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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

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session • Cent quinzième session • 115º período de sesiones

Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL

Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
**ACTAS TAQUIGRAFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS
DEL CONSEJO**

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HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
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(28 November 1998)

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CL 115/REP/12; CL 115/REP/13)

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
FIRST PLENARY MEETING PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
23 November 1998

**The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.15 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La première séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 15
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 10.15 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

I. INTRODUCTION - PROCEDURE OF THE SESSION

I. INTRODUCTION - QUESTIONS DE PROCÉDURE

I. INTRODUCCIÓN - CUESTIONES DE PROCEDIMIENTO

CHAIRMAN

I would like to call this first meeting of the Hundred and Fifteenth FAO Council Session to order. Before proceeding, I would like to make a short announcement. The European Community is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution. I have been asked to inform you that the Declaration made by the European Community and its Member States is contained in document CL 115/INF/6 which has already been distributed to all Members of the meeting. I would draw the attention of the meeting to this Declaration.

Before going into Item 1 which is the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable, I invite the Director-General to take the floor.

LE DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Mon intervention sera très brève. A l'occasion de cette réunion du Conseil de l'Organisation, je voudrais juste souhaiter la bienvenue à toutes les délégations qui sont arrivées à Rome, y compris les délégués qui résident à Rome. Votre présence ici témoigne de l'intérêt de vos pays aux travaux de l'Organisation et de l'importance que vous attachez aux activités de l'Organisation. Je voudrais donc vous remercier et, à travers vous, vos gouvernements, pour la collaboration extrêmement fructueuse qui s'est établie avec l'Organisation.

Nous avons des défis de plus en plus importants, non seulement ceux déjà identifiés par le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Depuis lors, comme vous le savez, un certain nombre de désastres naturels se sont produits dans le monde, en Asie, en Amérique latine. En outre, des problèmes financiers ont fait reculer les progrès dans le domaine de la sécurité alimentaire. Tout cela va nécessiter de votre part des réflexions afin qu'ensemble nous trouvions des solutions.

Encore une fois, soyez les bienvenus à Rome, à la FAO, dans votre maison et que votre séjour se passe dans les meilleures conditions possibles.

Je vous remercie.

1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (CL 115/1- Rev.1; CL 115/INF/1; CL 115/INF/6)

1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier (CL 115/1-Rév.1; CL 115/INF/1; CL 115/INF/6)

1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario (CL 115/1- Rev.1; CL 115/INF/1; CL 115/INF/6)

CHAIRMAN

We will go to Item 1 of our meeting this morning, that is the "Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable", as set out in documents CL 115/1-Rev.1 and CL 115/INF/1 respectively. I should like to inform you that the Director-General has proposed that an additional Item entitled "FAO Reaction to Recent Natural Disasters" be added to our Agenda, and on our Timetable this new Item would be taken this afternoon, immediately after Item 4 on the "State of Food and Agriculture". I should also like to point out that Sub-item 15.3, "Applications for Membership in the Organization" should be deleted from the Agenda and Timetable, since the Director-General has received no such application. Likewise, Item 3, "Statement by the Director-General", should also be deleted. A new information document should also be added at the end of our Provisional Agenda. This is a United Nations paper on the "Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa", which has been distributed as document CL 115/INF/5. If any Member wishes to address the subjects of these documents, they may do so under Item 20 entitled "Any Other Matters".

Thus, with the additions and deletions I have just outlined, may I take it that the Agenda and Timetable are now approved.

G. Anthony BEATTIE (United Kingdom)

May I please ask you to give the floor on this Item to Austria in its capacity as President of the European Community and its Member States.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

We welcome the addition of an additional Agenda item as read out by you regarding the recent disasters in Central America and in Asia. We also welcome your proposal regarding the time when we will discuss it. With regard to the competence, it is of mixed competence with both Member States and the European Community, so I would like for the respective documents to be corrected as I outlined.

CHAIRMAN

We will take note of it. Any other comments?

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like first of all to applaud the initiative of the Director-General with regard to adding the Item on recent natural disasters in this world. In the Group of 77, we feel very, very close and united with the countries in Central America such as Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, that is, the countries which were afflicted by the most recent natural disaster. We trust and hope our Organization will be able to provide both material and moral support to those countries that were afflicted.

CHAIRMAN

Any other comments by delegations?

The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock from Honduras has asked for the floor before we go on in our discussion.

Pedro Arturo SEVILLA GAMERO (Honduras)

Permítanme, en mi calidad de Secretario de Estado en el Despacho de Agricultura y Ganadería de Honduras y como Presidente *pro tempore* de los Ministros de Agricultura de Centro América, dirigir este mensaje en este amplio marco del Comité Ejecutivo de la FAO para manifestar, en breves palabras, lo que nuestra agricultura está experimentando en estos momentos y en el futuro, y que consecuentemente incidirá en la alimentación de nuestros países.

Ustedes conocen la magnitud del Huracán Mitch que afectó la zona de Centro América en los últimos días del mes de octubre; un fenómeno como nunca visto tanto por la magnitud como por el tiempo que el huracán permaneció en nuestro suelo. La oportunidad de esta amplia convocatoria de la comunidad internacional que tiene que ver con la producción agrícola y la alimentación de la población mundial, me obliga a compartir con ustedes la emergencia nacional que está viviendo mi país y el resto de los países de Centro América como consecuencia del paso devastador del más grave huracán y tormenta tropical en nuestra historia, el Huracán Mitch. Esto lo manifiesto en apelo a la solidaridad humana, no sólo de los países aquí presentes sino también de todos aquellos que recibirán las resoluciones de este Comité Ejecutivo.

En efecto, justo en frente de las costas del Atlántico de Honduras, el Huracán Mitch se estacionó por varios días en la última semana de octubre, alcanzando la categoría máxima de cinco en la escala Safir-Simpson con vientos y ráfagas de alrededor de 300 kilómetros por hora, provocando además precipitaciones extraordinarias en todo el territorio nacional y centroamericano, varias veces superiores al promedio anual, y continuaron aún después de convertirse en huracán en tormenta tropical, incursionando por varios días tierra adentro, cruzando desde el Atlántico hasta el Pacífico. De una población en Honduras de casi 6 millones de personas, el drama humano dejado por el huracán y la tormenta se refleja en los últimos datos disponibles de la Comisión Nacional de Emergencia de 6,600 muertos, 12,000 heridos, más de 8,000 desaparecidos, 1.4

millones de damnificados y 2.1 millones de evacuados. Con este panorama, los niveles actuales de pobreza e indigencia de 70 y 50 por ciento, respectivamente, que constituyen el sector de la población más afectada, aumentarán en el corto plazo ante las pérdidas materiales que sufrieron por la disminución de la capacidad del aparato productivo nacional y por los daños ocasionados a la infraestructura vial, educativa y de salud, lo que tendrá consecuencias sociales y políticas impredecibles en la historia de nuestros países.

El daño a la economía nacional es incuantificable, estimaciones iniciales muestran que un 60 por ciento de la infraestructura fue destruida, sin contar viviendas y edificios o con la información de las pérdidas de los sectores comerciales e industriales y de servicios y con la consecuente pérdida de empleos. Un inventario preliminar indica que las viviendas destruidas y/o dañadas suman alrededor de 150,000, las escuelas 250,000 y un número desconocido de centros de salud. En la red vial primaria del país hay 98 puentes destruidos y muchos otros puentes de caminos secundarios y terciarios, y 2,600 kilómetros de carreteras pavimentadas y 6,000 kilómetros de carreteras no pavimentadas fueron severamente dañadas. De acuerdo con la Empresa Estatal de Telecomunicaciones, se necesitarán más de 300 millones de dólares para reparar los daños y restituir la red telefónica del país. Se están presentando problemas con los servicios de agua potable y energía eléctrica, no sólo por las pérdidas multimillonarias sino además por el tiempo que se requerirá para su rehabilitación, con consecuencias en la salud de la población y el atraso en la reconstrucción del aparato productivo del país.

El sector agrícola, el más importante de la economía hondureña, que en 1977 contribuyó en forma directa con el 25 por ciento del producto interno bruto, el 38 por ciento del empleo y el 70 por ciento del valor de las exportaciones de bienes, también fue afectado gravemente. A tal sentido, el señor Presidente de la República lo ha incluido, junto con los sectores de agua y saneamiento e infraestructura vial, como los más prioritarios tanto en la actual fase de emergencia como en la fase posterior de rehabilitación y reconstrucción del país.

No voy a mencionar cifras de lo que hemos perdido en cada rubro porque este documento, señor Director y señor Presidente del Consejo, lo voy a hacer llegar a ustedes. Pero consideremos que desde los años ochenta y después de que los países de Centro América han llegado todos unidos y con gobiernos democráticos, este huracán nos haya querido separar, porque no tenemos prácticamente comunicación entre Nicaragua y Honduras por la destrucción de puentes y carreteras. Tampoco tenemos comunicación con nuestro vecino El Salvador por la destrucción de los puentes principales y de la carretera pavimentada: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala, que somos los que más hemos sufrido con este huracán, nos apelamos a los países amigos, a los que ya nos han tendido la mano y quiero aquí dejar constancia del más claro agradecimiento a la FAO porque nos ha dado el apoyo a través de todos sus programas y proyectos. Quiero también agradecer específicamente a un país amigo, a un país que nos tendió la mano desde el primer momento, como es nuestra hermana la República Federal Mexicana. Al señor Embajador de México nuestro agradecimiento permanente porque México puso a nuestra disposición todos los esfuerzos de un Gobierno y de un pueblo para que asistieran a las personas damnificadas.

Con lo anterior he tratado de sintetizar los daños que el Huracán y Tormenta Tropical Mitch ha causado en el sector agrícola de Centro América. Para enfrentar esta situación, la Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería de mi país ha formulado e iniciado la ejecución de un Plan de Emergencia para el abastecimiento de granos básicos que contempla acciones inmediatas para cubrir la demanda nacional. Asimismo hemos iniciado la formulación de un Plan de Rehabilitación y construcción del sector agrícola que está orientado, en primer lugar, al restablecimiento de la base productiva nacional y, en segundo lugar, al diseño y ejecución de políticas que permitan progresivamente obtener tasas de crecimiento altas y sostenidas para elevar los niveles de bienestar de la población hondureña. Para la ejecución del Plan de Rehabilitación y Reconstrucción del Sector Agrícola, si bien el Gobierno orientará sus escasos recursos a estos fines, se requerirá un mayor apoyo de la comunidad internacional mediante el aporte de recursos financieros, la asistencia técnica de países amigos y de organismos internacionales como la FAO,

así como de mayores facilidades para un incremento de la demanda externa, especialmente para nuestros productos agrícolas exportables.

Finalmente, en nombre de los pueblos y gobiernos de Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador y Guatemala, quiero manifestar nuestro más sincero agradecimiento a la FAO por la cooperación técnica brindada en materia agrícola y a la comunidad internacional por la importante y valiosa ayuda en la asistencia humanitaria recibida hasta el momento.

CHAIRMAN

If we adopt the Agenda, we will again have time to continue our discussion about this natural disaster in the Item proposed by the Director-General. Do I understand that we now adopt the Agenda and Timetable?

It was so decided.

Il en est ainsi décidé.

Así se acuerda.

CHAIRMAN

Before we proceed allow me to extend a warm welcome to all delegates and observers. I am particularly heartened to see a number of Ministers in the room, and also wish to thank the Director-General for being with us this morning. May I also take this opportunity to call upon your cooperation in keeping proceedings as smooth-running as possible, given the very full Agenda before us and the limited amount of time at our disposal.

I particularly welcome the addition of the Item on Agricultural Devastation, arising from the recent natural disasters, and wish to thank the Director-General for taking the initiative to focus the Council's attention on their consequences for agriculture. Some of the countries affected are among the poorest and the aftermath of these disasters will affect agricultural production and food security for many years to come. The heavy losses to life, infrastructure and agriculture can only be remedied by long-term efforts to assist rehabilitation and recovery in the affected areas-efforts which we know FAO is already undertaking. We will be considering this additional item, as soon as we conclude Item 4, which is the State of Food and Agriculture 1998 this afternoon.

This morning, the Council will also be called upon to express its support for the proclamation of an International Year of Mountains in the year 2002. I trust Council Members will have no difficulties in doing this given that the 130 countries sponsored the Resolution. I should also like to add that the text of the General Assembly Resolution is available at the Documents Desk for interested delegations.

Unless, the Council wishes to make any comments or issues on the first part of our proceedings, I suggest we now take up the next Item on our Agenda for today, which is Tribute to the Memory of Ambassador Di Mottola of Costa Rica.

VI. OTHER MATTERS
VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES
VI. OTROS ASUNTOS

20. Any Other Matters
20. Autres questions
20. Otros asuntos

- **Tribute to the Memory of Ambassador Di Mottola of Costa Rica**
- **Hommage à la mémoire de l'Ambassadeur Di Mottola du Costa Rica**
- **Homenaje a la memoria del Embajador Di Mottola de Costa Rica**

CHAIRMAN

Distinguished Delegates, it is with deep regret and sadness that I must draw your attention to the death in Rome, on 20 February 1998, of His Excellency Carlos Di Mottola Balestra of Costa Rica. Ambassador Di Mottola was known to all, during his long term in Rome, and the Council will recall that he was also Chairman of the Finance Committee from 1989 to 1993.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Con su acostumbrada brillantez, el patriota cubano José Martí sentenció que “honrar honra”. Bajo el principio de esa consideración hablamos hoy del Embajador Don Carlos di Mottola Balestra en nombre de los países de América Latina y el Caribe, Región a la cual perteneció.

Es precisamente aquí, en esta Sala Roja, donde la FAO le brinda este justo y emotivo homenaje a su memoria, escenario de su activa participación en reuniones y debates. Conocimos a Don Carlos y fuimos sus amigos; al estrechar su mano por primera vez, pudimos percatarnos que detrás de su indiscutible personalidad existía una gran sensibilidad humana, pero permítanme destacar un rasgo sobresaliente que observé siempre con admiración en el Embajador di Mottola: su procedencia social no le hizo perder jamás su honda preocupación y defensa por los pobres de la tierra. Era constante su solidaridad con su querido pueblo de Costa Rica, con América Latina y el Caribe, un eterno defensor de los países en desarrollo en su lucha por un futuro mejor, por erradicar el hambre y la pobreza en el mundo.

Su larga trayectoria como Representante de Costa Rica, su destacada participación como miembro y presidente del Comité de Finanzas, igual que en el Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos, y en el Comité de Apelaciones que unía a su esclarecida prédica y con un dominio pleno de la política multilateral, lo convirtió en punto de referencia y consulta en estas complejas disciplinas. Siempre estuvo de acuerdo a brindar su concurso con su proverbial gentileza. Lo recordamos presidiendo nuestro grupo regional, el GRULAC, en su último período y observamos que mientras envejecía su cuerpo por los años, su mente se mantenía joven y sus ideas se mantenían precisas y claras. Un día se despidió de nosotros en Roma, marchaba para su querida Costa Rica.

Al conocer de su desaparición física le escribimos a su estimada colaboradora Señora Yolanda Gago y hoy repetimos lo que en aquella oportunidad muy sinceramente le expresamos: los predios de Roma pierden un honesto y brillante diplomático, su familia a un querido esposo y padre, su país natal a un gran hombre y los que tuvimos el honor de conocerlo, un sincero amigo.

Sra. Victoria GUARDIA ÁLVAREZ de HERNÁNDEZ (Observador de Costa Rica)

Hace pocos días cuando tuve el honor de presentar las cartas credenciales al Director General de la FAO, y sus primeras palabras fueron de agradecimiento y reconocimiento a la labor del Embajador Carlos di Mottola.

En mi país, Costa Rica, hablar de Carlos di Mottola es hablar de la FAO. Este binomio, Embajador comprometido con los intereses de su país y, al mismo tiempo, identificado con la Organización, es un ejemplo importante especialmente en estos momentos en que en este Consejo

se va a votar y analizar el marco de estrategias para los años 2000-2015, en el que debemos seguir muy cuidadosamente los lineamientos del futuro de la FAO, y la importancia que el mismo tiene para nuestros países, para el desarrollo de la Organización. Una Organización ágil acorde con el desarrollo para el siglo XXI.

Quisiera agradecer las palabras del distinguido Embajador de Cuba, que muy bien ha delineado la personalidad y el trabajo del Embajador Carlos di Mottola. Asimismo quisiera agradecer a este Consejo en nombre del pueblo y del Gobierno de Costa Rica y de la familia de Don Carlos di Mottola este sentido homenaje.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

On behalf of the North American Region I would like to express our deep sadness upon the death of our colleague Ambassador Di Mottola of Costa Rica. Many Canadian and US officials worked closely with Ambassador Di Mottola. His dedication to FAO's work, and his important participation in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters will be greatly missed.

CHAIRMAN

Ladies and Gentlemen, again may I ask you to join me now in observing one minute of silence in memory of His Excellency Carlos Di Mottola Balestra of Costa Rica.

One minute of silence.

Une minute de silence.

Un minuto de silencio.

2. Election of three Vice-Chairmen, and Designation of the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee (CL 115/INF/9)

2. Élection de trois Vice-Présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction (CL 115/INF/9)

2. Elección de tres Vice-presidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción (CL 115/INF/9)

CHAIRMAN

Distinguished Delegates, we now move to Item 2, Election of Three Vice-Chairmen and Designation of the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee.

Following consultations among the regional groups we have the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairmen: Mr L.M. Fontana-Giusti of Italy, Mr L. Kezimbira Miyingo of Uganda, Mr A.S. Al-Aquil of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the three Vice-Chairmen on their election.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I have to mention the spirit of friendship that has prevailed between the OECD and the Group of 77 during this year, which led to a good spirit for nominating the three names you have just mentioned. I wish to announce that the Representative of Portugal has been selected as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. I also wish to read out the membership for the Drafting Committee: For Africa, Eritrea and Mauritania; for Asia, the Republic of Korea and Pakistan; for Latin America and the Caribbean, Argentina and Cuba; for the Near East, Egypt and the Islamic Republic of Iran; for the OECD and the European Union, Romania, Denmark, Australia, Canada and Japan.

