

April 2001



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

SIXTH INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONTACT GROUP

Spoletto, Italy, 22–28 April 2001

**DATE, PLACE AND FINANCING OF THE SIXTH EXTRAORDINARY
SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD
AND AGRICULTURE**

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DATE, PLACE AND FINANCING OF THE SIXTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Introduction

1. This document provides background information for the Chairman's Contact Group, in order for it to be able to take decisions in relation to item 3 of the Draft Provisional Agenda (document CGRFA/CG-6/01/1), *Date, place and financing of the Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*. Extracts from the relevant decisions of the FAO Conference and Council are cited; the possible dates, in terms both of the requests from the FAO Governing Bodies and of the times when facilities are available in FAO, are discussed; and budgets are provided for meetings of various length. Attention is drawn to that fact that adequate extra-budgetary funds are not yet at hand, and that they will need to be mobilized with all haste, if the deadline of submitting the revised International Undertaking to the Thirty-first Session of the FAO Conference in November 2001 is to be met.

Relevant decisions of the Commission, Conference and the Council

2. The Chairman's Contact group was established during the Commission's Eighth Regular session in April 1999. The Commission "decided to authorize the Chairman to convene, in consultation with the Director-General, further sessions of the Contact Group, as required, subject to the availability of funding, to advance the negotiations, on the basis of the Chairman's Elements derived from the Montreux meeting, ... and that, when he believed that a point had been reached where the Commission might adopt the final text, he then request the Director-General to convene an Extraordinary Session of the Commission, so that the results might, at the very latest, be submitted to the 119th Session of the Council, in November 2000". The Commission recognized that this process would require extrabudgetary funds, both for the convening of meetings, and to facilitate the participation of developing countries, and appealed for donors to provide adequate resources for this whole process".

3. In the event, the Chairman reported to the 119th Session of the Council that further time was required to complete the negotiations. The Council accordingly:

- "Reaffirmed its commitment to the finalization of the revised International Undertaking within the auspices of FAO;
- "Warmly thanked the Chairman of the Commission, Ambassador Gerbasi, for his untiring efforts, invited him to continue leading the negotiations to their conclusion and requested him to convene, in consultation with the Director-General and subject to the availability of funding, further sessions of the Contact Group as required, followed by a negotiating session of the Commission to finalize and agree upon the text of the International Undertaking for submission to the Thirty-first Session of the Conference in November 2001;
- "Recognized that the negotiations had reached a crucial stage and encouraged the negotiators to focus intensively and with requisite flexibility on the outstanding issues and to be in a position to take the relevant political decisions to conclude the revision of the Undertaking;
- ...
- "Appealed to Members to provide further funds that would be necessary to maintain and increase the momentum, both for the preparation and holding of the necessary negotiating meetings, and for facilitating the participation of developing countries."

Possible date for the Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission

4. In order for the revised International Undertaking to be considered by the FAO Conference in November 2001, the Director-General is required to notify FAO Members not later than *ninety days* (that is, before the end of July) before the Conference session starting on 2 November 2001. The Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission would therefore need to meet with sufficient anticipation of this deadline. Facilities in FAO Headquarters have accordingly been reserved for the Sixth Extraordinary Session in the period from 25 June to 6 July 2001, immediately following the 120th Session of the Council (18-23 June 2001). The schedule of meetings in FAO is such that there is likely to be no later time open, which would still allow the deadline set by the FAO Governing Bodies to be kept.

Financing of the Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission

5. The convening of the Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission is dependent on adequate extra-budgetary resources being available, both for the preparation and running of the meeting, and to support the participation of developing countries. By a letter to donor countries¹ of 22 December 2000, the Secretariat informed them of the decisions of the 119th Session of the Conference, noting that, "given the very short deadlines involved, and the fact that meetings can only be convened once extra-budgetary funds are in hand, the success of the process will depend upon donor contributions being announced in the near future". The letter included the budget for a two-weeks meeting of the Commission, given below as *Option 1*. This budget is indicative, in that the Contact Group may decide to use the possible two-week session for any combination of the Contact Group and Commission meetings, and the budget would vary accordingly.

<i>Option 1: Costs of a two-week Sixth Extraordinary Session of the Commission</i>		US\$
▪ Preparation and running the meeting		578,928
Project servicing costs on meeting only, 6%		34,736
	Sub-total	613,664
▪ Developing country participation ²	Sub-total	280,800
TOTAL		894,464

6. For the information of the Contact Group, *Option 2* gives a budget for a one-week (five-day) meeting of the Commission, and *Option 3* gives a budget for a three-day meeting of the Contact Group, immediately followed by a two-day extraordinary session of the Commission.

¹ Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

² As in past meetings, one delegate per developing country would be supported, on official request by the government involved. A return economy class ticket, and a daily contribution towards living expenses of \$140 for the meeting and a day of travel, where applicable, will be provided.

<i>Option 2: Costs of a one-week extraordinary session of the Commission</i>		US\$
▪ Preparation and running the meeting		329,500
Project servicing costs on meeting only, 6%		19,770
	Sub-total	349,270
▪ Developing country participation	Sub-total	217,100
TOTAL		566,370

<i>Option 3: Costs of a three-day meeting of the Contact Group, followed by a two-day extraordinary session of the Commission</i>		US\$
▪ Preparation and running the meetings		271,000
Project servicing costs on meeting only, 6%		16,260
	Sub-total	287,260
▪ Developing country participation	Sub-total	200,300
TOTAL		487,560

7. The extraordinary session cannot be convened before the necessary funds are at hand, and the sums currently remaining from earlier contributions do not suffice for any of these options. It is estimated that a total of about US\$ 150,000 will remain in hand after the Sixth Meeting of the Contact group. The sums still needed immediately, under each of the above options are therefore as follows.

	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
Funds needed	894,464	566,370	487,560
Funds available	150,000	150,000	150,000
BALANCE NEEDED	744,464	416,370	337,560