MATTERS**

10. Date, Place and Main Theme(s) of the Twenty-sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe
11. Any other business
12. Adoption of the Report
13. Closure of the Conference

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## APPENDIX C

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### LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ERC/06/1.Rev.1	Provisional Agenda
ERC/06/2	Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2004-05
ERC/06/3	Contribution of rural development in meeting the World Food Summit (WFS)/Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Region
ERC/06/4	The view of the European Region on the role of FAO as provider of global public goods
ERC/06/5	Strengthening Regional Cooperation and assisting countries in controlling Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Europe, including CIS countries
ERC/06/6	Matters arising from the 33 <sup>rd</sup> Session of the FAO Conference
RC/2006/1	FAO Reform: Part I. The Director-General's revised proposals Part II. A vision for the twenty-first century

#### **INF SERIES**

ERC/06/INF/1	Information Note
ERC/06/INF/2.Rev.1	Provisional Timetable
ERC/06/INF/3.Rev.1	List of Documents
ERC/06/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ERC/06/INF/5	Provisional List of Delegates
ERC/06/INF/6	Statement of Competence and Voting Rights by the European Community (EC) and its Member States

#### **LIM SERIES**

ERC/06/LIM/1	Main conclusions and list of recommendations stemming from the debate in the 34 <sup>th</sup> session of the ECA on item: The role of agriculture and rural development in revitalizing abandoned/depopulated areas
ERC/06/LIM/2	Main conclusions and list of recommendations stemming from the debate in the 34 <sup>th</sup> session of the ECA on item: Development in the European agrifood markets: impact on producers and consumers and perspectives

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## APPENDIX D

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### STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

*Mr Chairman,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Honourable Delegates,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

#### **Introduction**

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to be here with you at this Twenty-fifth FAO Regional Conference for Europe which is being held this year in the thriving capital of Latvia.

I should like to express my deep gratitude to Latvia for the warm welcome and the hospitality extended to the delegations. I should like to thank the Government of Latvia in particular for its generosity in having facilitated the attendance of the low-income food-deficit Member Nations of the region by covering their travel and accommodation expenses.

I should also like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the Russian Federation. The return to FAO of this important agricultural country is a significant event that reinforces the universal nature of the Organization.

#### **State of food insecurity in the world and in Europe**

Hunger and poverty are the two major scourges of humanity. The World Food Summit of 1996 and the Millennium Summit therefore set the goal of halving hunger and undernutrition by 2015.

The number of undernourished people in the developing countries fell by 26 million during the first half of the 1990s but then rose by 23 million during the second half of the same decade.

Global *per capita* food production has steadily risen for the past 30 years. Yet, 854 million people are still undernourished in the world, including 820 million in the developing countries, 25 million in the countries in transition and 9 million in the industrialized countries.

Hunger and malnutrition in Europe are concentrated in the Balkans and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where the majority of the poor depend on agriculture. It is therefore important for these countries to ensure economic growth in their rural areas in order to raise *per capita* income.

Food insecurity is exacerbated by:

- man-made disasters (war, conflict, political and economic instability with their ensuing problems of refugees and displaced persons);
- natural disasters (prolonged drought, floods and hailstorms); and
- the absence or inadequacy of social safety nets.

## **Development of agriculture in Europe 2004-2005: outcome**

### **Agricultural production**

*Per capita* agricultural production in Europe has remained relatively stable during the last ten years, rising by only 5 percent in Western Europe and by 7 percent in the countries of the CIS. During the same period, crop production rose by 17 and 24 percent in Western Europe and the CIS countries, respectively, while livestock production fell by 18 percent in the CIS countries and only rose by 3 percent in the countries of Western Europe.

### **Fisheries and aquaculture**

Fish production remains stable, as does *per capita* fish consumption which averaged 19.8 kg in 2001. Total aquaculture production in 2004 amounted to 2.2 million tonnes. Aquaculture production – mainly in freshwater ponds – increased in Central and Eastern Europe, following transition to a market economy. In Western Europe, marine aquaculture has expanded in these last ten years, rising from 20 000 tonnes in the early 1990s to 1.7 million tonnes in 2003.