CHAIRMAN

So we have the Chair and Members of the Drafting Committee. The Chairman will be the delegate from Portugal. Members from Africa are Eritrea and Mauritania; from the Near East, Egypt and the Islamic Republic of Iran; from Europe, Portugal, Romania and Denmark; from

Latin America and the Caribbean, Argentina and Cuba; from Asia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Japan; from North America, Canada; and from South-West Pacific, Australia.

It was so decided.

Il en est ainsi décidé.

Así se acuerda.

V. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

V. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES

V. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS

15. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters, including:

15. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques, dont:

15. Otros asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos, en particular:

15.2 Invitations to Non-Member Nations to Attend FAO Sessions (CL 115/LIM/2)

15.2 Invitation d'États non membres à assister à des réunions de la FAO (CL 115/LIM/2)

15.2 Invitaciones a Estados no Miembros para asistir a reuniones de la FAO (CL 115/LIM/2)

CHAIRMAN

We now come to Item 15 on our Timetable: Other Constitutional and Legal Matters, including Invitations to Non-Member Nations to Attend FAO Sessions.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

A request was received from the Russian Federation to attend this Council Session in an observer capacity and an invitation was issued on 9 October 1998, subject to the approval by the Council. Council approval is sought to admit the Russian Federation as an observer at the 115th Session of the Council.

CHAIRMAN

Unless there are any objections, I think that the Council approves the request of the Russian Federation to attend the present session as an observer.

May I add that paragraph 5 of the document CL 115/LIM/2 lists those Non-Member Nations that have participated in FAO meetings since the last Session of the Council. If no Member wishes to speak on this subject, we will proceed to the next Item on our Agenda.

VI. OTHER MATTERS (continued)

VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES (suite)

VI. OTROS ASUNTOS (continuación)

18. Proclamation of an International Year of Mountains (CL 115/INF/10)

18. Proclamation d'une Année internationale de la montagne (CL 115/INF/10)

18. Proclamación del Año Internacional de las Montañas (CL 115/INF/10)

CHAIRMAN

The purpose of this, as indicated in the background paper document CL 115/INF/10, is to give the Council an opportunity to support the adoption of the Resolution by the United Nations General Assembly.

May I invite Mr Henri Carsalade to take the floor and introduce the matter.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Je ne vais pas reprendre l'exposé des événements qui ont conduit votre secrétariat à accepter sous réserve de votre accord d'être l'agence leader de L'année internationale des montagnes que l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies, par sa Résolution A/53/L.24, a décidé de célébrer pour l'année 2002. Cette fonction me bornerait, dois-je souligner, mais elle est parfaitement cohérente avec notre fonction de *Task Manager* pour le Chapitre 13 de l'Agenda 21, fonction que nous poursuivons depuis 1993 avec, je crois, pas mal de succès. Notre accord provisoire pour jouer ce

rôle a été clairement donné sous réserve de la provision de ressources nouvelles et spécifiques que devront réunir les donateurs afin de permettre la célébration de cette Année internationale. L'action de la FAO ne pouvant en aucun cas être prise en charge sur son Programme régulier, sous réserve de votre accord, nous allons maintenant, en fonction des ressources éventuellement disponibles, procéder à une analyse approfondie des implications techniques, opérationnelles et financières de cette décision, et une fois ces éléments réunis nous la soumettrons à l'avis des Comités appropriés qui feront rapport à l'une de vos prochaines réunions.

CHAIRMAN

The document which I have just mentioned to you, CL 115/INF/10, has the following text which reads: The Council welcomes the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/53/L.24 to proclaim the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains and the invitation to FAO to serve as lead agency for this year. It further requested the Director-General to transmit this message of support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Are there comments or objections?

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

As the first intervention of this Council session I would like to welcome you and everybody else to this meeting.

Taking up the point just made by the Assistant Director-General Carsalade, I wonder whether we might like to also make reference to the points he made, not so much in terms of our transmission of a message to the Secretary-General. I think that is quite appropriate and would certainly support that, but would just seek to supplement our conclusion and recommendation with something along the lines that we understand that there will be an assessment of the funding involved and a Report back to the relevant body. I would suggest that we would want to see that Report at our next Council session, if that is possible, in preparation for analysing the resources that are going to be suggested for use in the International Year of the Mountain along with all of the other resource claims that will be before us, when we are considering the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium.

If I could suggest, then that we add something along those lines in the conclusion, as well as the message to the Secretary-General.

CHAIRMAN

We shall include the text that I just read in our Report of this 115th Council, and we take note of your suggestion to be incorporated into the Report also.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Je me permets, Monsieur le Président, une seule petite nuance, c'est que le Représentant de l'Australie a fait référence au prochain Conseil. Je ne suis pas absolument certain que nous pourrions à la fois avoir reçu toutes les informations sur l'argent qui sera mis à la disposition de la FAO pour cette célébration et procéder à l'analyse de ses implications d'ici le prochain Conseil. Je souhaite donc, si Monsieur le Représentant de l'Australie est d'accord, que l'on remplace le prochain Conseil par l'un des prochains Conseils.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

That nuance would be fine as long as the nuance reflects that we will need this information by the time we get to consideration of the PWB 2000-2001 biennium. That is fine. I am very flexible on that.

Ms Rollande LEDUC (Canada)

Canada supports the proposal to pass a motion of support for this International Year of Mountains and we noted that 106 countries supported this Resolution in the General Assembly.

We noted that the work to be undertaken by the Organization in implementing this Resolution is, in general, consistent with the mandate of the Organization. However, we also believe that the Organization will require additional resources in order to do justice to this Resolution. We hope the countries which supported the Resolution will also support the FAO as it implements this request from the international community.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

La délégation du Sénégal voudrait également se réjouir de vous revoir à la présidence du Conseil et saisit l'occasion pour adresser toutes ses félicitations aux autres Membres du bureau et à ceux du Comité de rédaction. Tout en appuyant l'idée pertinente de l'Australie, je voudrais poser une question; je crois savoir qu'il s'agirait de ressources extrabudgétaires. Si tel était le cas, pourquoi, tout en souhaitant qu'il y ait une évaluation à présenter au Conseil et peut-être avant même aux organes pertinents, ne pas par la même occasion, inviter davantage les pays, comme l'a indiqué la Représentante du Canada, qui ont soutenu cette Résolution, à faire le plus rapidement possible des annonces de contributions pour soutenir cette action et ne pas renvoyer cela au dernier moment pour se mettre à rechercher des ressources, sans lesquelles l'Organisation, qui est évidemment très pertinente pour accomplir ses fonctions, ne pourrait pas mener efficacement les actions voulues.

CHAIRMAN

I think it is still very much in line with the intervention of Australia, the explanation by Mr Carsalade and also the intervention of Canada.

If there are no more interventions, I take it that we have decided to put the text that we have just read in our report. We will ask the Director-General to transmit our conclusions to the Secretary General of the United Nations immediately.

II. WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION

II. SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE

II. SITUACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACIÓN

4. State of Food and Agriculture 1998 (CL 115/2; CL 115/2-Sup.1)

4. Situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 1998 (CL 115/2; CL 115/2-Sup.1)

4. El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación, 1998 (CL 115/2; CL 115/2-Sup.1)

Hartwig DE HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

The Secretariat has prepared two documents for discussion of this Agenda Item. The main document CL 115/2 presents to you a report on the World Food Security situation, based on the most recent available information, as well as concise information on the main aspects of world and regional agricultural performance in recent years.

You will note that, unfortunately, we had to report a slight increase in the absolute number of the chronically undernourished in developing countries between the early 1990's and 1994-96, which is the most recent estimate immediately before the World Food Summit.

The positive aspect is that the proportion of undernourished has continued to decline. However in Africa, South of the Sahara, about one half of the countries experienced increases in the proportion of undernourished.

Our conclusion is that the World Food Security situation is, by-and-large, developing along the lines of slow and uneven progress, as foreseen already in the Summit technical documents. As far as can be seen, so soon after the Summit and taking into account the recent global developments, we are concerned that the rate of this progress may not be sufficient in meeting the World Food Summit target.

The world global supply demand balance remains acceptable. Unfortunately, however, this is due not to increased supply but to a less dynamic demand due to slower economic growth. Let me simply note that, as usual, the report also provides succinct data on fisheries and forestry. You will note that aquaculture continues to be the main source of increases in fish supply, while on the forest side, data shows that for the first part of the decade the loss of natural forest appears to be slowing down from previous trends. This information is drawn from the main FAO publication: *The State of Food and Agriculture*. I am pleased to announce that this document, this book, will be released in a revised format in the course of this Council Session. Unfortunately, it is not yet out today, but in the course of this week we hope to be able to supply it.

Document CL 115/2-Sup.1 revises and updates information concerning food shortages and emergencies, the current situation and prospects for cereals and international commodity markets. Both documents, the main document and the supplement, refer to the increasing number of countries facing severe food emergency situations, including the impact of the most recent and most devastating disaster caused by Hurricane Mitch, which swept across Central America and to which reference was already made earlier.

Of particular relevance, and this is my final remark, is also the deterioration and the economic situation which has sharpened over the last few months even though the fears for the worst are less now than only a few weeks ago. The supply situation for 1998 is somewhat below what was estimated earlier this year, but demand is even more affected by the economic crisis. Cereals carry-over stock should remain at a safe level and food surplus availability for food aid is expected to increase significantly among the major donors.

You will have received, a special invitation for a Briefing on the Impacts of the Recent Global Financial Instability on Food Security, which will be held on Friday this week and which will provide an opportunity to address this issue in more detail. It is our hope that the two documents before you will provide information and insights on what is at present a particularly uncertain and challenging world economic and agriculture development scenario.

Marcelo FERNÁNDEZ de CORDOBA PONCE (Observador de Ecuador)

Tengo el honor de hablar a nombre del grupo de países de Latino América y el Caribe. Deseamos expresar nuestra complacencia al verlo presidir esta importante reunión que esperamos llegue a acuerdos satisfactorios en beneficio de nuestros países.

Durante la 25a Conferencia Regional de la FAO de América Latina y el Caribe efectuada en Nassau, Bahamas el pasado mes de junio, la Región analizó el estado de la agricultura y la alimentación que a nivel global se presentaba en ese momento, centrando sus intereses en la situación que al respecto tenían nuestros países. En tal contexto, la liberación del comercio constituye un elemento fundamental en la seguridad alimentaria, por lo que existe la necesidad de continuar con el proceso de apertura de los mercados eliminando subsidios de las exportaciones y evitando la discriminación en las condiciones de acceso a los mercados de los productos básicos agrícolas, lo que reviste múltiples facetas en especial a través del uso de medidas zootofitosanitarias sin base científica que son usadas como barreras del comercio.

Rechazamos que los alimentos sean utilizados como instrumentos de presión política y económica.

Respaldamos los procesos de integración regional y alentamos una efectiva aplicación del trato especial y diferenciado a favor de los países en desarrollo importadores netos de alimentos y los menos adelantados de acuerdo con los mecanismos previstos por la OMCD.

Solicitamos dar especial consideración a los pequeños Estados isleños a causa de su fragilidad y vulnerabilidad ante los factores climáticos y económicos. Ante la próxima Ronda de negociaciones agrícolas, la FAO debe contribuir de una manera positiva para la preparación de los países que integran esta Organización, a través del establecimiento de un programa de asistencia técnica que incluya la formación de negociadores tanto para la preparación cuanto para el seguimiento de las próximas negociaciones. De igual manera, en el marco de su mandato, la FAO

debe organizar Reuniones de Preparación Técnica para apoyar a los países en la definición de sus posiciones negociadoras. En igual sentido se concluyó que la FAO debe promover la cooperación horizontal en coordinación con otros Organismos Especializados que trabajen en la Región.

Con relación a la estrategia de desarrollo rural como eje de la disminución de la pobreza en la Región, hemos constatado la persistencia o el aumento de las agudas desigualdades en la distribución del ingreso y, en algunos casos, retrocesos en la superación de la pobreza rural. Reiteramos que deben ser implementadas medidas destinadas a neutralizar los efectos negativos de la globalización sobre los pequeños productores, como también a reforzar los aspectos positivos.

Respaldamos la selección de propuestas de las cuatro áreas prioritarias que deben orientar el trabajo de la FAO en la Región, a saber: seguridad alimentaria, inserción dinámica en el comercio exterior, gestión sustentable de los recursos actuales y reforma de las instituciones agrarias. Es por ello que reiteramos la necesidad de profundizar, entre otros, los siguientes temas: el peso de las barreras arancelarias, el desarrollo de los recursos humanos en cuanto a capacitación y organización, el relanzamiento para el desarrollo rural sostenible y el impacto de los desastres naturales en la inestabilidad de la oferta alimentaria. Durante el presente año la producción de alimentos de América Latina y el Caribe se ha visto particularmente afectada por diversos factores de índole climático. Puntualizamos la grave repercusión que tiene el fenómeno de El Niño y la seguridad alimentaria de muchos países de la Región. Este fenómeno cíclico ha causado enormes daños a través de sequías e inundaciones, reportando un alto costo social y económico para los mismos.

El Caribe y, recientemente, los países de América Central que vivieron una de las más graves catástrofes de este siglo, han sufrido los efectos del Huracán Mitch y de otros ciclones en varios casos. No sólo la economía del sector agrícola alimentario se vio afectada, sino toda la economía y el sector productivo de estos estados, a los que su fragilidad los hace particularmente vulnerables y ha incidido gravemente en su capacidad de recuperación. Por ello solicitamos que la FAO, en el marco de su mandato, apoye a esas naciones a través de programas de rehabilitación y desarrollo.

En consecuencia, se debe reforzar el sistema mundial de información y alerta y otros programas pertinentes en una acción conjunta y ordenada, con los países que continúen brindando apoyo para prevenir y contrarrestar los daños ocasionados por estos fenómenos, así como proceder a la formulación de programas de reconstrucción del aparato productivo de los estados afectados.

Nuestra Región ha destacado la importancia de la aplicación del Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable, con miras a lograr la conservación de los recursos y la sostenibilidad de las pesquerías, la seguridad alimentaria y el desarrollo económico. Solicitamos que se continúe brindando cooperación técnica y apoyo a la búsqueda de financiamiento para ejecutar el Código de los países. La Región desea subrayar que hasta la fecha diversos avances han sido obtenidos en ese sector, en particular, desde que se acordó que la implementación del Plan de Acción y los ordenamientos internacionales deben basarse en el Código de Conducta en lo que respecta a la ordenación de la capacidad pesquera, la pesca del tiburón y las capturas incidentales de aves marinas en la pesca con palangre. Particularmente refiriéndose al Artículo Quinto con relación al fortalecimiento de la habilidad de los países en desarrollo a fomentar su capacidad pesquera y a participar en la pesca en alta mar, incluyendo el acceso a estas pescas de acuerdo con sus derechos legítimos y sus obligaciones bajo el derecho internacional.

Reafirmamos la importancia de establecer la Oficina Sub-regional para América Central, reiterándole a la FAO la petición para que proceda a su creación, así como el compromiso adquirido para el establecimiento de oficinas nacionales de conformidad con las recomendaciones emanadas de anteriores conferencias regionales.

Señor Presidente, dado que este Consejo abordará el tema de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, permítame reiterar nuestro compromiso con los acuerdos alcanzados por este histórico evento e informar que nuestros países han tomado diversas medidas para cumplir los

objetivos fijados, centrándose particularmente en el acceso a la alimentación. Convocamos a todos los países a acompañarnos en este propósito reafirmando la voluntad política expresada en la Cumbre. Dentro de las múltiples medidas con miras al seguimiento de los acuerdos de la Cumbre, por la importancia que tienen para el logro de la seguridad alimentaria y el desarrollo social y económico, recomendamos que la cooperación bilateral acordada entre los países de la Región sea ampliada a los demás países en desarrollo en el marco de la cooperación Sur-Sur a fin de aprovechar la capacidad existente y cumplir con las metas del Plan de Acción.

Finalmente, quiero reiterar que las consideraciones expresadas en este foro son propuestas que hago a nombre de todos los países de la Región de América Latina y el Caribe, que reflejan las conclusiones que fueron resultados de la 25a Conferencia Regional y que le pedimos sean recogidos por la Organización.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Permítame expresarle, Señor Presidente, nuestra complacencia por verlo de nuevo conducir las labores de este 115º Consejo de la FAO. Aprovecho, también, esta oportunidad para felicitar a los Vice-presidentes, al Presidente del Comité de Redacción y a los Miembros elegidos.

Lo expresado por el Presidente de nuestro Grupo Regional que define muy claramente las posiciones de los países de América Latina y el Caribe en propuestas muy concretas, facilitan nuestra intervención por estar recogidos nuestros intereses en los temas manifestados por el Embajador de Ecuador. - Propuesta que Cuba comparte y respalda.

Por su importancia y para una mejor lectura, estamos solicitando a la Secretaría que este documento del GRULAC se traduzca y se ponga a disposición de todas las delegaciones participantes en este 115º Consejo.

Comenzaré por hacer algunos comentarios acerca de la pobreza rural. Este fenómeno fue un tema central también de la Cumbre Mundial que expresó su profunda preocupación por la persistencia del hambre que en tal escala constituye una amenaza para las sociedades nacionales y, por distintas vías, para la estabilidad de la propia comunidad internacional. No es nueva la constatación de que éste es un fenómeno complejo en que inciden muchos factores con orígenes tan antiguos como el colonialismo y que en nuestros países se agudizan por un injusto orden económico internacional en que prevalecen las diferencias entre pobres y ricos. De los 1.100 millones de personas afectadas por la pobreza en el mundo, 800 millones viven en zonas rurales. Sin embargo, en la mayoría de los países en desarrollo, el sector rural continúa padeciendo abandono. Los países en desarrollo se enfrentan también a un medio internacional difícil y limitativo, condicionado por los programas de ajuste estructural que no tienen debidamente en cuenta los límites impuestos por sus economías basadas en la agricultura, por la inestabilidad de los mercados para la mayor parte de sus exportaciones y por la competencia internacional cada vez mayor a lo que se enfrentan las industrias incipientes y sus débiles economías agrarias. A la carga de la deuda acumulada en gran medida como consecuencia del internamiento de las relaciones de intercambio y de préstamos para proyectos económicos que no han conseguido obtener los beneficios previstos.

