

Co-Chairs' Aide Mémoire of Third Meeting of CoC-IEE WG II

Friday 8 February 2008, 9.30 – 17.30

Lamya Al-Saqqaf and Natalie Feistritz Co-Chairs

Member Country Representation in the Programme and Finance Committees

- 1) Members undertook a preliminary exchange of views and many considered that the Council should not become very much larger than it is at present in any adjustments, but there was no case for reducing it in size or changing the present role of observers.
- 2) There was agreement that the Programme and Finance Committees were not adequately fulfilling their role and this was not purely an issue of their membership. There was also a wide degree of consensus that there should be:
 - a) provision for attendance by observers. It was also suggested that substitutes should be allowed for members to ensure all regions are properly represented at all times in the Committees;
 - b) clear terms of reference for members of the Programme, Finance Committees and CCLM and more attention should be given in selecting members to the qualifications of the individuals to deal with the technical work of the Committees. Some members suggested that to have the requisite knowledge of the context and availability members needed to be Rome based but many considered that the pool of potential members could not be limited in this way; and
 - c) more joint sessions, avoiding repetitious discussion between the two committees. Some members suggested merging the Programme and Finance Committees.
- 3) Several regions, considered that the current make up of the Council membership was not representative and others also considered the make up of the Programme and Finance Committees unbalanced. It was concluded that the matter should be further discussed in the Working Group and at that time the CoC-Secretariat and management should provide information on the formulae for representation used in other UN agencies.

Overall Structure and Functions of the Major Governing Bodies

- 4) Members welcomed the flow chart which showed the current Governing Body structure and functions compared with that proposed by the IEE. While, several members supported the overall changes in functions and relationships between Governing Bodies as proposed by the IEE, it was agreed that no final judgements could be made on this until the details of the proposals had been examined.

IEE Recommendation 4.7: The FAO Conference

- 5) There was broad overall agreement with the recommendation. Points made by members, included:
 - a) each Conference should have one major theme carefully selected to strengthen the impact of FAO on global issues;
 - b) minister's speeches should be retained as part of the Conference format and many may choose to address the major theme;
 - c) there should be no necessity to invite independent high level experts to the Conference. This had more pertinence for the Technical Committees (such as COAG and COFO). However,

invitation to address the Conference should not be excluded and should be maintained as an option when it could be helpful to the discussion;

- d) members supported FAO's role in global governance. The majority also supported the FAO governing bodies' role in reviewing global governance discussions and instruments being developed elsewhere related to food and agriculture. Such discussion would be with a view to ensuring that the implications for the hungry, for sustainable agricultural and rural development and for food were adequately reflected, as well as the contributions they could bring. Some others argued that their governments had well considered national positions and it was not FAO's place to make points about discussions in other global fora. In their view this could also lead to duplication of work. The majority argued that national representation on such issues was not necessarily completely joined-up and FAO involvement could benefit national governments in alerting them to wider implications. This did not need to be seen as conflictual but beneficial and served to develop partnership, which should be a strong feature of FAO's approach to global governance;
- e) members also generally confirmed their view that the Conference date should be changed to May/June of the second year of each biennium, beginning in 2011. Management clarified that it was its considered judgement that this would improve the overall programme and budget process and strengthen governance in key steps of this process. It would be possible to adjust the overall cycle of governing body meetings in line with the new date. The Working Group decided to further develop its recommendation when it had the views of Working Groups I and III on this subject.