### **Forestry**

Europe's forests perform important ecological, economic, social and cultural functions. Its forest area in 2005 (excluding the Russian Federation) covered 193 million hectares, an increase of 7 percent from 1980. Europe is the only major region to have had a net increase in forest area for the period 1990-2005. However, the health of its forests is compromised by fire, insect infestation and disease.

### **Agricultural trade**

Europe's agricultural exports in 2004 amounted to US\$307 billion, which was 17 percent higher than the previous year. Its agricultural imports were US\$330 billion, up almost 16 percent from 2003. Its agricultural trade balance for 2004 was therefore in deficit by US\$23 billion.

The countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS have run an agricultural trade deficit for the last ten years, with the 2004 deficit totalling US\$12.9 billion.

### **Constraints**

#### **Water**

Water represents a constraint on agriculture in the arid countries of Central Asia, in the Caucasus and in the Republic of Moldova, especially where cotton is the main crop.

#### **Infrastructure: roads, storage and markets**

Communications and road links remain an important constraint on agricultural production in the poorest countries of the region. The rural populations are also affected by a lack of access to clean water, electricity and gas as well as to adequate healthcare and education facilities. Investment in rural infrastructure is essential if further investment is to be encouraged.

#### **Transboundary animal diseases**

Transboundary animal diseases (foot-and-mouth, bluetongue, brucellosis) pose serious problems in the region. There is also growing concern over avian influenza, as the H5N1 virus has now been detected in twenty-five countries of the region (including the countries of Central Asia). FAO has always advocated an approach based on prevention, with the training of national officers in early detection and in the control of transboundary diseases, together with the mobilization of

international expertise and financial resources. In this connection, I am most appreciative of the close cooperation that exists between FAO and its major partners in the region, that is, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the European Commission, in the control of these animal diseases.

### **Financing**

It is encouraging to note that loans and credit granted by the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in support of the agricultural sector increased from US\$5 billion in the 2002 financial year to US\$7 billion in the years 2003 and 2004, with 20 percent for agriculture and 30 percent for rural infrastructure.

### **Agenda of the Regional Conference**

We are here today for a Conference that has a new format and a much reduced duration, as agreed with the European Commission on Agriculture.

The Regional Conference will be looking closely at two important topics:

- the contribution of rural development to the realization of the World Food Summit objectives and the Millennium Development Goals; and
- the strengthening of regional cooperation for the control of highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Finally, I eagerly await the recommendations from the Ministerial Round Table on the "role of FAO as provider of global public goods".

### **Outcome of the Thirty-third Conference of FAO**

The Thirty-third session of the Conference of FAO, which was held in Rome in November 2005, adopted a budget of US\$765.7 million for the 2006-2007 biennium, which represents zero nominal growth plus security expenditure and US\$6 million for priority programmes. The FAO Conference also examined my proposals for reform of the Organization. It approved, among other matters, a number of changes to the organizational structure at Headquarters from 1 January 2006, together with the implementation of decentralization proposals limited to one region and the opening of a subregional office in another region. I have decided to begin with the Africa region and the Central Asia subregion.

FAO will also have to raise an additional US\$15 million in voluntary contributions to cover the transition costs of reform.

The Programme of Work and Budget 2006-2007 has therefore been revisited to accommodate these initial changes in the organizational structure at Headquarters and the decentralized offices and to place special emphasis on the dissemination of knowledge and on the building of capacities in the developing and transition countries.

### **Main challenges and prospects in the region**

*Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The agricultural sector dominates the economies of a majority of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. It is basic to food security as a source of livelihood for a majority of the population, providing income, foreign exchange earnings and gainful employment. And yet it remains a vulnerable sector. The potential for

increasing agricultural output in the countries of the region is great. Actual crop and livestock yields are markedly lower than the results of research trials. If they are to meet their development objectives, the countries of the region need to increase their food supplies and exports and to develop their human and institutional capacities, technology transfer, delivery systems and infrastructure.

The lasting solution for the improvement of agricultural performance in the countries of the region lies largely in the transformation of agriculture through National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) able to generate and transfer productivity-enhancing and market-oriented technologies. Enhancing the research capacities of the NARSs requires the active collaboration of policymakers, educators, extension workers and clients.