Cuba, desde hace algunos años, aseveró que la deuda de los países del Tercer Mundo era impagable y hoy se confirma. La deuda externa, en especial, es otra de las lacras de la cual el orden económico internacional condena a los países en desarrollo a ser más deudor mientras más paga. Es preocupante constatar que en el mundo los países que pueden contribuir de manera positiva a fomentar el desarrollo en países como los nuestros se alejan cada vez más de los perfiles de la asistencia oficial al desarrollo, agregando a esto la tendencia cada día más presente de la disminución de las contribuciones a los organismos multilaterales. En fin, sin que exista ni remotamente una política global o individual de parte de los países desarrollados en analizar la posibilidad de condonación de la enorme deuda externa que somete a cada uno de los países del llamado Tercer Mundo.

Nos hemos permitido hacer esta referencia porque consideramos importante que se tenga presente que en la actualidad existen millones de personas que están padeciendo hambre y malnutrición en

el mundo, en otras palabras, que se encuentran en una aguda y crítica situación que bien pudiéramos denominar situación de emergencia humanitaria compleja a nivel global. Estos millones de personas no están siendo objeto de la atención prioritaria porque formalmente no están en situaciones de guerra ni hacen noticia en la prensa internacional, sufren sin embargo las peores de las violencias que puede sufrir un ser humano: el hambre y sus secuelas que lo acompañan de por vida.

En otro orden de cosas, desearíamos añadir algunas reflexiones, mientras la rentabilidad de la producción agrícola siga siendo tan baja, será prácticamente imposible para la agricultura competir el desequilibrio del aumento de la población entre las zonas rurales y urbanas. Los problemas sociales crecientes en las ciudades harán que aparezcan de forma mucho más clara los costos reales para la economía de los países en desarrollo. Alertamos que la inversión que se haga en el desarrollo sostenible del potencial y de la agricultura, los bosques y la pesca serán mucho menos costosos a largo plazo, que la solución de los problemas que el abandono rural está provocando. El abandono secular de la agricultura refleja la baja estimación y el poco valor que se le ha atribuido a los recursos naturales. El incremento de la producción alimentaria es una condición necesaria, pero no suficiente, para resolver los problemas del hambre y la pobreza. Es una verdad absoluta reiterar que mientras los pobres sigan desprovistos de los medios necesarios para generar ingresos, para adquirir alimentos o recursos para producir lo que necesitan, permanecerán bajo la amenaza del hambre. De este conocido análisis se desprende la urgencia de considerar prioritaria la rehabilitación de las zonas rurales como señaló la Cumbre en sus textos.

Otro aspecto que deseo destacar está relacionado con los fenómenos climáticos en general y en particular con los efectos del fenómeno de El Niño. La geografía de la inseguridad alimentaria coincide y en cierta medida aumenta la grave crisis alimentaria provocada por los efectos climáticos, sean sequía, inundaciones, ciclones, tormentas, huracanes, terremotos, volcanes, desertificación y la crítica situación que provoca El Niño. En el caso de nuestro país entre el mes de mayo de 1997 y el mes de julio de 1998, el fenómeno de El Niño, oscilación sur, ha venido afectando de la siguiente forma: sequía e inundaciones. También este año fuimos víctimas del Huracán George y el Mitch nos dejó algunas secuelas, aunque por supuesto nunca comparado con la catástrofe de que han sido víctimas los hermanos países de América Central. En Cuba, los registros de precipitación en el período lluvioso de 1997 estuvieron entre el 75 y el 50 por ciento de los promedios históricos, mientras que en el período poco lluvioso los promedios acumulados de lluvia se comportaron muy por encima de las normas históricas en episodios de poca duración y gran intensidad, lo que hizo poco aprovechables y más bien dañinas a muchas actividades productivas. Unido a ellas en este período se han registrado las temperaturas más altas de los últimos 40 años incidiendo negativamente en los cultivos o la afectación en el desarrollo normal y el incremento de la presencia de plagas debido a los excesos que se presentaron acompañados de vientos y tornados. Entre noviembre de 1997 y febrero de 1998 fueron afectadas 12 de las 14 provincias del país, resultaron damnificadas cerca de 20 000 personas de las cuales fueron evacuadas más de 12,000. La afectación general fue de alrededor de 120,000 millones y fundamentalmente los cultivos alimentarios desde marzo pasado se habían calculado en 62,4 millones de dólares adicionalmente a las pérdidas en ganadería que fueron de 4,000 millones y en la agricultura por valor de 4,5 millones, pesca por 4 millones, y afectaciones a población y vivienda por valor de 26,1 millones entre otros.

Por otro lado, el progresivo empeoramiento de las disponibilidades de lluvia en las cinco provincias de oriente del país: Las Tunas, Olguín, Granma, Santiago de Cuba y Guantánamo durante 1997 y el primer semestre de 1998 afectaron drásticamente la producción y la disponibilidad de alimentos así como el abastecimiento de agua a la población en esta parte del país. La pérdida como consecuencia de la intensa sequía desde marzo último a la fecha en la producción de alimentos está estimada en varias decenas de millones de dólares. Esta situación puso en estado de alerta el país para asistir de manera urgente a miles de personas. La escasez de lluvia provocó una alarmante reducción de los niveles de agua en las presas, encontrándose por debajo de un 30 por ciento de su capacidad de almacenamiento. Las pérdidas provocadas por esta sequía han tenido un efecto negativo sobre nuestra economía, pues no sólo han afectado a la

ganadería, las cosechas y los cultivos en períodos transcurridos y a la agricultura sino que no nos han permitido realizar la siembra en los ciclos normales, cuestión que redundará en afectaciones que comprometen el futuro de cosechas venideras. Las pérdidas por la sequía han agravado aún más la difícil situación económica por la que atraviesa Cuba, y a pesar del esfuerzo realizado por el Gobierno de mi país que tuvo que destinar recursos urgentes de otras regiones y de otros rublos en la economía nacional para contrarrestar los efectos negativos para la población y la rehabilitación de la producción. Tuvimos que solicitar ayuda de emergencia en favor de las cinco provincias antes mencionadas para enfrentar y atenuar los daños ocasionados por la intensa sequía.

Quisiera aprovechar esta ocasión para agradecer en nombre del Gobierno de Cuba a los organismos y agencias de la Naciones Unidas, así como al conjunto de países que han contribuido y se han comprometido a apoyar las acciones que se están efectuando para atenuar los daños de esta importante Región. La FAO se encuentra en la fase de concretar también una ayuda de emergencia para apoyar la rehabilitación de dicha zona, por lo que hago extensivo este agradecimiento a la Organización, en la seguridad que mi país sabrá valorar, como es habitual, dicha asistencia en favor y beneficio de los productores y por la pronta recuperación de esta importante región de Cuba.

Li ZHENG DONG (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, I am very happy to see you presiding over this session of our Council. I would like to offer congratulations for the election of the three Vice-Chairmen. At the same time, I would like to thank the Secretariat of FAO for having prepared document CL 115/2 and Mr de Haen for his introduction of this Agenda Item. I think these will facilitate our discussion of this Agenda Item.

The Chinese delegation noted with pleasure that in recent years there has been a big major increase in world food production. In 1996, it went up by 7.9 percent over 1995 and it continued to rise by one percent in 1997, to reach a record level of 1, 911 million tonnes. In 1998, the global food crops are expected to have a bumper harvest, with cereal production reaching 1, 892 million tonnes. The substantial increase in world food production has significantly improved the previous food security situation, characterized by stagnating food production, tied food supply, rising prices and sharp decline of stocks.

However, there are still many problems in the world food and agricultural development. At present, there are still 800 million people suffering from hunger and malnutrition, and the number of countries suffering from food shortages has increased from 29 in 1996 to 40. Most of the developing countries have a very weak infrastructure for food and agricultural production, and many Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries are still faced with the double constraints of inadequate food production and lack of purchasing power. The financial crisis in Southeast Asia has negatively affected the food security of many countries.

At the same time, in recent years the external assistance and food aid for agriculture has continuously decreased. I think it is an important and urgent task facing us to develop food and agricultural production to improve the world food security situation and to realize the objectives of the World Food Summit, i.e. to reduce by half number of hungry and malnourished people by the year 2015. This is also the common responsibility of national governments.

Now I would like to express our views on this Agenda Item.

First, by world food problem we mainly mean that developing countries are still faced with weak infrastructures for food and agricultural production coupled with a lack of purchasing power. Developing countries should formulate policies and measures for facilitating agricultural and food production that increase agricultural input, strengthen education and technical training for farmers, and speed up technological and scientific progress in agriculture.

Second, to solve the world food problem and to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, national efforts but also mutual cooperation endeavours among countries must take place. Developed countries should provide the necessary development assistance to agriculture for developing countries, and

remove protectionism and discrimination in trade. For this, they should make tangible efforts so as to help developing countries increase the self-reliance and competitiveness of their farm produce.

Developing countries' economic development would also facilitate the continuous economic development of the world, as well as that of developed countries. Developing countries should further promote technical cooperation in agriculture among themselves, learn from each other's merits for common development. We are happy to note that, in recent years, FAO's TCDC and developing countries have collaborated in food security endeavours, and this Programme has played a useful role in promoting South-South cooperation.

Third, as a Specialized Agency in food and agriculture in the international arena, FAO should play a greater role in promoting rural economic development, in improving world food security and in eradicating hunger and malnutrition. We have also noted that, since its inception, FAO has provided very useful financial, technical and policy support and assistance to developing countries. Especially in recent years, FAO has further adjusted its Programme of Work and has taken as priorities the increase in food production of Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries to ensure their food security, and it has implemented a Special Action Programme for Food Security and that has achieved tenable results.

We would like to express our appreciation and support for all these efforts. We hope that FAO will play a more significant role in implementing the follow-up activities of the World Food Summit. I believe that so long as we join efforts, and take practical actions, the objectives set forth at the World Food Summit can surely be reached.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

First of all, I would like to congratulate the three new Vice-Chairmen and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee on behalf of my delegation. I believe that a new bureau of the Council could make this Council constructive and efficient.

Also, thank you for Mr de Haen's excellent explanations of this document, and we look forward to receiving the supplementary documents during the course of the Council.

My delegation would like to comment on four points in the *State of Food and Agriculture in 1998*. First, the regional dimension of food security; second, FAO's leading role in highlighting the multifunctional character of agriculture in upcoming WTO negotiations; third, uncertainty and effects of natural disasters on food production, and finally, I would like to comment on the financial crisis.

I would first like to touch on the regional dimension of food security. The current economic crisis in Asia is affecting, to a large extent, the regional capacity to import food commercially and, in addition, recent floods resulting largely from *La Niña* had a devastating effect on regional production of food grains, in particular rice production. As is well known, over 90 percent of global rice production is concentrated in Asia, while only five percent of total rice production is internationally traded. As a result, the global rice market exists in the form of a thin market, where a small increase and import demand for the commodity can cause its price to rise exceptionally high. Recent developments in the global rice market empirically proves these characteristics. The paddy crop damage caused by the recent floods and consequent increase in import demand for rice keeps its price on the rise and the overall food security situation in Asia is precarious because importing countries are increasingly put in jeopardy. In addition, in spite of the slight increase in the rise in agricultural production in 1997, the majority of the 46 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa experienced a fall in *per capita* production.

Under these circumstances, I would like to underline that due attention needs to be given to this regional dimension of food security, in spite of overall favourable global food supply situation. Along with this, I would also like to stress that a preventive strategy for food security, that is increasing domestic production through the effective utilization of existing resources in a

sustainable way and maintaining a reasonable level of self-sufficiency in staple foods in each country, is vital for achieving lasting food security.

Secondly, I would like to comment on FAO's leading role in highlighting the multifunctional character of agriculture in upcoming WTO negotiations. Coordinating to ensure national food security through effective and sustainable utilization of existing production resources for staple foods is the promotion of the multifunctional character of agriculture, the importance of which was duly recognized as Commitment 3 of the World Food Summit and OECD Agricultural Ministers' meeting earlier this year. With its positive externality, Asian paddy field-based agriculture serves to maintain the socio-economic viability of rural communities, as well as the preservation of biological diversity and flood control. It is worth noting that it is hardly possible to rehabilitate the production resources, especially agricultural land, if they are damaged or disrupted by natural disasters or other economic factors. For those positive functions to be fully utilized, it is essential to maintain an optimum level of production based on staple food.

Hence, I firmly believe that the promotion of multifunctional agriculture is closely interrelated with ensuring national food security, and they are mutually supportive.

In this context, I recommend that FAO should take a leading and vigorous role in highlighting the importance of the multifunctional character of agriculture and its close relationship with sustainable food security in upcoming WTO negotiations on agriculture, as already defined by many delegates in the Committee on World Food Security in June of this year.

I welcome in this regard the Director-General of FAO's commitment to stepping up FAO's action to assist in the preparation for future trade negotiations, which was made in a statement at the Twenty-fourth Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in Myanmar in April this year.

Fourthly, I would like to draw your attention to the uncertainty and effects of natural devastation on food production as mentioned by other delegates before. (I understand the deleterious effect on agriculture depends to a great degree on interaction between temperature, precipitation and atmosphere.) In 1997, we noted the increasingly apparent trend of the global warming. In addition, it is observed that the cycle of the currents of *El Niño* has been getting shorter. Considering the utmost importance of achieving the World Food Summit targets, I am of the view that it seems to be necessary for FAO to undertake to carry out an analytical and deep study on this major uncertainty and its possible impacts on future food production.

In this context, I strongly recommend that the GIEWS early warning systems and the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES) should be strengthened in the future.

Finally, I would like to comment on the financial crisis as mentioned by other delegations before. Para. 64 of this article is saying that the global recession will inevitably translate into greater food insecurity for millions of people. It is impossible to reduce food insecurity without resolving this financial crisis. Therefore, I would like to appeal that all UN organizations concerned, international financing institutions and the G7 countries do their best to collaborate in resolving global necessities.

Nehad Ibrahim ABDEL-LATIF (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group I would like to extend to you Sir, the expression of our satisfaction over your election as Independent Chairman of Council. We would also like to congratulate your Vice-Chairmen and the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee.

We are also grateful to the Secretariat for the efforts deployed in the preparation of this document now before us. Even though this does focus on the objectives of the World Food Summit, the main objective being to cut by half the number of people suffering hunger before the year 2015, we do note that the first chapter in this document indicates that the number of those who appear to be undernourished between 1994 and 1997 has increased.

We would like to know if this number includes 1997, and what has happened between 1997 and 1998 so that it would be possible to have an updated picture on the world malnutrition situation. We would like to know, if we could have this information to enable us to be really up-to-date with the latest developments. In some paragraphs of this document there are references to the fact that there has also been a decrease in the number of persons who are undernourished in the world. We would just like to have the latest up-to-date data.

With regard to my country and the countries on behalf of which I am speaking, I would like to say that Egypt has deployed a major effort to increase food production, especially with regard to maize and other cereals since 1997. We have also increased the production of other crops and foodstuffs.

I would also like to indicate to the Organization that efforts must be continued in all developing countries to increase the food security situation. It is quite gratifying to know that we can count on clear statistics on the latest situation in fisheries and food products.

Mme María IGLESIA GÓMEZ (Observateur pour la Communauté européenne)

Nous nous réjouissons nous aussi de vous voir présider cette nouvelle période du Conseil, ainsi que les Vice-présidents et les membres du Comité de rédaction. La Communauté européenne et ses Etats Membres ont pris connaissance avec intérêt des documents que le Secrétariat de la FAO a préparés sur ce point de l'ordre du jour. Dans ce cadre, permettez-moi, d'illustrer brièvement la situation actuelle de la conjoncture agricole dans la Communauté européenne.

L'année 1997 marque, par rapport à l'année passée, le retour à une situation de marché beaucoup plus équilibrée entre les différents secteurs de production, confirmant ainsi la tendance positive que l'on avait prévue avec la réforme de la Politique agricole commune (PAC) en 1992. Dans l'ensemble, les résultats, tout en étant encore insatisfaisants à certains égards, montrent toutefois les signes d'une reprise qui devrait se renforcer encore davantage en 1998-99, à moins d'une détérioration de l'environnement international.

La production communautaire de céréales pour la campagne 1997-98 est estimée à 208 millions de tonnes, soit un niveau légèrement supérieur à celui de l'année précédente. La surface en céréales, avec un taux de gel de terres de 5 pour cent, a globalement diminué. Les rendements maintiennent la tendance à l'augmentation. Les stocks ont fortement augmenté, et les prix des céréales se situent à des niveaux assez bas. Pour le riz, la production communautaire se situe aux environs de 2 millions de tonnes. Depuis 1997, les stocks ont augmenté.

Pour ce qui est de la production des oléagineux, celle-ci a atteint en 1997 un niveau record de 14,7 millions de tonnes, dont 13,5 millions pour usage alimentaire et 1,2 million pour les utilisations non alimentaires.

Pour le sucre, la production de 1997 est en hausse par rapport à l'année précédente, en raison de plusieurs éléments: une hausse légère des surfaces, une augmentation des rendements et l'augmentation de la teneur en sucre. Mais on constate néanmoins une diminution des prix.

Cependant la production de lait et de produits dérivés en 1997 est estimée en légère baisse par rapport à l'année précédente. Les prix se sont redressés au cours de l'année 1997 et les stocks ont diminué. La consommation est plutôt stable, et nous avons constaté pour 1997 une reprise des exportations.

Pour ce qui est de la viande bovine, sa production est restée pratiquement stable en 1997. La consommation interne de viande a commencé à se redresser en 1997 avec une augmentation d'environ 3 pour cent.

En 1998, la crise de la Russie avec la dévaluation du rouble a sévèrement frappé le marché communautaire des viandes bovines et porcines. Etant donné l'importance des flux d'exportation communautaire vers le marché russe, la conséquence immédiate de la crise est ainsi essentiellement ressentie sur le marché interne de la Communauté.

Les perspectives à long terme devraient se présenter favorablement pour la Communauté en raison d'une baisse prévisible des cours mondiaux et d'une augmentation de la demande de denrées alimentaires. Ces perspectives prévoient que la croissance économique dans les pays en voie de développement entre 1997 et 2005 se ferait plus rapidement que dans le passé, ce qui permettrait d'espérer une amélioration de la sécurité alimentaire dans les pays en voie de développement.

Pour permettre à l'agriculture européenne de s'adapter à l'évolution positive du marché mondial pour améliorer la compétitivité, pour se conformer à l'Organisation mondiale du commerce et pour une meilleure protection de l'environnement, la Communauté discute actuellement un paquet de réformes présenté dans l'Agenda 2000.

Permettez-moi de faire quelques remarques concernant les chapitres relatifs à la sécurité alimentaire. En 1996, la Communauté européenne et ses Etats Membres ont réformé la politique intégrée de l'aide alimentaire de la Communauté pour en faire une politique sur l'aide alimentaire et de la sécurité alimentaire. En conséquence, le budget traditionnellement affecté à l'aide alimentaire peut désormais être également utilisé pour les actions de soutien à la sécurité alimentaire. Le résultat est que sur les 530 millions d'ECU du budget de 1997, environ 45 pour cent ont déjà été attribués à ces actions, qui ont visé des activités pour l'amélioration de l'accès physique et économique aux produits alimentaires, et ont été principalement financés via les actions de développement dans les budgets des gouvernements bénéficiaires. Le reste étant ainsi destiné principalement à l'aide alimentaire. Un autre aspect de cette réforme est que pratiquement 55 pour cent du montant de l'aide a été attribué directement et que plus de 40 pour cent indirectement via les organisations internationales telles que le Programme alimentaire mondial, l'Office de secours et de travaux pour les réfugiés de la Palestine et la Croix-Rouge internationale.

L'intérêt continu et croissant pour la sécurité alimentaire au sein de l'Union s'est traduit par un appel à une amélioration de la gestion de l'intervention sur l'aide alimentaire grâce à l'établissement d'un Code de conduite pour l'aide alimentaire. Ce Code de conduite contiendrait des règles sur la façon dont l'aide alimentaire doit être octroyée, sur le type, la qualité et la valeur nutritive des denrées devant être privilégiées afin de fournir les produits alimentaires les plus appropriés aux bénéficiaires. Ce Code de conduite précise également les conditions de coordination nécessaires pour une planification efficace des interventions et établit la règle selon laquelle toute l'aide alimentaire doit être assurée sous forme de subvention. La Communauté et ses Etats Membres se sont mis d'accord sur ce Code, qui serait désormais utilisé comme ligne de conduite pour les interventions d'aide alimentaire.

La Communauté européenne et ses Etats Membres ont un engagement minimal dans le cadre de l'actuelle Convention d'aide alimentaire de plus de 1,75 millions de tonnes d'aide alimentaire. En effet, ces dernières années une moyenne de 2 millions de tonnes ont été distribués. Les coûts relatifs au transport et à l'aide alimentaire ont été aussi donnés. Toutes ces interventions d'aide alimentaire et coûts supplémentaires y afférents se font sur une base de subvention, conformément aux principes fixés dans notre projet de Code de conduite.

La Communauté et ses Etats Membres sont actuellement activement impliqués dans les renégociations d'une nouvelle Convention qui doit entrer en vigueur mi-1999. Nous nous efforçons, dans la modification de la Convention actuelle, d'aboutir à une Convention plus orientée vers le développement, ce qui signifierait: en premier lieu, une forte réorientation vers les pays moins avancés; deuxièmement, une meilleure coordination des interventions de l'aide alimentaire à entreprendre, afin d'augmenter l'efficacité et l'impact sur l'aide alimentaire; en troisième lieu, un éventail plus large de produits à inclure dans le cadre de la Convention, comprenant les produits dont s'alimentent traditionnellement les groupes sensibles; quatrièmement, davantage d'accent sur les achats locaux et les transactions triangulaires; en dernier lieu, la suppression de l'aide alimentaire basée sur l'octroi de prêts.

Cela n'est pas, évidemment, entre les mains de la Communauté européenne et de ses Etats Membres, mais nous avons fortement défendu le principe d'une aide alimentaire octroyée sous forme de subventions. Nous continuerons à poursuivre ces objectifs dans les négociations de la

Convention sur l'aide alimentaire, ainsi que dans tout autre forum sur l'aide alimentaire, et nous demeurons engagés sur le principe d'octroi de l'aide alimentaire sur la base de subventions.

Kamal PANDE (India)

I feel confident that under your able Chairmanship the deliberations of Council will be fruitful and rewarding. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Vice-Chairman and the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee and also, Mr de Haen for his clear and thought-provoking presentation.

At the World Food Summit conducted two years ago, we had all pledged our will and national commitment to the continuing efforts aimed at eradication of hunger in all countries. Even today there are over 800 million people suffering from malnutrition. The FAO has made commendable efforts to address this critical issue and to evolve a global strategy for insuring food security for both the present and future generations. I congratulate the Organization for raising this issue to the highest international level and for bringing it to the forefront of the international agenda. I would like to assure you of our unstinted support for these endeavours.

At the threshold of the Twenty-first Century and looking back at the performance of the agricultural sector in India, over five decades, one has the sense of quiet satisfaction of optimism. With a record production of nearly 200 million metric tonnes of food grains in 1996, of fourfold increase over the output in the 1950s, India has come a long way since the unfortunate drought years of the mid-1960s characterized by what was then known as the ship-to-mouth survival. Moreover, Indian agriculture attained high resilience through the development and wide adoption of new technologies. Unlike the 1960s, the effects of severe droughts in 1979 and 1980, and again in 1987 and 1988, were therefore overcome with our internal stocks of food grains. The country is now fully capable of taking care of its food security.

Apart from the Green Revolution, India has made great strides in other sub-sectors. The White Blue and Yellow Revolutions have achieved fourfold increases in milk, sevenfold in fish, and fivefold in oilseeds, respectively, in the last five decades. Most of the technologies that have fuelled the Green and other Revolutions have been generated and disseminated by a research and extension institutional network painstakingly built over the last fifty years.

The National Agricultural Research System in India, supported by over 30 000 scientists, is now one of the largest in the world. Our efforts have been supported by the development of expertise in diverse areas of agriculture such as, irrigation, watershed management, and the provision of critical inputs such as quality seed, improved high-yielding varieties, fertilizers, pesticides, farm mechanization, access to credit and post-harvest management. Our farmers have shown a tremendous spirit of enterprise and a commendable ability to adopt the latest techniques and agricultural practices.

With these significant achievements, Indian agriculture has now entered a phase when second generational problems will pose major challenges. The sustainability of the agricultural system is repeatedly being called into question in areas where prosperity and progress have been recorded. Integrated pest management, integrated nutrient management and integrated farming systems approaches need a renewed thrust. The production, popularization and promotion of bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides require much greater emphasis. A clear and definite strategy needs to be evolved by the FAO to assist measures aimed at harvesting, conservation of water, and efficient on-farm water management. What India requires right now is to extend the Green Revolution to the rainfed areas, the benefits of which have so far primarily flown only to the irrigated area.

In this result the country is giving high priority to bio-technology, informatics, crop-modelling and geographical information systems. Strong linkages have been created among research, extension and farmers for assessment and transfer of technologies in a participatory mode. Assured irrigation facilities, access to technology and availability of quality inputs notwithstanding, agriculture remains an essentially seasonal and risky occupation with failing investments causing untold distress to farmers. We are grateful to FAO for agreeing to assist the

Government of India in devising a versatile comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme meant to cover more farmers and more crops in the country.

The major problem being faced by developing countries is the need to increase productivity, particularly, in the context of globalizaton of the agricultural sector and in the wake of the agreement on agriculture in the WTO. In the changed scenario, agriculture in countries like India will have to respond robustly to changes in the global agricultural situation. We will need to acquire the ability to engage in a meaningful and continuous dialogue with the external environment and to have an on-line and real time capacity to analyze the signals emerging from the farmers and the markets. Some fast-track bypassed mechanism will need to be evolved to source data relating to availability of inputs, crop conditions, early warning systems, means of predicting gluts or shortages, and the emergence of threats and opportunities in the market.

Recognizing the fact that the availability of food grains is an essential element but not a sufficient condition for food security, we are implementing several poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes. Sustained efforts are also being made for enabling the most needy sections of the population to gain easy access to food through a well-targeted public distribution system. The Government of India is also implementing other schemes under which nutritional meals are provided to school children.

India is more than willing to do what it can to assist the cause of food security in less developed countries. It might not have the financial resources, but it has an abundance of human capital, talent, expertise and experience which is low cost and labour-intensive, and which we are willing to pool and share with countries in need under the spirit of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries.

I take this opportunity to express our support to the Director-General's laudable initiative for the expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security. India has already expressed wholehearted support to this effort by offering to implement the project in Eritrea. We are also looking forward to participating in the Special Programme in Sierra Leone and Ghana. We accept that governments alone cannot tackle the issue of food security and extra resources are required for the implementation of this Programme. We wish all success to the "Telefood" venture which invites contributions from countries, private individuals and businesses to help augment the efforts aimed at overcoming the scourges of poverty and deprivation.

The FAO is an Organization that has worked, in close collaboration with the committee of nations, giving us valuable assistance in developing our technologies and in establishing fruitful collaborative relationships. In a market-driven world, dominated by a paradigm of intense competition, new demands are being made on the agricultural sector and the farmers dependent upon it in various countries. FAO has, in recent times, embarked on a number of initiatives designed to assist the developing countries in coming to terms with the rapid changes in the external environment. We are confident that FAO will continue to play an advocate role in this regard in the interest of the underprivileged sectors of our farming community.

Zacharie PÉRÉVET (Cameroun)

Au nom de ma délégation, permettez-moi d'abord de vous féliciter, Monsieur le Président, ainsi que les nouveaux membres; je pense aux trois vice-présidents nouvellement élus, aux membres du Comité de rédaction de votre bureau qui viennent d'être brillamment élus pour vous aider à conduire les travaux de notre Conseil.

Je saisis également cette occasion pour saluer le Directeur général, Monsieur Jacques Diouf, et le féliciter ainsi que ses collaborateurs pour le travail qu'ils accomplissent à la tête de la FAO et plus particulièrement pour la qualité des documents qui sont soumis à notre examen sur la situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture. Cette situation, malgré une légère augmentation globale de la production agricole en 1997, est loin d'être satisfaisante. Bien au contraire, la conjugaison de plusieurs facteurs naturels, et autres, a entraîné une augmentation du nombre des pays confrontés à des crises alimentaires aiguës qui est passé de 29 en 1997 à 40 aujourd'hui. Parallèlement, on relève un déclin de l'assistance extérieure à l'agriculture. La menace d'une récession économique

qui plane actuellement ne pourra qu'aggraver cette triste situation, avec des répercussions sur la sécurité alimentaire des ménages pauvres les plus exposés.

Il y a deux ans, le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation a permis la mise sur pied d'un Plan d'action avec des objectifs nobles basés, entre autre, sur la solidarité internationale qui seule permettra d'affronter sérieusement le fléau de la famine. Le constat que nous faisons actuellement devrait par conséquent nous inciter à accélérer la mise en œuvre de nombreux mécanismes de lutte contre la pauvreté prévus dans ce plan.

En 1997, notre pays a été confronté au cours de l'année à des catastrophes naturelles, notamment l'invasion du criquet migrateur africain, la sécheresse, qui ont sérieusement aggravé le déficit alimentaire de la zone sinistrée concernée. Notre pays n'avait pas connu d'invasion du criquet migrateur africain depuis plus de trente ans, d'où la surprise et la lenteur des réactions pour y faire face. Nous voulons ici exprimer notre gratitude aux pays et aux organismes qui ont répondu à l'appel lancé par notre Gouvernement à cette occasion pour une intervention d'urgence en faveur des populations sinistrées. Je voudrais citer particulièrement l'Union européenne, les Etats Unis d'Amérique, le Canada, l'OUA, la FAO, le PAM. Pour cette année, les récoltes de culture pluviale s'annoncent meilleures que celles de l'année précédente, mais des poches de déficit dues aux inondations et aux restrictions des cultures à la suite des invasions des éléphants existent malheureusement.

La politique de notre Gouvernement est orientée vers la recherche de solutions durables aux problèmes de déficit vivrier devenus structurels dans la zone septentrionale, et de consolidation de la sécurité alimentaire dans les autres zones. Elle s'appuie sur la maîtrise des facteurs de production, plus particulièrement l'eau et la promotion des activités agricoles menées par les femmes afin d'améliorer leurs revenus. Le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire est considéré comme un cadre adéquat de mise en œuvre de quelques-unes de ces opérations. Le Gouvernement fonde beaucoup d'espoir sur ce programme et nous comptons sur la FAO pour le démarrage rapide de la phase pilote dont les plans d'opération étaient déjà élaborés. Nous sommes conscients de l'importance de la mise en œuvre de toutes ces mesures, mais également de son coût qui ne peut être supporté par les petits producteurs. Des investissements publics seront affectés en priorité dans les zones à fort impact socio-économique. En plus de ses propres efforts, le Gouvernement s'emploie à rechercher les moyens financiers appropriés internes et externes pour la réalisation de ces opérations. La recherche de solutions au renforcement de la sécurité alimentaire tient particulièrement compte des zones hautement peuplées et des zones à risques climatiques élevés, notamment la partie septentrionale du pays.

Comme vous le savez, la pauvreté qui sévit aussi bien en milieu rural qu'en milieu urbain, comme relevé dans le document élaboré par le Secrétariat, nous interpelle particulièrement. La lutte contre la pauvreté constitue une priorité dans la politique de notre Gouvernement pour élever le niveau de revenus des ménages et faciliter l'accès à la nourriture. La 18ème Journée mondiale de l'alimentation et l'émission *Téléfood*, qui a été un grand succès, ont permis de sensibiliser davantage l'opinion publique nationale sur cette préoccupation et sur l'important rôle joué par les femmes dont les efforts doivent être soutenus. Cette lutte est difficile et nécessite le renforcement du concours des différents partenaires, états, bailleurs de fonds extérieurs, ONG qui doivent se mobiliser à travers des projets de développement à impact immédiat sur les conditions de vie des populations défavorisées.

Notre Gouvernement apprécie le travail que la FAO réalise aussi bien ici au siège que sur le terrain. Comme les performances d'une organisation dépendent des hommes qui la dirigent, nous félicitons et encourageons le Directeur général, Monsieur Jacques Diouf, et son équipe à poursuivre les efforts qu'ils n'ont cessé de mener à la tête de la FAO. Une fois de plus, nous félicitons le Secrétariat pour l'analyse de la situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture et remercions tous ceux qui, à travers cette analyse, trouveront l'occasion de manifester concrètement leur solidarité aux populations qui continuent de souffrir de la faim et de la malnutrition dans le monde.

Mohammad MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh)

My delegation thanks the Secretariat for the excellent document CL 115/2 that very clearly depicts the major events relating to food and agriculture in the world in 1997, including some indications of the trends for the current year. This document has also provided us with an opportunity to assess progress towards attainment of the lofty target of reducing the present absolute number of chronically-undernourished people to half by the year 2015, which was agreed by the world community and the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996.

Although a timeframe of two years may not be enough to analyze trends, the situation in the food and agriculture sectors in the world, in particular in the developing countries, does not indicate a very positive tendency towards achievement of food security. While agricultural production has continued to increase in the 1990s in most regions of the world and while the world has attained a capacity to feed all its people, the number of people living below the poverty line and suffering chronic malnutrition has, in fact, increased in developing countries. This is a deplorable situation. Table 1 of the document indicates that between 1990 to 1996, the number of undernourished has increased in developing countries, especially in Asia and Africa.

Special mention must be made of the situation in South Asia where the food security situation has deteriorated by alarming proportions. World crop and livestock production in 1997 grew by only 1.2 percent, compared to 4.5 percent in 1996 which is the lowest yearly growth rate since 1993. The developing countries as a whole recorded a growth of only 1.8 percent, compared to 5.3 in 1996. This rate of growth in many cases is below the natural growth rate of population in many Asian and African countries. This low level of growth in agricultural production in resource-poor countries will exert unbearable pressures on the balance-of-payments situation to feed the hungry millions.

This document rightly identifies that unusually low production in 1997 was a consequence of adverse weather conditions. Droughts and floods associated with *El Niño* and *La Niña* ravaged crops and livestock in many countries of Asia, Africa, Near East and Latin America. The unfavourable weather conditions causing severe floods and droughts recently in parts of Asia, Central America, Africa might have a much more devastating impact in terms of agricultural production and productivity than anticipated in paragraph 28 of the document. We in Bangladesh recently have experienced a flood which was unparalleled in its devastation. Standing crops in some 1.28 million acres were damaged, affecting roughly 30 million people. In addition, severe damages have occurred to infrastructures, which would limit the future growth of agriculture in the country. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all bilateral and multilateral agencies, including FAO, whose response to the crisis was immediate. However, even with food assistance we have to import four million tonnes of additional food this year to tackle the food shortages.

Countries affected by such adverse natural phenomena are on the rise around the world. The Report indicates that the number of developing countries facing food emergencies has risen to 40, from 29, since last November 1997. This trend will undoubtedly exacerbate the food security situation in many of the affected countries. In such a situation, FAO needs to come forward to assist these countries to institute an Early Warning System and to provide other requisite facilities to prevent and mitigate the effects of such natural disasters in affected countries.