The countries of the region and of the CIS, in particular, continue to have the highest incidence of cardiovascular disease in the world. This is essentially due to poor nutrition and is an issue that needs to be addressed from the producer perspective, while educating consumers with WHO assistance. In this connection, I greatly appreciate the collaboration that exists on this matter between the WHO Regional Office and the FAO Regional Office in anticipation of the Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity, which will be held in Turkey in November this year.

Many countries of the region have to deal with the liberalization of agricultural trade in the framework of the WTO and its impact on food security and poverty alleviation. What is important is to align market reforms with effective policies and investments that will enable the poor to seize the opportunities of trade, while putting safety nets in place to protect the vulnerable segments of society.

The developed countries could help these countries draw tangible benefits from international trade by facilitating access to their markets. The European Union can play a fundamental role in improving the welfare of the countries of the Balkans and the CIS, especially of their rural populations, by facilitating the integration of trade. This is particularly important for agriculture.

FAO will continue to work closely with its development partners and with individual governments of the Balkans and CIS subregions to strengthen their agricultural sectors and alleviate poverty in their rural areas.

I wish you a successful meeting and thank you for your kind attention.

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## APPENDIX E

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### STATEMENT BY THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE FAO COUNCIL

*Mr Chairman,  
Mr Director-General of FAO,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is my pleasure and indeed an honour to express on my own behalf and on behalf of all Member Nations of FAO, our most sincere thanks and gratitude to you, Mr Chairman and through you to the Government and to the great people of Latvia, for the outstanding hospitality extended to all participants in the 25<sup>th</sup> FAO Regional Conference for Europe.

*Mr Chairman,*

We are living in a world endowed with such global prosperity and material wealth that no one could realistically have predicted even half a century ago. The world GDP exceeds US\$40 000 billion, some countries enjoy per capita income of more than US\$40 000 per year, but unfortunately, in the very same world and at the very same time, three billion people are living on an income of less than US\$2 per day. Every day 25 000 children die of hunger and malnutrition; in other words, during the two days of our Conference here in Riga, 50 000 children will never wake up again from their sleep, 80 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product belongs to the one billion people living in the developed world; the remaining 20 percent is shared by the five billion people living in developing countries. Failure to address this inequality will ensure that social justice and better living conditions for all people remain elusive. Inequalities in income and in access to productive resources, basic social services, opportunities, market and information can cause and exacerbate poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

*Mr Chairman,*

According to the Report on the World Social Situation 2005, "with the exception of a few countries that have pursued liberalization and deregulation policies, in most other countries income inequalities have worsened and the income gap between high and low income countries has widened". Fortunately, the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty declined from 40 to 20 percent between 1981 and 2001. Nonetheless, many countries continue to experience high levels of poverty and hunger.

Although economic growth is a prerequisite for higher income, focusing exclusively on economic growth and income generation as a development strategy is ineffective, as it leads to the worsening of existing inequalities.

*Mr Chairman,*

I had the privilege of translating from English to the Persian language the famous book “Development as Freedom” written by our most prestigious contemporary economist, the Nobel Laureat Amartia Sen. Its first print run was quickly sold out. The main message of this book is that development cannot be achieved in the face of inequality and lack of freedom. The way out of this dilemma is the removal of the constraints facing the major part of the developing world, that is hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, health problems and lack of democracy. The single solution to all of these problems is investing in the poor, especially the rural poor and particularly the rural women. It is implementation of appropriate policies in these areas that contributes to the development of human capital and enables the poor to achieve their full productive potential. This is the great opportunity for Europe to come to the assistance of the poor and hungry in the less lucky continents of the world.

*Mr Chairman,*

The so-called invisible hand of classical economists has proven unable to manage our troubled world which is rapidly shrinking to a global village with unprecedented inequalities and injustices.