We are happy to note that production of fisheries in the world registered a healthy growth in 1996, an increase of 3.2 percent compared to 1995. One very positive trend is output expansion in aquaculture which has an important contribution to make in food security, as well as in social and economic development in LDCs. However, while exploitation of fishing stocks in many parts of the world causes a serious threat to the sustainable management of fisheries, we think there is an urgent need for total compliance with the provisions of FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Assistance to developing countries to build the necessary infrastructure and management capacity in this regard should be given utmost importance. Although we are on the verge of completing 1998, the fishery statistics in this Report cover the period 1996 with some

preliminary estimates for 1997. More updated information would be a welcome feature in future Reports with focus on futuristic analyses of trends in the medium-term.

It is regrettable that the Official Development Assistance to agriculture has not registered any increase over the last few years. There is an urgent need for substantial increases in the flow of concessionary resources into research, technology development and productivity improvements in the crop, livestock and forestry subsectors. In this context, we strongly support FAO's initiative in mobilizing investment resources for the developing countries through collaboration with other international financial institutions.

We also note with satisfaction that the level of food aid to developing countries in 1997-98 was satisfactory, although this level is substantially lower than its peak level during 1992-93. The document, however, does not give a complete picture of food aid flows as it excludes contributions from bilateral sources. One disturbing feature of food aid flows through WFP is that almost 70 percent of food aid is channelled for emergency and protracted relief operations. The Development portfolio of WFP now handles 30 percent of resources. This imbalance in resource distribution needs to be rectified. Donors should increase their contributions to food-assisted development projects in developing countries which have proved to be effective in targeting and assisting the most vulnerable groups to lift themselves out of the morass of absolute poverty. Moreover, people assisted through development projects are found to be in a better position to cope with emergency situations.

In concluding, it is our moral duty to make this world free from hunger. It would require concerted international actions. We in the developing countries have always considered FAO as the most appropriate forum for addressing our problems in agriculture. With climatic and socio-economic factors affecting adversely our countries, FAO as a repository of technical competence must now come forward in more meaningful ways than ever before to complement our efforts towards the alleviation of poverty and food insecurity.

Jerzy PLEWA (Pologne)

Tout d'abord, au nom de notre délégation, je voudrais exprimer nos félicitations au Secrétariat, au Président, Vice-Présidente, aux nouveaux membres du Comité de rédaction. La Pologne s'est jointe à l'opinion que le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation a contribué à accroître l'intérêt des états pour le développement de l'agriculture et de l'économie alimentaire. Ce développement doit être l'objet d'un souci constant tant que la malnutrition et la faim persistent dans le monde.

Le développement de la production n'est pas équilibré, y compris en Europe orientale, et rencontre de sérieux problèmes d'approvisionnement de leur nations. Cependant, la plupart des pays du monde ont accompli des progrès importants sur la voie de l'équilibre entre la production et la demande des produits alimentaires. Cette tendance positive apparaît également dans les échanges internationaux, en outre grâce à la libéralisation progressive du commerce mondial initiée par les accords GATT/OMC. Dans ce contexte, il apparaît plus clairement que, comme l'a remarqué le précurseur de la FAO, David Lubin, les aspects commerciaux sont très importants lorsqu'il s'agit de résoudre les problèmes *Food for all*.

Le prochain cycle de négociations de l'OMC renforcera cette tendance, et bien que la poursuite de la libéralisation ne soit pas facile, la plupart des pays y réfléchit et s'y prépare. La libéralisation de la politique agricole américaine, les propositions de l'Union européenne contenues dans l'Agenda 2000, et de nombreuses initiatives régionales en témoignent clairement.

La Pologne participe activement à cette évolution, depuis la moitié de la présente décennie. Après une période d'effondrement de la production et du marché au cours des premières années de transformation, nous reconstruisons avec conséquence la production agricole tout en améliorant sa qualité. Dans la plupart des secteurs, nous avons franchi le seuil d'autosuffisance, la croissance de l'industrie agro-alimentaire est de 10 pour cent par an. Nous avons triplé les liens du secteur agricole et alimentaire polonais avec le marché mondial, et notamment avec les pays en voie de développement dont nous importons les produits alimentaires, surtout les fruits pour plusieurs centaines de millions de dollars. Tout indique que, au cours des quatre ou cinq prochaines années,

la Pologne arrivera à rétablir pleinement le niveau de la production d'avant l'effondrement. Et ce processus sera accompagné par la transformation de sa structure de manière avantageuse du point de vue de la demande ainsi que par la modernisation des technologies des productions et l'amélioration de la productivité. En même temps, il est prévu d'augmenter la production de produits alimentaires transformés et d'accroître les exportations.

Ces transformations font partie de nos préparatifs à l'adhésion à l'Union européenne qui progresse favorablement dans tous les domaines et permet d'espérer que la Pologne deviendra membre de l'Union européenne après 2002. Etant donné que l'Union européenne se dirige vers la réduction du protectionnisme dans le secteur agricole et la libéralisation des échanges mondiaux, ce qui à long terme est aussi l'intention de la Pologne, notre intégration à l'Union européenne et au marché mondial contribuera en même temps à la réalisation du programme du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Cependant, il faut souligner que ces tendances et transformations positives s'accomplissent dans la période difficile de la restructuration de toute l'économie, et récemment dans le contexte de la crise mondiale des finances et du commerce qui provoque des tensions et des difficultés aussi dans le secteur agricole.

Les très coûteuses transformations de ce secteur doivent s'effectuer dans la situation où les revenus des agriculteurs et le soutien budgétaire à l'agriculture sont réduits. Le Gouvernement s'efforce de surmonter les difficultés en concentrant le front sur les problèmes les plus importants, tels que la mise en place des institutions du marché, le soutien au progrès biologique, l'amélioration de la productivité surtout dans le secteur du lait, toutes les mesures de la politique agricole visant le développement rural et la protection de l'environnement. Nous entreprenons des efforts pour utiliser au mieux les aides provenant de l'Union européenne, de la FAO et des accords bilatéraux. Ces aides sont pour nous très précieuses et, nous le soulignons non seulement en guise de remerciements, mais aussi pour encourager les parties concernées à élargir leurs activités et pour déclarer que la Pologne est disposée à partager ses expériences de la période de transformation. Les métamorphoses qui s'accomplissent dans l'agriculture contribuent à améliorer la situation dans le domaine de la santé publique par les changements des habitudes alimentaires de la population, la réduction de la consommation de matières grasses d'origine animale et de la viande rouge, et l'augmentation de celle de fruits et légumes ainsi que des matières grasses d'origine végétale. En 1998, le Conseil des ministres a approuvé le document stratégique de moyen terme du développement agricole et rural. L'objectif alimentaire et les orientations de l'évolution du modèle alimentaire polonais constitue une partie intégrante du programme contenu dans ce document. L'inclusion des objectifs alimentaires au programme du développement de l'agriculture et de l'économie alimentaire est le résultat de la coopération entre le secteur agricole et celui de la santé publique et constitue la mise en œuvre des recommandations de la Conférence internationale sur la nutrition.

Nous avons également préparé le projet d'un programme stratégique gouvernemental intitulé: «L'amélioration de l'état de santé publique en Pologne à travers la meilleure qualité sanitaire des produits alimentaires et la modification de la nutrition». Nous percevons aujourd'hui les changements qui jadis étaient l'objet des soucis exprimés par la FAO dans le cadre des expertises et lors des conférences générales ainsi que plusieurs conférences régionales européennes. Le travail assidu de la FAO visant à mettre un lien entre la production, l'économie et les aspects sociaux aujourd'hui dans ce circuit, même si beaucoup de régions du monde attendent encore des actions d'aide considérables. Et ceci est important non seulement pour ces régions, mais pour le monde entier, et notamment pour l'agriculture des zones rurales des pays développés. Ce lien nécessaire entre la production, l'économie et les aspects sociaux a trouvé récemment son symbole dans le prix Nobel par lequel l'esprit de la FAO a été reconnu.

Dato'ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

Like other delegations before us, we are happy to see you in the chair, and congratulate the three Vice-chairmen, as well as Members of the Drafting Committee, on their unanimous election to the 115th Session of the Council.

The Malaysian Delegation notes with concern that the world state of food and agriculture, during the period under review, has only improved marginally and in some aspects has worsened compared to the previous year. The overall agricultural production in both developed and developing countries, only showed a slight increase. Weather adversities associated with *El Nino* and *La Nina* phenomena and civil strife were identified as the main factors that have contributed to this unhappy situation.

This slowdown in agricultural output has resulted in many countries, the majority being developing and least developed countries, experiencing food shortages which further aggravated their perennial problems of famine and undernourishment. With the volume of food aid and external assistance to agriculture, remaining well below the levels of the early 1990s, the food security situation of these countries continues to remain precarious.

As reported in the document, the current economy and financial crisis experienced in several regions of the world, and the probability of it turning into a global recession, will inevitably compound the food insecurity situation. In the light of this scenario, the international community *vis-à-vis* Member Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, all have an important role to play in ensuring that the obligations and commitments made at the World Food Summit, two years ago, are fulfilled. The serious shortfalls in production in some parts of the world underline the need and urgency to introduce appropriate socio-economic policies and measures that will improve access to food and increase agricultural productivity.

In the short run, the more developed Member Nations should be more prepared to share their wealth with those which desperately need it. The provision of food aid should be enhanced through the World Food Programme and contributions to intergovernmental organizations, namely FAO and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), should be met so that these organizations will be able to fulfil the mandate entrusted to them.

The Malaysian Delegation believes that FAO should continue to give priority to the needs of the developing countries in the process of formulating FAO's Programme of Work and Budget. In developing countries, with a high dependence on agriculture, increasing the sustainable use of agricultural resources and promoting rural development through capacity-building, remain the most effective way of reducing poverty and improving food security.

In the long run, the obligation and political will of Member Nations and the international community at large to fulfil all commitments made at the World Food Summit will be crucial to the creation of better world state of food and agriculture.

In conclusion, the Malaysian Delegation welcomes the initiative of FAO to hold a briefing session on Friday to discuss the Impact of Recent Global Financial Instability on Food Security and Changing Priorities in the Asia and Pacific Regions.

Mrs B.D.B. SEKYI (Ghana)

The Ghana delegation is happy to contribute to the discussion on this important Agenda Item in order to learn and share experiences with other countries, especially the developing ones.

In Ghana, in general, there are good production prospects for all commodities due to improved rainfall. The initial drought we experienced in the early part of the second quarter of the year adversely affected maize production. This notwithstanding, it is estimated that the total output of the other cereals will increase by about 20 percent as compared to 1997 output. The production of starchy staples has been normal this year. Compared to the previous year, it is estimated that output of the starchy crops will increase by five to ten percent, to reach 12.8 million metric tonnes. Livestock and fish production have also registered a steady growth in output. Livestock farmers are adopting better feeding and housing methods. The growth in the fishing sector is attributable to an increase in aquaculture activities and to the rehabilitation of dams and dugouts in some parts of my country.

With these modest developments, the overall food and agriculture situation in Ghana could be said to be satisfactory. In our own small way, we are addressing the issues of food insecurity with

all seriousness. In this regard, the Government of Ghana has launched an Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Development Strategy which is designed to increase the sector's annual growth rate from three to four, to five to six percent.

The achievement of food security in Ghana, would amount to nothing if other countries in the West African Sub-region are unable to produce enough to feed themselves. It therefore behoves on every country in the Sub-region to create the enabling environment which would enhance agricultural growth and productivity, and create prosperity for the wellbeing of the people of the sub-region.

A close look at countries facing food shortages and emergencies reveal that most of them are manmade and a result of the complex weather phenomenon which is largely human or technologically-induced through the complex system of global warming and climate change. Despite these occurrences, which are beyond the control of most developing countries, they continue to receive less assistance, even when the warning signs of disaster are evident. However, the international community is more than willing to mobilize huge relief when disasters have occurred. This to me is like setting up a stage to enjoy the fun.

I wish to reiterate our view that there is a need to reassess our strategies. We are faced with a situation where the difference between yields obtained by farmers in most food-deficit countries are generally less than ten percent of potential yields. Knowledge and technology to obtain the potential yields are available, while large numbers of farmers continue to produce below subsistence levels. In short, let us translate the knowledge that is available through the Organization and the resources which abound in various parts of the world to address the food situation that is so often talked about in major fora such as this current Session.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México)

Ante todo deseamos darle la bienvenida a ésta, que para usted representa la primera reunión de fondo del Consejo en su carácter de Presidente Independiente. Nos dio mucho gusto también que participara en la 25ª Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe en Nassau en junio pasado y tomara conocimiento de nuestros problemas. La delegación de México desea hacer una intervención complementaria a aquella realizada por el Representante Permanente de Ecuador a nombre del GRULAC.

Lamentamos que desde la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación en 1996, las personas desnutridas del globo hayan aumentado en 28 millones en vez de descender y que se haya agravado el problema del acceso a los alimentos de las tres cuartas partes de la humanidad. Deseamos referirnos a los párrafos 6 y 24 del documento CL 115/2 sobre los niveles de desnutrición y de producción de alimentos en la Región de América Latina y el Caribe que no consideran los recientes impactos de los terribles fenómenos meteorológicos que han afectado, tanto la agricultura como la economía de muchos de los países de nuestra Región, en particular de América Latina, a cuyos pueblos reiteramos una vez más nuestra solidaridad fraternal. Queremos agradecer asimismo al señor Pedro Sevilla, Ministro de Agricultura y Ganadería de Honduras, por sus generosas y sentidas palabras respecto a la ayuda proporcionada por mi país. Esperamos que para la próxima sesión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, podamos contar con información actualizada con respecto al impacto de estos fenómenos así como sobre las acciones que la FAO realice para mitigar las repercusiones de las catástrofes en los sectores productivo y alimenticio de la zona. Agradecemos a los miembros de este Consejo por el apoyo para que esta cuestión sea objeto de debate en la presente reunión.

En esta línea resulta altamente preocupante el incremento de casos de emergencia de ayuda alimentaria que se han presentado recientemente a nivel global. Esta situación pone de manifiesto la necesidad de contar con mecanismos de ayuda alimentaria que prevean objetivos de desarrollo a largo plazo, que permitan a los sectores vulnerables estar mejor preparados para enfrentar los embates de la naturaleza. Estimamos que cualquier mecanismo de ayuda alimentaria de urgencia debe contemplar acciones para el período de transición desde la recuperación hacia estadios superiores de desarrollo. En este marco deseamos resaltar el contenido del párrafo 34 del

documento en relación a la disminución que ha observado la asistencia multilateral al sector agrícola durante los últimos años.

Permítame señor Presidente presentar alguna información sobre la situación del sector agropecuario mexicano. Las condiciones agroclimáticas adversas que prevalecieron en varias regiones de mi país desde el segundo semestre de 1997 ocasionaron una disminución del 5,3 por ciento en el conjunto de la actividad de este sector durante el primer trimestre de 1998. La sequía, las heladas y los huracanes se tradujeron en disminuciones de la producción de frijol, maíz, trigo, sorgo, cebada, tomate y aguacate. Por otra parte, se observaron incrementos en la producción de arroz, soya, cártamo y cacao. Durante el ciclo primavera-verano del presente año se logró una producción estimada en 19,56 millones de toneladas, lo que representa una disminución de sólo 0,4 en relación al ciclo anterior. Por lo que respecta a la producción pecuaria, se prevé en cambio para este año un aumento en la producción de carne del 4,7 por ciento. La producción avícola será de 1,58 millones de toneladas, lo que significa un incremento del 8 por ciento. Ésta, además de haberse constituido en la actividad pecuaria más dinámica se ha convertido en una importante fuente de proteínas animales de bajo precio. A su vez, la producción de leche se estima que será de 8 mil millones de litros, lo que implica un incremento de más del 5 por ciento en relación a la cifra del año previo. La balanza agropecuaria de mi país durante el primer semestre de 1998 registró un saldo deficitario de 51 millones de dólares, mientras que en el mismo período del año anterior había observado un superávit de 79 millones de dólares. En este contexto, deseo resaltar que el Programa Alianza para el Campo compensó en gran medida los efectos climáticos adversos. Cabe mencionar también el impacto de la introducción de paquetes tecnológicos con fertilizantes así como de variedades mejoradas y asistencia técnica. Mi delegación hará entrega de datos más detallados sobre el particular con el objeto de que la FAO los considere en sus estadísticas.

El Gobierno Mexicano desea dejar constancia también de su respaldo al desarrollo de una pesca responsable, así como al ordenamiento de la pesquería del tiburón y a la adecuación del tamaño de las flotas a las posibilidades de aprovechamiento de los recursos de conformidad con las mejores evidencias científicas.

Finalmente, con relación a la parte 9 del documento, México subraya que, si bien el problema de la deforestación ha disminuido en términos generales sería altamente aconsejable que la FAO continuase incrementando sus esfuerzos de cooperación en dicha área con el objeto de evitar, en la medida de lo posible, la gran cantidad de incendios forestales que durante el presente año se propagaron en forma alarmante debido a las elevadas temperaturas y al largo período de sequía registrado en el primer semestre de 1998. Tal situación motivó la celebración, a fines del mes de octubre pasado en la sede de la Organización, de una consulta sobre incendios forestales que reunió expertos en la materia a nivel mundial para abordar este preocupante fenómeno y estudiar las medidas gubernamentales más adecuadas para combatir.

El Consejo que hoy inicia tendrá a su consideración importantes temas como el Proyecto de Estrategia para la FAO y el caso de la respuesta de la FAO a las recientes catástrofes naturales. Estamos seguros que la voluntad que ha caracterizado a los países que integran este foro permitirá llegar a acuerdos positivos para todos nuestros pueblos.

The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.00 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
SECOND PLENARY MEETING DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESION PLENARIA
23 November 1998

**The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.45 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

II. WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION**II. SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE****II. SITUACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACIÓN****4. State of Food and Agriculture 1998**(CL 115/2) (continued)**4. Situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 1998** (CL 115/2) (suite)**4. El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación, 1998**(CL 115/2) (continuación)**Abdolali SABBAGH (Iran, Islamic Republic of) (Original language Farsi)**

At the outset I would like to welcome you, the Chair of the Council. I am confident that with your able leadership we will achieve the goals of this Council. I wish you all the best and look forward to seeing a successful outcome of our debates. My delegation also thanks the Secretariat for preparation of an excellent and well-organized document on the State of Food and Agriculture, document CL 115/2.