The efficient, effective and peaceful leadership of our world is in dire need of some very visible caring hearts to beat in all corners of the globe. In simple words, while freedom, competition and innovation are the seeds of efficiency and growth, respect and care for the poor and the vulnerable are the foundations of peace, development and justice. Mahatma Gandhi said “to a hungry man, God looks like a loaf of bread”. My reading of this short, profound phrase is that with hunger, there is no faith, without faith there is no love and a world without love, is not only very boring, but is also very cruel and dangerous. We have to reintroduce love into our world. We have to transform the culture of indifference into the culture of care. FAO, with its mandate of “Fiat Panis”, that is Food for All, is a good example of such a culture. FAO, with its sacred goals and its invaluable sources of knowledge and expertise, is, or better said, can be a visible heart for the world on issues related to food security, poverty and hunger. If we did not have an FAO, it would be high time to create it.

*Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Participants*

At the dawn of the third millennium, FAO is facing a very important and delicate turning point. The Organization, which during its past sixty years of service to the poor, has been at the forefront of combating food insecurity and has had a great impact on the world’s agricultural development, is in need of a reform. In line with the whole UN system, this need has simultaneously been expressed both by its visionary Director-General and by all its Member Nations. The first part of the reform package of the Director-General has already commenced and the second part entitled ‘A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ will be presented to you shortly. I am confident that you will provide your support and valuable comments to this very important document. Parallel to this, an Independent External Evaluation (IEE) was proposed by the Member Nations. The Council and the Conference in 2005 have emphasized the importance of an early start to the IEE and that its report should be completed in adequate time for full consideration by the Governing Bodies by November 2007. The Conference in particular stressed the mutually-supportive role of the IEE and the reform proposals of the Director-General. They “welcomed in this context, the establishment of an IEE Multilateral Trust Fund by FAO and urged all Member Nations to contribute in making this evaluation a true product of the membership as a whole”.

Your Excellencies, the Chairman of the Council Committee for the IEE has requested me to bring this Conference recommendation to your kind attention and to request your additional financial contributions, and for those who have not contributed yet, some contribution, even in

small amounts, which symbolically demonstrates your support for this exercise and its ownership by us all. In brief, the Member Nations of FAO have decided to reform their Organization so that it can face its responsibilities with increased efficiency and cost effectiveness. In other words, we have already entered a period of transition from a 20<sup>th</sup> Century FAO to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organization. Our success largely depends on the level of excellence in the design and management of this process. Our decisions now, will have a great impact on the performance and effectiveness of FAO in the future. Here the European Region and especially the EU can play a very important role in bridging the probable gaps and differences in views which are natural and expected in such a delicate process and I wholeheartedly appeal to all of you to live up to this great historic responsibility with a global, not a regional view and understanding. We do have a fresh successful example of sincere cooperation, that is the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, I hope we will be able to add another example of success to it in this case as well.

Dear sisters and brothers, let me conclude my statement by adding another touch of history. At the dawn of the second millennium, that is more than 1 000 years ago, the house of a Persian SUFI (Abolhassan Kharaghani) was open to the public as a guesthouse and at its entrance was written: "Whoever enters this house, give him/her food, do not ask his/her faith because the one who is entitled to life by the Almighty is definitely entitled to food by Abolhassan". This is the example of the conviction which is needed to uproot hunger and misery from our world.

Thank you.

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## APPENDIX F

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### **MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS STEMMING FROM THE DEBATE IN THE 34<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE ECA ON THE ITEM: THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN REVITALIZING ABANDONED/DEPOPULATED AREAS**