My statement follows the Secretariat's recommendations on page 11, Main Issues for Discussion. The Report is not promising from a food security point of view. The number of chronically-undernourished people in developing countries is estimated at 828 million for the 1994-96 period. That is six million more than what it was in the 1990-92 period. This increase coincided with the pre-World Food Summit period.

In 1996 our Heads of State and Governments, in this very same building, committed themselves to cut down the number of undernourished people by half by the year 2015. We have used 10 percent of the allocated time, and we are not sure that we are 10 percent better off.

The Report indicates that there has been a slight decline in the proportion of undernourished since the early 1990s, but also a slight increase in the number of undernourished. We should remember that our goal of reducing undernourished people by 2015 is set in absolute numbers, and not in proportion of hungry people. We are not interested in figures; people matter most.

According to the Report, "the recent trends give no room for complacency, as progress in some Regions was more than offset by deterioration in others." A closer examination of Table 1, on page 1, reveals that the only Region which shows a meaningful decline in the number of undernourished people is East and Southeast Asia. My delegation is quite confident that updated figures from the 1994-96 period to the 1996-98 period would show a deteriorated situation, even in this Region, - a deteriorated situation that stems from recent financial and economic crises.

The Near East Region, of which my delegation is one of the representatives at this Council, has demonstrated the worst performance both in absolute numbers and in proportional terms. Again, updating of the figures would certainly show a grim situation due to the sharp decline of petroleum prices which negatively affects food security in most of the oil exporting countries of the Region.

Still of particular concern is that the poorer groups of developing countries have not registered any decline in the numbers or percentage of undernourished. This means that in achieving the goals of the World Food Summit, we are facing a difficult challenge which needs more commitment, more resources and more innovative thoughts, means and actions. We must believe that actions speak louder than words.

Let me take a quick look at crop and livestock production in 1997. As stated in paragraph 9, for the developing countries as a whole 1997 was a disappointing year. The 1.8 percent increase in agricultural production recorded this year was nearly the lowest during the last two decades. For the first time since 1987 the developing countries as a whole did not achieve any gain in *per capita* crop and livestock production. The sharpest negative turn-round in agricultural performance in 1997 was recorded in the Near East Region where agricultural output is estimated to have declined by four percent.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is in this category and did experience two years of drought, from 1995-97, the worst in the past 25 years. Decline in *per capita* agricultural production has also been recorded in most of the African countries and a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean Region. It is not surprising to read that all of these negative performances stem from weather adversities. This is a historic reason behind almost all crop failures, food shortages and famines.

In this respect, my delegation would like to draw the Council's attention to the following point: there are some climatic and weather-related phenomena which are difficult to predict or prevent, like *El Niño* and hurricanes. Others such as floods and droughts, which are more frequent and the major cause of agricultural production shortfalls, are also difficult to predict but can be prevented to a high degree by existing knowledge and technology.

The best reason for this argument could be found within the very same Report. Although in a very few of the developed countries the rate of growth in agricultural production has slowed down, fortunately none of them has experienced a serious negative growth rate or decreased *per capita* production in 1995-97. The main reason is that by taking advantage of new knowledge and technology, they have been able to prevent the negative effects of weather adversities. The lesson which can be learned from this is that FAO should focus on this issue more than before. My delegation believes that this is important enough to be included in FAO's future Strategic Framework, and receive more attention in FAO's normative responsibilities.

On food shortages, emergencies and food aid, there is nothing new in the Report. Of course the figures are new, but the substance is the same old story of increased civil strife, weather adversities and economic hardship versus declining food aid.

Food aid decreased from 15.1 million tonnes in 1992-93 to 5.3 million tonnes in 1997-98. My delegation would like to repeat once again what was said by one of our African colleagues in the Fiftieth Anniversary of FAO celebrations in Canada. He said, "Do not give us food aid, aid us to produce food". Considering the bulky nature of food shipments, expensive transportation and poor infrastructure in most of the food aid recipient countries, local food production seems to be the best option. It is needless to add that most comparative advantage elements in food production are technological and knowledge-based, and therefore transferable to most food-deficit localities.

This brings me to the Special Programme for Food Security which, with more support, would be able to deal directly with removing obstacles to local agricultural production and providing Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries with necessary ways and means of increasing food production and food security and less need for food aid.

It is difficult to draw a conclusion on external assistance to agriculture over recent years because the available data lack information about a major contributor. However, the Report indicates that the declining trend in external assistance to agriculture during the 1990s is continuing and at constant 1990 prices, its level has declined by about 20 percent from 1990 to 1995.

My delegation would like to seize this opportunity to thank IFAD and the regional development banks for expanding their commitments to the level of 1994 and hopes to see these organizations, as well as the World Bank, pay more attention to this issue, especially at a very difficult time for the agricultural sector of developing countries throughout the world.

In fisheries, although in value terms below half the total exports in 1996 originated from developing countries as against a share of 51 percent in 1995, it is encouraging to see that the production of fish and aquatic animals has reached a record level in 1996. My delegation shares the concern that the complicated problem of over-exploited fish stocks, often the result of excess fishing capacity, remains in many parts of the world and fully supports the Secretariat's proposal concerning the importance of establishing an infrastructure for assessing and managing fisheries and bringing national management capabilities and action into line with those included in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other international instruments, by all FAO Member Nations.

Section 9 of the Report, Production and Trade of Forest Products, provides a good example of what FAO should do to help developing Member Nations. The developed countries are responsible for the larger share of industrial roundwood (70 percent) and expanded production by two percent, with developing country production increasing by a more limited 1.5 percent. In production of solid wood products, the bulk of expansion occurred in the developed countries, which account for more than two-thirds of the total output of both. The strongest growth in output of pulp and papers is recorded in developed countries at 6.8 percent.

The situation was less favourable in developing countries. 1994 saw an increase in the total value of exports of forest products of 2.2 percent. The increase was mainly confined to the developed countries. The developed country forestry exports witnessed a five percent decline. On the other hand, according to latest FAO estimates worldwide there was a net loss of forests of 56 million hectares between 1990 and 1995 as a result of a decrease of 65 million hectares in developing countries and an increase of nine million hectares in developed countries.

To be short, the developed countries have utilized their forests more profitably and at the same time have increased the area of their forests. My delegation congratulates them and wishes them more prosperity and welfare. My delegation also believes that FAO should lead its developing Member Nations to a similar path of sustainable development in all areas of agriculture. We hope that future FAO documents prepared for all Committees, Commissions, Inter-governmental Groups, Councils and Conferences contain an in-depth analysis and recommendations in this direction.

Finally, I would like to draw the attention of Council on behalf of the Near East Region, to one of the two main recommendations of the Twenty-fourth Near East Regional Conference, that is to increase technical assistance to the Central Asian Members of the Near East Region and consider establishing a Sub-regional Office to serve these countries in particular and the neighbouring countries of the Near East Region in general.

Ioan PAVEL (Roumanie)

C'est un privilège pour la délégation de la Roumanie de pouvoir saluer et féliciter les nouveaux Vice-présidents et également le Président et les membres du Comité de rédaction de notre session.

Nous voudrions remercier Monsieur de Haen, pour la présentation du document concernant la Situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture. Nous avons pris connaissance avec intérêt du document que le Secrétariat de la FAO a préparé sur ce point de l'ordre du jour et, notamment, l'analyse de la situation en ce qui concerne la production mondiale des principaux produits agricoles. Juste deux années après le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, nous constatons que l'amélioration de la sécurité alimentaire est encore très éloignée et dépendante de facteurs difficiles à contrôler. Dans ce cadre, permettez-moi d'illustrer brièvement la situation actuelle de la conjoncture agricole et de la nutrition dans mon pays.

Le Gouvernement roumain est toujours préoccupé de mettre en place un programme de sécurité alimentaire. Pour la Roumanie, celui-ci présume une restructuration rapide de l'agriculture, y compris de la production agricole par l'accélération de la réforme, l'introduction de mesures pour encourager les investissements, une diffusion plus large de nouvelles technologies et la création d'un marché agricole fonctionnel. En ce qui concerne la production agricole, comme il a été remarqué dans le document préparé par le Secrétariat, après une importante augmentation de la production végétale de l'année 1996 et 1997, à cause des conditions climatiques défavorables, les estimations pour cette année ne sont pas encourageantes. De plus, la production du secteur animal a continué à baisser avec des influences négatives sur la disponibilité énergétique alimentaire par habitant et, en particulier, sur la qualité de nutrition de la population. Pour un jugement plus correct des conditions de nutrition dans mon pays, il faudrait plutôt ajouter que la plupart de la population ne dispose pas de moyens financiers pour acheter de la nourriture suffisante et de bonne qualité.

Enfin, nous voudrions saisir l'occasion pour remercier la FAO qui a aidé constamment la Roumanie dans sa politique agricole ou concernant certains secteurs de production. A l'avenir la

Roumanie souhaiterait bénéficier d'une assistance de la FAO pour la formulation et l'implantation d'une stratégie de développement de l'agriculture et des zones rurales, ainsi que pour la création des systèmes de cadastre et au fonctionnement des marchés de terres agricoles. De plus, comme il a été souligné à la vingt-et-unième Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Europe (Tallin, 25-29 mai 1998), la FAO doit apporter son soutien aux pays d'Europe centrale et orientale qui souhaitent adhérer à l'Union européenne, en les aidant à satisfaire aux critères requis.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Allow me to express my gratitude to Council for electing me as one of the Vice-chairmen of Council. Uganda is greatly honoured by this election. Permit me also to congratulate the other two Vice-chairmen as well as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee and the Member Nations of the Drafting Committee.

I promise to serve with total commitment and diligence during the term of office in guiding Council to fulfil the tasks, which include the commitment to the World Food Summit to which Uganda is a signatory.

Uganda regards FAO as a vital global organization, especially for Africa and the developing world. This is why, for many years, Uganda's delegation to Council has been led by a Minister of Agriculture. I am the Minister of State for Agriculture in Uganda, responsible for Animal Industry. I bring, Mr Chairman, to you and to the Director-General of FAO and the entire Council greetings and support from my President, his government and all Ugandans.

Now allow me to turn to the topic for discussion. Agriculture is still the mainstay of Ugandan economy, accounting for 42.2 percent of the total GDP and generating about 85 percent of the export earnings, and employing more than 88 percent of the labour force. The national food production increased by 1.1 percent in 1996-97, as compared to 4.4 percent in the previous year. During 1996-97, our agricultural production was adversely affected by the drought that characterized the last quarter of 1996 and the first quarter of 1997. This affected mainly food crop production. There was, however, a good performance of the cash crops in 1996-97, which readjusted a growth of 14.2 percent.

Regarding modernization of agriculture, Uganda's agriculture has been best on low-input low-output technology, and mainly practised by small-scale farmers cultivating on an average two hectares of land. This agriculture has been rainfed, subsistence in nature and not commercially-oriented.

The Government, considering the vast importance of agriculture to the economy and the importance of ensuring food security, has developed a Medium-Term Plan for its modernization, covering the period of 1998-99 to the period 2003-04. The basic aim of this Plan is to progressively make the small-scale farmers commercially-oriented in their production. The whole process will entail both transforming and improving the most critical aspects to propel the sector forward, and encouraging the farmers to: shift the focus from concentrating on subsistence to market-oriented production, utilizing comparative and competitive advantage; shifting from low-income to high-income generating enterprises; shifting from low to high yielding technologies, and utilizing the natural resources sparingly, and conserving them for the future generations.

Under the modernization of agriculture, great emphasis will be put on proper management and conservation of natural resources for sustainable agricultural production. For a long time, Ugandans have regarded the country as the "Pearl of Africa" and believed that the soil could always support any crop. However, there is strong evidence of degradation, declining soil fertility and poor land management. A Soil and Water Conservation Programme is in place to encourage farmers to control soil erosion and to train them on soil fertility maintenance and improvement. This will be supported by a Soil Fertility Initiative Programme to be implemented by the National Agriculture Research Organization (NARO). This Programme will assist to promote the best practices covering the technical, policy, institutional and cross-sectoral aspects of soil fertility management related to an on-going project and programmes. It will also foster development of an immediate Action Plan and longer-term programmes on soil management.

Efforts are being made to integrate trees with food crops through agro-forestry techniques on farmers' gardens so as to maximize land utilization, starting with highly-populated areas. In addition, farmers are being encouraged to establish their own woodlots to provide wood for fuel, build poles and fence posts and windbreaks - another income-generating intervention to assist in poverty-reduction and to contribute to ensuring food security.

With regard to food crops, the production of cereals in 1997 increased by 22 percent from 1996, but this was a decline of 17 percent from the year 1995. Similarly, root crops increased by 10.5 percent from 1996 to 1997 and, again, this was a decline of six percent from 1995. The production of pulses and oilseeds in 1997 was reduced by 2.8 percent and 12.9 percent, respectively, from the year 1996. These crops registered further reductions of 47 percent for the pulses and 18.5 percent for oilseeds from the year 1995. The prolonged heavy rains which came late in 1997 affected the pulses and oilseeds much more than the cereal and root crops. Food production was adequate to feed the nation only where proper distribution was in place.

Cash crop production, on the whole, increased by 14.2 percent from 1996 to 1997. Coffee exports increased by 32.4 percent from the year 1995 to the year 1996, where there was a decline of 18 percent in exports from the year 1996-97. This decline in exports was registered due to poor drying and storage of coffee beans caused by heavy rains. However, production of coffee beans has now increased.

Production of tea and tobacco steadily increased from 1996 to 1997 by 20.9 percent and 66 percent, respectively.

In 1995-96, cotton exports increased by 68.2 percent, mainly due to the liberalization of the cotton industry. Previously, cotton was purchased by a government parastatal, which was replaced by several private companies.

During 1996-97, livestock production steadily recovered by 5.7 percent from the previous 2.6 percent decline of 1994-95. The highest growth was 9.8 percent in 1995-96. This growth was mainly due to the general improvement in this control through vaccinations, using financial support from the European Union through OAU/IBAR and FAO emergency assistance. There was also control of animal movement, which led to the spread of diseases. There was an increase in rain which provided better pasture and adequate water. The provision of land to previously nomadic pastoralists settled them and their herds so that there was an improvement in management. There was improvement in milk marketing after the setting-up of over five private processing plants, which stimulated more people to go into animal production, improve the quality of their animals and increase the numbers so as to supply the liberalized market.

Measures for further improvement of the livestock sector were put in place. Commercial semen production at national level is to be undertaken and even provides semen for indigenous breeds. A Bull Scheme has been established to serve areas where semen cannot be accessed readily.

Regarding water for production, Government set aside US\$400 000 last year and US\$600 000 this year for the provision of water for livestock. This is in addition to other projects financed by the World Bank.

The Fisheries Sector experienced a growth of 4.3 percent in 1996-97 which is, however, less than the previous year. The major reason for a slower growth rate is the menace of the water hyacinth, which is prevalent in most Ugandan waters. National and international efforts are being embarked on to establish a sustainable management system of this obnoxious water weed, which affects the fisheries industry in Uganda and some of our neighbouring states. The effect of illegal fishing gears has also led to a decrease in the growth of fisheries as a lot of premature fish is harvested. Great effort have been undertaken to improve the quality and standard of fish so as to satisfy the European Union and other markets. Fish is the second highest foreign exchange earner after coffee and, in 1996, its earnings were US\$100 million. Aquaculture is being promoted to increase availability of fish in all parts of the country.

Poultry registered an increase from 21.8 million birds in 1995 to 23.8 million in 1996. There is an increase in the number of hatcheries producing their own chicks and these are supplemented with imports of day-old chicks from within and outside Africa. There is, however, need for further improvement through the introduction of improved breeds and improved management systems and storage facilities.

Supportive Policy Measures to Agriculture

- Modernization of agriculture: The government policy on modernization of agriculture will address problems raised in the crop, livestock and fisheries sectors mentioned above, through the following interventions: the improving of research – extension – farmer linkage; the development of marketing infrastructure; the targeting of commercial agricultural production; the improving of access and availability of credit in rural areas; and the promotion of developing of agro-based rural enterprises.
- The role of women in agricultural production: The role of women in agricultural production has been found to be important. The National Resistance Movement Government of Uganda has recognized the role that women play in food security and poverty eradication. In so doing, it has empowered them constitutionally by providing for a mandatory representation on all Councils by a third of the total membership. This, therefore, puts them in positions of decision at all levels, right from the village to Parliament. At Cabinet-level, the Vice-President is a woman and there are many women Ministers.
- The Land Act 1998: This year, a Land Reform Act was passed, bringing a fundamental change for women who till the land which originally and traditionally was the property of men who could sell off whatever they wished, whenever they wanted. The provisions passed bar a male spouse from selling land on which there is a matrimonial home, or where the family ordinarily resides or derives their livelihood, without the consent of the female spouse. This security of tenure will further reassure the women as they produce. The men will also know that land committed to the family is for sustainable development and should be a source of food security and income for the family.
- Water harvesting and irrigation: Uganda has noted the changing climate, and has realized the need to develop irrigation in order to ensure food security and poverty eradication. The Government has gone out to sensitize the population about the importance of water harvesting and small-scale irrigation. We are promoting the establishment of a water source per household or farming unit. FAO has come to Uganda's aid by initiating a Small-scale Irrigation Development Project, supported by the Special Programme for Food Security and a TCP. Meanwhile, under TCDC, arrangements for a Master Plan on Water Use for Agriculture are being worked out. When this Programme is in place, it will improve water availability for crops, livestock and fisheries production. It is also hoped that the burden to women in search of water will be lightened.
- International financing: There will be in Uganda a Consultative Donor Group Meeting in December this year, and the Modernization Plan will be presented for support.