#### **(Extract from the Report of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Commission on Agriculture)**

1. The Commission welcomed the document and thanked the Secretariat for the practical and pragmatic analysis in the document and noted that agriculture has a role to play beyond production.
2. The Commission took note that the document used the EU experience, among others, as a reference for defining different policy options.
3. The Commission highlighted that sometimes the EU policies were presented in the document in a distorted manner and that the reformed rural development policy of the EU was not designed to simply ensure its consistency with the WTO rules but that rural development policy has a much wider scope to fulfil, such as contributing to economic growth and employment opportunities, to satisfy consumer demand for food quality and to provide attractive livelihoods.
4. Member Nations suggested to consider agriculture and rural development policies as a result of a more complex and diversified process, implicating different sectors of the economy, different demographic structures, different systems and preference of livelihoods, different stages of development and a changing global context, each having a differentiated impact on processes of land abandonment and depopulation of rural areas.
5. The Commission noted that in developed countries land abandonment no longer coincides with depopulation, while the two processes remain associated in developing and less developed countries.
6. The Commission took note that in the EU the viability of rural areas is associated with the repopulation of rural areas, driven by the service and manufacturing sector and not only agriculture. Abandonment, depopulation and ageing represent only one aspect, the most traditional one of the evolution of rural areas.
7. Member Nations highlighted that one of the EU rural development policy main objectives is to improve the competitiveness of farm and forest enterprises through support for restructuring and innovation.
8. The Commission requested that the specific problems of developing countries should be studied in a more particular manner, particularly factors such as the sizeable peasant populations engaged in subsistence agriculture and temporary migration.
9. The Commission suggested that revitalization policies should be differentiated according to the socio-economic conditions of rural areas.

10. The Commission also suggested to differentiate the diagnosis on the basis of the degree of the development as well as based on different behaviour related to land abandonment and depopulation in relation to the character of the rural economy and environment rather than referring it only to agriculture.

11. The Commission requested to consider differentiation policies addressing the environment, landscape and biodiversity on the basis of intensive or extensive land management patterns and levels of modernization, as well as, the organization of coherent and complementary agriculture and rural development policies as a package rather than opting for a generalized menu of broad orientations for all rural areas.

12. The Commission took note of Ireland's remark that the FAO statistics in paragraph 8 of the document did not reflect the national statistics of Ireland and that footnote 8 of the same document did not reflect the official position of Ireland.

13. The Commission endorsed the recommendations and requested forwarding them to the 25th Regional Conference for Europe for their endorsement.

### **List of Recommendations**

The Commission endorsed the following recommendations from document ECA/34/06/2 (page 14):

- a) In order to find the right *policies for revitalization*, a systematic approach has to be followed and different options for revitalization of rural areas defined. Revitalization policies have to be tailored according to the situation and needs in the rural areas.
- b) The following set of *generalized policy recommendations* can be given, however, the situations described should be seen as a continuum and not as mutually exclusive.

Revitalization for nature – preservation of biodiversity:

- c) First priority should be given to policies that compensate the production of a *public good* and as second priority, policies that foster *diversification* in order to benefit from the nature potential through rural tourism, organic farming, collection of non-wood products, etc.

Revitalization for recreation – preservation of quality of life and biodiversity:

- d) *Market based incentives* have highest priority in these areas. As second priority, the production of some *public goods and services* has to be compensated in order to make the revitalization sustainable

Revitalization for economic development – develop rural areas for economic reasons and create synergies with other sectors

- e) In these areas, price mechanism should play the major role; combined with diversification these policies should enable the rural economy to become the engine of a sustainable revitalization of the area. There are only a few public goods functions that would have to be compensated.
- f) This set of recommendations has to be seen as part of a general policy framework. Such a general policy framework should be integrated both vertically (international, national and regional) and horizontally (intra and inter-sectoral) and encompass, *inter alia*, an enabling macro-economic environment, an institutional framework and policies, decentralization and participation, agricultural, forestry and environmental policies, and rural development policies, with particular attention to improving social and cultural amenities, services and infrastructure, in order to stimulate social and cultural revitalization, and primarily to engage young people in the revitalization process.

- g) FAO could assist Member Nations to develop strategies for rural development and to determine the right combination of the above-mentioned policies and measures for revitalization. This could take the form of recommendations, but also through technical assistance programmes on a pilot basis in a regional or country context.
- h) However, there are still many unanswered questions and more research is necessary. Therefore, one of the first steps could be to organize a “*Pan-European Conference on Revitalization of Abandoned Land and Depopulated Areas*” in close collaboration with other international and European organizations and actors in this area (e.g. the EC, The World Conservation Union (IUCN), World Trade Organization (WTO), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Council of Europe, etc.)<sup>9</sup>. This would include awareness raising at institutional and political levels in Member Nations. The conference would discuss concrete situations of countries and geographical areas concerned. It would also identify agricultural and rural development policies and programmes for abandoned and depopulated regions that are WTO compatible and efficient in terms of revitalization. Furthermore, a *research programme* on the efficiency of programmes and measures and the economic impact of land abandonment and depopulation and the cost-benefit of revitalization policies, could prepare the ground for discussion and stimulate international debate on this issue.

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<sup>9</sup> Considering the budgetary constraints faced by FAO, the organization of such a Conference could only be possible on condition that extra-budgetary funds are made available.

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## APPENDIX G

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### MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS STEMMING FROM THE DEBATE IN THE 34<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE ECA ON THE ITEM: DEVELOPMENT IN THE EUROPEAN AGRIFOOD MARKETS: IMPACT ON PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS AND PERSPECTIVES

#### (Extract from the Report of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Commission on Agriculture)

1. The Commission welcomed the document as it provided a useful contribution on a number of important elements concerning agricultural and food supply chains, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS countries.
2. Special reference was made by the Commission regarding the importance of traceability as a very important concept in EU policy and a fundamental part of its integrated “from farm to fork” approach.
3. The Commission took note of the efforts of the paper to explore the impact of changes in contractual arrangements on agricultural productivity, quality, and opportunities for small farmers.
4. The Commission highlighted that marginalization of small farms would be an important point to be examined.
5. The Commission also took note of the references made to the different approaches in measuring competitiveness, particularly the ability by retailers or producers to meet standards and recalled that other factors such as infrastructure, storage, transport costs and integration of markets can also strongly influence competitiveness.
6. The Commission underlined that assuring food quality and safety standards continue to be challenges in parts of the Region and further efforts should be devoted to this important aspect.
7. The Commission noted that improving production, marketing and adopting food quality and safety standards in the processing industry were considered crucial for increasing trade opportunities of new EU member states to the Western European market.
8. The Commission suggested to support enhancing access to information, resources and equipment allowing gradual quality improvement also for small and medium-sized agrifood businesses.
9. The Commission highlighted that vocational training, strengthening agriculture extension services and stimulating farmer groups and marketing cooperatives were important measures to improve access of small farmers to the market.
10. The Commission endorsed the recommendations outlined in the document and requested forwarding them to the 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe.

#### List of Recommendations

The Commission endorsed the following recommendations from document ECA/34/06/3 (page 13):

- a) Ministries of Agriculture are invited to take due note of the difficulties of meeting private food safety and production standards and changing consumer preferences for small farmers in CEE and CIS countries. It is important that farmers in these countries are not excluded from restructured food supply chains.
- b) Governments of the Region should consider assisting farmers through a sustainable extension system that includes training in marketing and on how agricultural producers can meet private food safety standards and better meet other customer and consumer preferences. This will involve improving the ability of extension agencies to provide technical expertise to farmers to fulfil international certification schemes such as EUREPGAP.
- c) Strengthening the agricultural sector will require the upgrading of national food control infrastructures (management, inspection and laboratory capacities) to provide a sound basis for farmers, and agro-processors to gradually improve levels of quality and safety.
- d) Improving access to restructured supply chains for small farms typically requires stimulating intermediary organizations and marketing cooperatives, to coordinate the activities of farmers and provide a link between them and processors and retailers. Support to establish sustainable intermediary organizations with the requisite competencies and infrastructure will be of greater benefit than investments in new wholesale market infrastructure.
- e) Agricultural education and training in the Region should be restructured so that it better prepares farmers for the new realities of supply chains (including contract farming, quality control and management) and incorporates training in marketing and agribusiness management.
- f) FAO is ready to provide support to member governments, upon request, in the above-mentioned fields.

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## APPENDIX H

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### GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FAO/NGOs-CSOs CONSULTATION ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MEETING THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT (WFS)/MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN THE REGION

Representatives from 24 organizations from the European Region came together for the 25<sup>th</sup> FAO Regional Conference for Europe NGO/CSO Consultation. Among those participating were: NGOs; peasant farmer and agricultural organizations; consumer organizations; environmental organizations; and associations of organic farmers<sup>10</sup>. We debated the following points:

**We reaffirm that:**

- European agriculture is above all about family farming and plays a strong role in strengthening social cohesion.
- Public investment in small-scale family farming is profitable in terms of social, environmental and employment benefits.
- Food security and agrarian reform are global problems that also must be solved in the EU, the Region of Europe, as well as in other regions of the world.
- Local markets are the strongest drivers of rural development, which justifies shifting production towards these markets.