I want to end by thanking FAO and the Director-General in particular for playing a leading role in promotion of agriculture globally, and ensuring that the World Food Summit commitments and the Plan of Action are on course.

Semere AMLESOM (Eritrea)

I would like to extend my congratulations to the three Vice-Chairmen, as well as to the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee for their election, in the name of my delegation.

FAO as an Organization covering the most important and essential aspects of humanity, food and agriculture, is to be commended for its activities and its achievements. The reports for this session have been prepared, compiled and presented to the satisfaction of all Member Nations, including my delegation.

I would, however, like to bring to your attention the contents of documents CL 115/2 and CL 115/2 Sup.1. There is a slight variation in the contents of this sister document. In document

CL 115/2, under section 3, pages 3 to 4 on Food Shortages and Emergencies, Eritrea was included in the list of countries having food supply difficulties stemming from weather adversities and/or civil strife.

In the same sister document CL115/2-Sup.1, however, Eritrea was excluded from the list of the countries with the above mentioned causes of food shortage.

The 1997-98 agricultural season in Eritrea had a better amount and distribution of rainfall than in previous years. As a result, a relatively better harvest is expected. The shaky harvest in the past two years due to rainfall irregularities has, however, had an impact that was not easy to cure within a short time. What is more, the prevailing border conflict with Ethiopia has caused the dislocation of more than 100 000 Eritreans during the peak of the agricultural season. This has been brought to the attention of concerned UN Bodies in time. This is an unexpected extra burden to the already existing food shortage in Eritrea over the last several years.

If there is no other valid reason for excluding Eritrea from this category, I would like to see an amendment of the incomplete statement of the issue under CL 115/2-Sup.1 before its approval.

At the same time, I would like to assure you that the Government of the State of Eritrea, as one of the low income developing countries, is doing its level best to boost its food production so as to contribute to the global reduction and avoidance of food shortage once and for all.

Eritrea is more than willing to avoid food aid by producing its own food needs, and welcomes projects that assist in food production rather than food aid.

Eritrea is grateful to FAO and other bilateral partners for their assistance in development and in food production.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Au lendemain des deux guerres mondiales, la tragédie humaine la plus malheureuse qu'a connue l'humanité, les précurseurs de la paix, d'une paix durable, avaient bien raison de croire que la paix et la sécurité internationale passaient inévitablement par un développement économique et social généralisé et profitable à toutes les populations du monde. Aussi avaient-ils raison de créer la FAO, dont la mission, aujourd'hui plus que jamais actuelle, est d'aider tous les pays, et notamment ceux qui sont les plus faibles, à disposer d'un appareil productif performant et de nature à offrir l'alimentation nécessaire à leurs populations.

Mais que constate-t-on aujourd'hui ? La production agricole augmente, certes, presque partout, sauf malheureusement en Afrique, et surtout dans sa partie subsaharienne. Le nombre de personnes sous-alimentées continue de baisser en termes de pourcentage, ce dont on se félicite au passage, mais il augmente en nombre, et toujours dans cette partie de l'Afrique subsaharienne. Les pays sous-développés confrontés à une crise alimentaire aiguë sont passés de 29 à 40. L'aide alimentaire reste en deçà du niveau de 1990, de même que l'assistance extérieure à l'agriculture. Au total, ce triste et sombre tableau laisse apparaître que la moitié des pays confrontés à une crise alimentaire aiguë se trouvent en Afrique où les perspectives seraient d'ailleurs assez préoccupantes.

Est-ce à dire que la FAO n'aurait pas accompli sa mission ? Ou les difficultés de l'Afrique relèvent-elles d'une fatalité ? La réponse à ces deux questions, à n'en point douter, est non. La FAO, malgré les restrictions budgétaires dont elle est régulièrement l'objet, a fait de grandes réalisations et démontré, au cours de ces dernières années, ses qualités de centre d'excellence. Ses initiatives, dont les plus significatives sont le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation et le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire, et le Programme de coopération technique, ont déjà produit des résultats on ne peut plus significatifs. A ce propos, ma délégation voudrait surtout souligner, pour s'en féliciter, l'Accord tripartite FAO-Viet Nam-Sénégal conclu dans le cadre du Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire. Aujourd'hui, cet Accord qui, au demeurant, a également bénéficié d'un appui très significatif de l'Italie et d'autres pays, est opérationnel avec la présence de 89 experts vietnamiens sur les 120 prévus initialement et qui travaillent efficacement. Je dois même signaler que les 120 experts devraient être sur place d'ici mars 1999. Ce Programme donne

des résultats si excellents, à la grande satisfaction des populations rurales et des organisations paysannes des différentes régions concernées, qu'il est étendu à l'ensemble des départements.

Le Gouvernement sénégalais a d'ailleurs été si encouragé par ce Programme qu'il a décidé d'y injecter en 1999 d'importantes ressources sur fonds propres. Dans le même sens, nous nous félicitons que, grâce à la FAO, le Maroc ait bien voulu accepter, dans le cadre de la coopération Sud-Sud, d'apporter son expérience précieuse en matière d'aménagement hydroagricole. Une première mission d'évaluation a permis de faire un premier diagnostic et d'identifier les propositions de solutions qui devraient être concrétisées d'ici 1999.

Ces exemples de coopération Sud-Sud, favorisée par la FAO et généralisée, méritent toutes nos félicitations, et nous donnent la conviction que la FAO s'impose grâce au dynamisme de son Secrétariat et à l'esprit d'initiative et d'imagination de ses dirigeants. Ils présentent donc une organisation capable de s'adapter à un contexte international défavorable pour s'imposer comme une organisation dynamique, performante et capable de renverser les tendances actuelles pour un monde bien nourri.

Les problèmes de l'Afrique ne dépendent pas d'une fatalité. Les pays de cette zone sont confrontés à des problèmes de ressources, certainement aggravés par une dette extérieure insupportable, un dérèglement des marchés, une stagnation – j'allais dire parfois même une tendance à la baisse – de l'aide publique au développement. Malgré tout cela, l'Afrique a aujourd'hui conscience qu'elle doit se mobiliser davantage pour renforcer son unité, son intégration, et redimensionner ses programmes de développement en fonction de ses propres priorités. Dans ce cadre, permettez-moi de vous informer que le Sénégal expérimente depuis plus d'un an la mise en place d'un programme de relance de son agriculture. Ce programme porte essentiellement sur la prise de mesures améliorant l'accès des agriculteurs aux facteurs de production tels que la fourniture de semences de qualité, d'engrais et de pesticides, et la mise en place de matériel agricole adapté grâce à l'adoption de conditions de crédit agricole comprenant des taux d'intérêt et des moratoires très avantageux, ainsi qu'une exonération des taxes sur le matériel agricole. Dans le contexte que voilà, la saison agricole de 1998 est sanctionnée par des résultats, certes mitigés, mais très encourageants.

Malgré un retard dans le début des pluies par rapport à l'année précédente et à la normale, celles-ci ont été régulières et bien réparties dans le temps et dans l'espace, jusqu'à fin septembre. Ce profil pluviométrique a permis d'enregistrer plus d'un million de tonnes de production céréalière. Les céréales, en général, se sont bien comportées comme l'arachide et le niébé. Certainement, le riz pluvial a enregistré des baisses pour des raisons de circonstances tout à fait particulières au Sud, sur lesquelles il n'est même pas très utile d'insister outre mesure.

A noter que, par rapport à 1997 où il y a eu un déficit vivrier assez important, le Gouvernement sénégalais a dû, pour faire face à ces difficultés d'approvisionnement signalées d'ailleurs dans le rapport, consentir des efforts particulièrement importants en achetant pour 10 milliards de francs CFA des vivres qui ont été distribués dans les parties les plus vulnérables.

Le coton, naturellement, qui est une culture de rente au Sénégal, a connu des performances moins heureuses du fait non seulement de l'arrivée tardive des pluies, mais aussi des attaques de la mouche blanche. Il est également important de signaler que le résultat enregistré grâce à une participation active de la FAO à travers le Programme de coopération technique et le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire, a permis au Gouvernement sénégalais de mettre en place, en conjugaison avec ce programme de relance agricole, que j'ai évoqué plus tôt, des réformes de son secteur agricole avec l'appui de ses partenaires. Ces réformes portent notamment sur un important programme d'investissement pour développer la production agricole et le potentiel agro-alimentaire du Sénégal, à travers des actions comme la vulgarisation, l'appui et le développement des capacités des organisations paysannes et des collectivités locales, pour leur permettre de se prendre elles-mêmes en charge, par la réalisation d'infrastructures comme les routes, les pistes de production, la restauration de la fertilité des sols, la maîtrise de l'eau avec la mise au point de techniques appropriées et adaptées, le développement de la petite irrigation, avec le soutien de la FAO, enfin, la mise en place d'un crédit agricole rural adapté et durable, de même que la prise en

compte des objectifs visés dans le cadre de l'intégration régionale et de l'ouverture aux autres membres de la communauté internationale. A ce niveau, il faut citer à titre d'illustration les accords régionaux comme l'UMA et, du point de vue international, l'Accord de Lomé et l'OMC.

Ici, nous tenons à souligner que, certes, la libéralisation des marchés est souhaitable, mais qu'elle devra prendre en compte les différents accords régionaux et internationaux.

En conclusion, le Sénégal est convaincu que l'avenir de l'Afrique n'est pas soumis à la fatalité. Il entend, par des mesures appropriées, rendre sa production agricole et agro-alimentaire plus compétitive, compte tenu notamment du niveau très faible des ressources disponibles en milieu rural. Aussi s'est-il résolument engagé, avec l'appui de ses partenaires et d'organisations comme la FAO, le FIDA et le PAM, à poursuivre la mise en place de programmes spécifiques pour lutter contre la pauvreté grâce, en particulier, à une implication accrue des populations elles-mêmes, une nette priorité étant accordée aux couches sociales les plus vulnérables, je veux parler des femmes, des enfants et des personnes âgées. Je voudrais également terminer en renouvelant toutes nos félicitations au Secrétariat de la FAO pour le document pertinent CL 115/2, ainsi que sur les points de discussion soulignés, qui devraient mériter toute notre attention.

Julio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Quisiera, como los demás, felicitarle también por su primera aparición como Presidente del Consejo Independiente. La delegación de Brasil desea asimismo el mayor éxito en esta nueva tarea a los tres Vice-presidentes y al Comité de Redacción. Deseo igualmente expresar nuestra gratitud por el trabajo del Secretariado reflejado en la calidad de los documentos, que ha hecho posible que podamos ahora intervenir y atender a nuestros quehaceres en este Consejo.

Brasil no puede dejar de valorar en especial la ayuda humanitaria prestada sea bajo la modalidad de donaciones de alimentos, sea a través de transacciones en base concesional. Brasil en realidad ha tratado también de participar de esa importante modalidad de cooperación internacional. Mucho se ha hecho en favor de los países en desarrollo que se encuentran confrontados con distintos problemas entre los cuales los desastres climáticos. Lamentablemente esa importante y valiosa ayuda no es aún suficiente para atender a las necesidades requeridas por determinados países y de forma más dramática por los grupos más vulnerables de sus respectivas poblaciones. No se puede dejar de considerar tampoco que existe aún el riesgo de que sin el respeto estricto a las reglas multilaterales sobre las transacciones realizadas en base concesional y a los principios de la FAO sobre ese tema, esa valiosa asistencia puede resultar en un efecto distorsivo sobre la producción y el comercio internacional de productos agrícolas afectando en particular a las exportaciones y a las economías de los mismos países en desarrollo.

En esa misma línea de pensamiento y de acuerdo con los párrafos 9 y 14 del documento CL115/2 que estamos analizando, valdría la pena notar que en 1997 la disminución de la producción agropecuaria mundial fue más acentuada entre los países en desarrollo que entre los desarrollados, los cuales disponen de una mayor capacidad para subsidiar su agricultura. Como ejemplo, recordemos que en 1991 la entonces Primera Ministra Margaret Thatcher denunciaba que una vaca comunitaria costaba al estado a la cual pertenecía 2000 dólares anuales, una cifra más elevada que el ingreso *per capita* de una gran parte de los países en desarrollo. Según los datos de la FAO, las exportaciones agrícolas de los países en desarrollo sufrieron un declinio del 30 por ciento en 1974 al 26 por ciento en 1994. Como resultado, los países en desarrollo se han transformado en crecientes dependientes de importaciones agrícolas para atender al consumo interno.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

I would first like to commend FAO for its most recent report on the State of Food and Agriculture. As the report clearly demonstrates, our attempts to address global food security goals continue to face immense challenges. During the past year, many countries and regions affected by poverty and food insecurity have been beset by serious financial instability, civil strife and natural disasters.

To address the very human needs caused by these disasters, I am proud to state that the United States commitment to emergency assistance remains strong. The United States is providing significant assistance to help countries recover from several emergencies, including programmes in Bangladesh, the countries of Central America following the recent devastating hurricane in that Region which we have heard about earlier today, and to countries facing financial emergencies such as your own country, Mr Chairman, Indonesia and Russia. This year the United States is providing US\$900,000 million in assistance to the World Food Programme alone. In view of this substantial increase in assistance, the food aid levels for calendar year 1998 will be considerably higher than in recent years, and greater than the estimates in the Report.

With regard to the Report under discussion, in our remarks at the Council last year we urged FAO to attempt to make the State of Food and Agriculture Report more forward-looking. To a certain degree, the current report represents an improvement over its predecessor in that it expands trade and production forecasts for 1998-99. However, in light of the significant developments in world production and trade this year and their actual or potential impact on global food security, we would continue to encourage the Secretariat to make every effort to place future Reports in a larger context. In our view, the Report should avoid being merely a statistical compilation of the current or near-term situation; rather it should be one of the key tools at our disposal in assessing our progress toward meeting global food security commitments and a guide to the challenges before us.

With respect to those challenges, it is also important that the current emergencies not cloud our awareness of our long-term goals or affect our capacity to further the significant progress that we have achieved in recent decades. A recent report of our United States Agency for International Development shows that using virtually every indicator, including level of poverty, life expectancy, caloric intake, literacy, gender equal and political freedom, there have been clear improvements in the average well-being over the past 50 years.

A fundamental reason that the long-term trends are positive is that the transmission of knowledge, including improved literacy, can bring benefits that transcend short-term economic and political instability or natural calamities. The tremendous advances achieved through multilateral cooperation, and through research, have enabled global food production to grow faster than population over the past 45 years, despite periodic instability in many areas. Recent research has made further strides in improving disease and pest resistance among crops, increasing tolerance to environmental stress, raising crop yields, increasing shelf-life and nutritional content of foods and reducing the use of crop chemicals and fossil fuels. Increased agriculture trade liberalization has brought and can bring further benefits of more efficient resource allocation, and help improve food self-reliance in developing countries.

In my view, there is a widespread misconception about the significant progress we have made in improving global well-being. Front-page stories of natural disasters, or persistent poverty in certain regions, grab the public's attention. In some cases, of course, that is good but in other cases it obscures our understanding of the longer term achievements, and unfortunately this misconception can have negative consequences. First, it promotes unwarranted pessimism about human prospects and, second, the misconception contributes to a cynicism about our international development efforts in general. In my country, some of the opposition in our Congress and by the public to foreign development assistance reflects the belief that these efforts have been ineffective and that poor countries are universally worse off than in the past.

I believe it is our duty to correct these misconceptions whenever appropriate. For that reason, I maintain that in assessing the State of Food and Agriculture we should both look squarely at the challenges that confront us but should not forget the considerable achievements we have made in recent years. Since the creation of FAO, humanity has made unprecedented progress against conditions that have plagued the world's population throughout history. This progress has not come about by accident but through the significant collaborative endeavours of the international community. FAO has played a crucial and important role in that achievement, as it does now in advancing our food security goals.

The challenge of eliminating global hunger is immense but it is in no way insurmountable. Although we cannot be blind to the obstacles before us nor should we forget the long-term success that can be obtained through international cooperation. Our past success should serve as a powerful incentive to show us what is possible if we are truly determined to eliminate hunger and achieve global food security for all.

Suresh Chundre SEEBALLUCK (Mauritius)

The paper on the State of Food and Agriculture seems to demonstrate that we might gradually be losing the battle of food security. The statistics indicate that the number of undernourished in developing countries is on the increase. Although the statistics refer to the period ending in 1996, I do not think anything dramatic has happened over the period 1996-98 to reverse this trend. In fact, with natural calamities occurring in many parts of the world and civil strife in others, the situation may have worsened today. If we do not today give the matter the very serious attention it deserves, those who would be sitting in this room for the FAO Council in the 2015 would simply be scorning those who elaborated the 1996 World Summit Plan of Action.

The paper under consideration also indicates that the external assistance to agriculture shows a declining trend. Maybe there is a correlation between this and the increase in number of undernourished. My delegation would therefore appeal to FAO to give special attention to the question of assistance and take up with bilateral and multilateral donors the necessity to step up the level of financial and technical assistance to developing countries, especially those countries with a high vulnerability index.

We must also take cognizance of the fact that the budgetary restraints we have ourselves imposed on FAO in the recent years have limited the ability of this Organization to cope with the situation itself.

I should like to speak about the situation of Small Island Developing States like Mauritius, which have limited natural resources and rely heavily on imports, therefore foreign exchange, to ensure their food security. To obtain the necessary foreign exchange, they rely on exports which means that they are highly dependent on economic conditions in the rest of the world. In fact, they are vulnerable to events in the world over which they have practically no control.

Moreover, in many small islands, increased demand for residential housing and industrial production has given rise to a depletion of agricultural land. As a result, the Small Island States are faced with the paradox of having to produce more on a declining land area.

The inherent obstacles of Small Island States do not allow them to take advantage of the benefits arising from liberalization and globalization. There is at present no level playing field in the multilateral trading system and, as such, equal rules for unequal partners will lead to unequal trade relations. Ultimately the process of globalization, unless corrective measures are taken, may actually further worsen the situation of food security in certain parts of the world rather than relieve it. We should never lose sight of the multifunctional nature of agriculture with a number of non-trade concerns. We should not be simply guided by the principles of comparative advantage. This is what we should bear in mind in the upcoming round of negotiations on agriculture at the WTO.