**We urge Member Nations to recommend FAO to:**

- Analyse the dominant agricultural model to better understand the social and agricultural damage that is taking place.
- Study the impact of WTO agreements on agriculture in the European Region.
- Promote Food Sovereignty across the entire European Region.
- Promote rural development by limiting industrial agriculture and preserving small-scale family farming.
- Assist new EU member states to evaluate the impact of the CAP on their countries.
- Make recommendations regarding CAP reform.

**With particular regard to Agrarian Reform and development, we urge:**

- To follow up the Peasant Charter of 1979, and the decisions taken at the International Conference of Agrarian Reform and Development (ICARRD) Porto Alegre, 2006.
- To put in place a permanent monitoring platform for these agreements.
- That the Food Security Committee (September 2006) and the Agricultural Committee (2007) put into action the decisions of the final declaration of the ICARRD Conference.
- That the FAO Council of November 2006 integrates the ICARRD decisions into FAO's programme and creates a special programme for financing the actions that were identified at the ICARRD Conference.

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<sup>10</sup> For full list refer to document: FAO/NGOs-CSOs/06/3

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## APPENDIX I

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### **GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FAO/NGOs-CSOs CONSULTATION ON THE VIEW OF THE EUROPEAN REGION ON THE ROLE OF FAO AS PROVIDER OF GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS**

Representatives from 24 organizations from the European Region came together for the 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe NGO/CSO Consultation. Among those participating were: NGOs; peasant farmer and agricultural organisations; consumer organizations; environmental organizations; and associations of organic farmers<sup>11</sup>. We debated the following points:

FAO's mandate in the United Nations system is irreplaceable. It captures: technical expertise; direct assistance in the field; and a regulatory role regarding food and agricultural questions. We urge Member Nations – and the European Union in particular – to support and strengthen FAO's mandate within the other multilateral organizations, and in particular the WTO. We recall that FAO must respond to the fundamental needs of the world's peoples and not only the interests of individual governments.

We condemn the drop in Member Nations' contributions to FAO's core budget, as well as the increase in extra-budgetary support. FAO's mandate cannot be fulfilled without the active participation of social movements, civil society organizations and NGOs. Member Nations have a responsibility to ensure that this participation takes place.

Recognizing that small-scale family farming is best placed to ensure food security, we urge FAO to:

- Defend and promote the regulation of international agricultural markets and support States to strengthen domestic markets by both appropriate political measures and the implementation instruments that would follow, including: border protection measures and supply management.
- Strengthen peasant farming and agricultural organizations and provide its expertise in order to support these organizations to develop operational proposals for agricultural policies and improve the market power of these producers.
- Pursue structural agricultural production policies so that they do not marginalize peasant and small-scale family farmers, who are the only ones able to ensure a sustainable agriculture for Europe.

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<sup>11</sup> For full list refer to document: FAO/NGOs-CSOs/06/3

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## APPENDIX J

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### **GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FAO/NGOs-CSOs CONSULTATION ON STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTING COUNTRIES IN CONTROLLING HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) IN EUROPE, INCLUDING CIS COUNTRIES**

Representatives from 24 organizations from the European region came together for the 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe NGO/CSO Consultation. Among those participating were: NGOs; peasant farmer and agricultural organizations; consumer organizations; environmental organizations; and associations of organic farmers<sup>12</sup>. We debated the following points:

We urge Member Nations and FAO to:

- Strengthen the capacity of public veterinary services.
- Conduct an independent study on the development of Avian Influenza within the intensive poultry industry.
- Put in place an appropriate initiative of FAO to enable it to block the concentration of the avian gene-pool, and to enable it to support the development of greater genetic diversity from local breeds.
- Avoid all forms of dumping.
- Ensure that FAO disseminates objective appropriate information on Avian Influenza.

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<sup>12</sup> For full list refer to document: FAO/NGOs-CSOs/06/3