Mme Hariba YAHIA-CHERIF (Algérie)

Avant d'entrer dans le vif du sujet, je voudrais tout d'abord vous présenter, Monsieur le Président, les félicitations de ma délégation pour votre présence parmi nous, et féliciter les autres membres du bureau, c'est-à-dire Vice-Présidents et membres du Comité de rédaction.

Les nombreuses délégations qui m'ont précédée sur ce point de l'ordre du jour ont couvert des aspects que ma délégation avait l'intention de soulever. Toujours est-il que les engagements que les dirigeants de la planète avaient pris à l'unanimité lors du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation de Rome donnaient à espérer que la lutte menée contre la pauvreté et la malnutrition et les efforts visant à réduire le nombre de personnes sous-alimentées seraient poursuivis avec toujours plus de rigueur. Mais après deux années, le bilan ne s'avère pas, hélas, à la hauteur de nos attentes. En

effet, si de manière globale les indicateurs de la sécurité alimentaire semblent donner des signes dans le sens de l'amélioration, la situation reste cependant critique dans de nombreux pays en développement et en particulier en Afrique subsaharienne. C'est dire, comme on est encore loin du compte de voir se concrétiser, comme nous l'escomptions, et au seuil du processus, les objectifs fixés par le Sommet mondial de Rome.

Déjà en 1974, la Conférence mondiale de l'alimentation fixait alors à la Communauté internationale l'objectif de l'élimination de la faim dans le monde avant 1985. En 1980, la stratégie internationale pour la troisième décennie des Nations Unies pour le développement repoussait cette échéance à la fin du siècle. A cette époque, la Communauté internationale avait déjà donné les signes de son incapacité à se mobiliser pour réaliser l'objectif majeur, celui de vaincre la faim et assurer la sécurité alimentaire pour tous. A l'avenir, et pour ne pas tomber dans les mêmes travers, la Communauté internationale devra se mobiliser avec vigueur et agir concrètement pour inverser la situation paradoxale où, malgré l'existence de stocks mondiaux de produits alimentaires dont le volume pose parfois des problèmes, un grand nombre de pays reste confronté à une crise alimentaire aiguë. Le paragraphe 63 illustre cette situation.

En outre, ma délégation constate que le contenu des paragraphes 33 et 34 ne pousse guère à l'optimisme, du fait de la régression de l'assistance multilatérale destinée à l'agriculture. Enfin, ma délégation estime qu'il est temps de réagir de manière effective et, bien que la situation alimentaire mondiale déplorable soit due entre autre aux situations conjoncturelles et aux phénomènes naturels - l'Algérie n'a évidemment pas échappé au fléau de la sécheresse qui a fait chuter de manière significative sa production céréalière - la Communauté internationale dans son ensemble doit faire preuve d'une plus grande solidarité pour relever le défi de l'an 2015. Pour cela, mon pays manifeste d'ores et déjà sa disponibilité pour agir dans le cadre de la coopération Sud-Sud qui, avec l'apport du Programme spécial de la FAO mis en œuvre à l'endroit des pays en développement, commence à donner des signes de partenariat et de solidarité palpables.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Tal como lo han hecho otras delegaciones me congratulo por verlo presidir este importante Consejo, como así también a los Vicepresidentes y los miembros del Comité de Redacción.

Mi delegación constata que el excelente documento que ha preparado la Secretaría tiene elementos positivos en cuanto a la tendencia final de los objetivos que nos hemos marcado, más allá de algunos aspectos coyunturales y que mi país siempre ha destacado como uno de los factores esenciales del problema agrícola, que son los del clima y, en estos dos últimos años, los desastres naturales a los que hemos asistido.

Si tal como señala el documento preparado por la Secretaría, a pesar de estos factores, hemos tenido un incremento de la producción en el año 1996 y, aunque fuera comparativamente menor se ha mantenido o está estabilizado un incremento en la producción mundial de granos en el año 1997, creo que la visión que tenemos que tener como países es una visión optimista, más allá de situaciones puntuales y que lamentablemente están originadas en desastres naturales que han golpeado muchos países. Pero la tendencia de fondo parece ser correcta, por eso también mi delegación se alegra de que prácticamente hayan desaparecido los comentarios que asignaban a la liberalización del comercio mundial y a los efectos de la Ronda Uruguay un efecto fundamentalmente negativo; los tres últimos años han demostrado que fundamentalmente eran razones climatológicas y de mercado las que incidían notablemente en los precios. En los últimos tres años los precios de la mayoría de los productos básicos ha descendido, la oferta mundial se ha mantenido o se ha incrementado, con lo cual también se ha incrementado en parte la seguridad alimentaria. Esta es una tendencia que no debemos olvidar porque si no perderíamos de vista el horizonte que tenemos como países, que es fundamentalmente incrementar la producción de cereales e incrementar las técnicas para que aquellos países que tienen un menor desarrollo relativo puedan obtener estos objetivos.

El documento de la Secretaría tiene varios aspectos positivos, señala también que las corrientes de la ayuda alimentaria probablemente se incrementen en este año y en el próximo. La única duda

que esta perspectiva genera a mi delegación es si esas corrientes están influenciadas fundamentalmente por una abundancia de colocación de oferta o es la voluntad manifiesta de los países de contribuir a incrementar la ayuda alimentaria. Quizás tendremos que ver el año que viene si las condiciones del mercado cambian, si esta tendencia o este primer dato de vuelta del crecimiento de la ayuda alimentaria se constata. Este es un elemento que a mi delegación le preocupa en función de lo siguiente: estamos en vísperas de negociaciones comerciales importantes y quisiéramos que éstas fueran absolutamente transparentes; que esa ayuda alimentaria que crecería no esté basada en viejos artilugios del pasado, que ante la crisis, lo único que hace es hundir los precios de los productores; debemos recordar que los precios de los productores y de los productores eficientes, si siguen a la baja dejarán de ser eficientes, por lo tanto los estímulos del mercado serán menores y será menor la única producción no eficiente, la producción subsidiada. Entonces, como tendencia, a mi delegación le gustaría constatar que tanto en la ayuda alimentaria como en las corrientes comerciales, ante la crisis, no influyan viejos factores que parecían eliminados, y que seguramente deberemos recordar en las próximas inversiones comerciales.

La mayoría de los precios agrícolas internacionales, según nos señala el documento y con razón, han tendido a la baja. Con relación a la pesca, según el párrafo 51, notamos una pequeña disminución en la participación de los países en desarrollo, que esperamos no sea una tendencia. Rescatamos el párrafo 55 de este documento, donde señala con exactitud que buena parte de la capacidad pesquera excesiva suele tener origen en subvenciones contraproducentes. Tal como lo hacen las otras delegaciones, más que encarar un informe de coyuntura con algunos elementos de mercado, la FAO tendría que analizar las causas profundas de algunos de los movimientos que se producen en los mercados. En este caso, creo que se podría analizar con mayor profundidad cuáles son esas subvenciones contraproducentes que se señalan en el informe para la pesca.

Por último quisiera hacer algunos comentarios sobre la campaña agrícola de mi país en 1997 y 1998. Al concluirla, la producción global de granos y algodón fue 66.6 millones de toneladas, es decir un 23 por ciento superior a la campaña anterior, con lo cual se produjo un récord histórico en la producción de granos. De ellos, 40.5 millones de toneladas fueron cereales y 24.9 millones de toneladas oleaginosas. Quizás este año por los factores climáticos que, vuelvo a confirmar, son fundamentales para el productor en su cosecha y si tiene un estímulo de mercado importante seguramente va a volcarse a la producción. Este esfuerzo que ha hecho mi país en los últimos cuatro o cinco años, que incrementó la superficie sembrada y la producción global en más de un 50 por ciento, apunta tanto a la seguridad alimentaria como a la reafirmación de la necesidad de que la liberalización del comercio se profundice siempre hablando de esos aspectos negativos y que los acuerdos se cumplan antes de generar nuevos conceptos de los que no sabemos cuál es su destino final, pero mientras tanto ponen una barrera a los compromisos adquiridos. Las barreras, como dijo en la declaración que leyó nuestro presidente del GRULAC, las barreras comerciales fitosanitarias, sanitarias, etc. aún persisten y generan nueva inventiva que deberíamos tener mucho más presente porque todas esas barreras atentan contra la producción de productores eficientes y también contra el desarrollo de aquellos países que todavía no han alcanzado la eficiencia pero que a través de conocimientos científicos y técnicos podrían alcanzar.

Repito, mi delegación fuertemente apoya el incremento de la producción, la producción sostenible y no subsidiada.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

Let me begin by expressing our sincere appreciation and gratitude to you, Mr Chairman, the members of the Bureau and members of the Drafting Committee. I should like to pay tribute to the Director-General of FAO, Mr Jacques Diouf, and his able Secretariat for preparing this important meeting.

On this occasion, the Indonesian delegation would like to express our sympathy to the Central American Region, which is affected by Hurricane Mitch, as clearly stated by His Excellency Mr Pedro Arturo Sevilla, Secretary of Agriculture of Honduras, this morning.

The 115th FAO Council Session is convened against the backdrop of the current economic turmoil and monetary crisis affecting several countries across Asia. The slowdown of industrial activities and negative economic growth, as the direct result of the crisis, has created greater challenges and opportunities, and has given a new impetus to the agriculture sector to increase its contribution towards the economic recovery of those crisis-hit countries, through increased agriculture export earnings. We believe that this Session is important and timely-fashioned to assess and respond to the economic crisis which has greatly affected the food security and agricultural situation.

The severe currency depreciation and the ongoing economic crisis affecting several countries across Asia have added an extra burden on top of the overall foreign debt borne by those countries to finance their economic development in the agriculture sector. The currency depreciation and the said crisis has dramatically increased the prices of agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, pesticides and seeds. This situation constitutes difficulties for small farmers in meeting their needs and in farming their land. Nevertheless, through implementation of appropriate measures to make agricultural commodity prices more competitive, it is hoped that the farmers' current difficulties can be overcome. The measures may also contribute to the recovery of the said crisis and may, in fact, boost those countries' export earnings.

We believe that agricultural commodity exports continue to provide a substantial contribution to the advancement of the developing countries. In this regard, I would like to reiterate specifically the importance of an unhindered exportation of agricultural commodities from the developing to advanced industrial countries.

In the case of Indonesia, it is pertinent to note that agriculture still provides the mainstay for millions of farmers and their families, and serves to expand employment opportunities and alleviate poverty, especially during the current monetary and economic crisis. For this very reason, the Indonesian Government continues to give a high priority to the sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

We are very confident that the work of FAO remains relevant and crucial, especially in the context of the current economic, food and agricultural situation facing most of the developing countries.

In the context of the economic crisis that has affected several countries across Asia, the role played by FAO is very important as it has been able to respond and to take necessary measures in an effort to find solutions to the food situation and the crisis impact on social problems. We would like to re-emphasize that the sensitivity and immediate response from FAO in solving the various problems will be regarded as a testimony of its comparative advantage over other networks of international and regional organizations.

The Indonesian delegation would like to express our highest appreciation to FAO for its expeditious response to the food situation in Indonesia by sending the Crops Assessment Mission to explore measures and to find the most applicable solution. FAO has assisted our country in overcoming the current food situation. Furthermore, the current projects on technical coordination and implementation of emergency agricultural relief and rehabilitation assistance for drought and fire-affected areas, and the emergency agricultural assistance to reinstate food production in drought and fire-affected areas are most welcome.

In addition to this, the Indonesian Government indeed considers FAO's initiative on the Special Programme for Food Security for Indonesia to be very useful, especially at a time when we are seriously facing food shortages. The Indonesian Government will follow-up seriously those food programmes initiated and supported by FAO.

In the context of national economic development in the years before, the agricultural sector was positioned as a supportive sector. The sector primarily supplied raw materials for industries and food for people at low prices. Secondly, it stabilized prices; and thirdly, it served to supply cheap labour and to also absorb unskilled labour.

In addition, farming was confined to production activities only, which had no effect on changes in the market situation. Farming was very much affected by technology and natural resource conditions. After all, agriculture was traditionally unaffected by macro-economic conditions. This old paradigm should now be replaced by new paradigm whereby the agriculture sector becomes a leading sector, functioning as the engine of growth to pull the economy back on its feet.

The position that agriculture will occupy in Indonesia in the future is the mainstay of its national economic development. This means the welfare improvement and poverty alleviation is effectively enhanced through agricultural development. Effort to maintain the country's ideology and culture are more effective if they serve farmers who are steadfastly maintaining their tradition and values. In other words, farmers in rural areas are the key to preserving national culture and identity.

The vision of agricultural development in the year 2020 is to create a resilient, modern and efficient agriculture which entails optimal and sustainable utilization of agricultural resources (land, water, manpower, capital and technology); application of a comprehensive agricultural diversification, (horizontal, vertical and regional dimensions); application of dynamic local specific technologies; efficiency gains in agri-business through competitive agriculture commodities, that rely on higher science and technology inputs, and that enhance the living conditions of farmers and consumers.

Bearing in mind that food security is a politically- and economically-sensitive issue, the Indonesian Government has continued its policy of increasing food production by developing new cultivated varieties, intensifying rice production in irrigated areas, implementing integrated pest control programmes and, recently, launching a policy to utilize uncultivated land with a view to secure food security, as well as rice self-sufficiency. In addition to the above-mentioned policies, the Indonesian Government also welcomes and highly appreciates the food assistance extended by donor countries and international institutions to overcome its current food situation.

We recognize that the development of livestock plays an integral part in attaining food security. The Government is currently developing livestock raising programmes with a view to providing high protein and nutritious food for consumption. Livestock production, such as eggs and milk production, is expected to increase annually. At the same time, the consumption of this high protein food is also expected to increase. Hence, it has become necessary for Indonesia to import only meat, since eggs and milk are expected to be produced in sufficient quantities to satisfy expected increases in domestic demand.

In the fisheries sector, Government programmes have focused on improving the income of fishermen, enhancing food nutrition, providing a source of raw materials for Indonesian food industries, providing employment opportunities and increasing foreign revenue. Between 1985 to 1996, fisheries production increased at an annual average growth rate of 5.85 percent. More than 70 percent of fishery production is contributed by marine fisheries. Indonesian export earnings from this sector have increased annually, and the total export revenue in 1996 reached US\$1.9 billion. In developing this sector, Indonesia is consistently implementing environmentally-sound and sustainable development programmes, such as the mangrove area conservation, by establishing a 500 metres green-belt area.

Indonesia has been striving to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action by strengthening its sustainable food security programmes, and particularly by maintaining its rice self-sufficiency. We realize that our efforts may be hindered by the current economic crisis, *El Niño* and now by the *La Niña* phenomenon. We, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to suggest that FAO assist countries that are currently facing food shortages by identifying the constraints and by helping to formulate solutions that would make implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action a success. In this regard, Indonesia is ready to extend its full cooperation to FAO in the best interests of world food security.

Finally, we would like to reiterate Indonesia's strong commitment to the work of FAO and its programmes in assisting its Member Nations to solve food and agriculture problems.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

Allow me to thank the Members of the Council who so kindly elected me as Vice-Chairman. I am confident that with my colleagues of Uganda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we shall make a very friendly group and, I hope, a good helping team. I also want to thank all delegations for their very stimulating remarks. Speaking at the end of discussions has advantages and disadvantages. For me it was a very important learning process.

Still, if one visitor had followed our discussion at first glance, he would have noticed something of a schizophrenic situation because, on one side food production has increased, and on the other side food security has been decreasing. We do not want to be pessimistic in any way. A lot has been done, as has been said by the Representatives of the European Commission, and by the United States. Certainly the situation is improving in all sectors, but there are still some reasons for worry. I think those worries are coming from the excellent document prepared by the Secretariat in which a table that is reporting data, before the World Food Summit, but still very current, shows the number of undernourishing people increased from 822 to 828 million people. I think if we had the latest figures we would have the same disappointing sensation. As a matter of fact, in 1997 the document (in paragraph 9) referred to a "disappointing year". As far as 1998 is concerned, we know, and we shall discuss afterwards, the terrible cataclysm that has happened in Central America. I personally feel that it was a very good initiative to add to our Agenda).

There are a lot of problems we are facing. Speaking of major issues not in our agenda, we should think of desertification, urbanization problems, and the loss of biodiversity among others. We have phylogenetic resources that are shrinking instead of being preserved, for a lot of reasons that we are discussing in other points of our Agenda. The number of poorer countries has increased from 29 to 40. Paragraph 36 says that food aid flows have decreased from 15.1 million tonnes of cereals in 1992-93 to 5.3 million tonnes. All these factors are certainly worrying, and that is the reason why we discuss this problem in my country and why we consider what FAO itself says: that the progress achieved is not sufficient to realize the aims of the World Food Summit. Hopefully the Inter-Parliamentary Union, that will meet the next weekend and the following days, will face the problem with a political will and shall give a political punch. That is the reason why our Parliament and Foreign Ministry were very interested in pushing and financing the initiative.

The conclusion that we can draw from the situation, with shadows and light but unfortunately many shadows, is that we need something new. We thought of a possible "Alliance for Agricultural Development". That is an initiative about which I wrote to all heads of different Regional Groups for their reflection. My letter was only sent recently, and the idea needs to be developed. I do not expect any reactions today, but I think that it is something on which we have to reflect.

Why an "Alliance"? Because the word "alliance" is one of the oldest words, and means union by mutual engagement. It was used first in religion, in the Bible, in the Gospels and in other sacred books, then in politics. From the Thirteenth Century on, it was used in law, and, of course, everybody recalls the "Alliance for Progress" that President Kennedy launched in the Twentieth Century. Quite successful, I might say. We are thinking of an "Alliance" which is a renewed pact of solidarity, trying to find some new stimulus, some new reasons for progressing. What we need is an engagement, in a renewed sense of partnership, a common engagement between countries and organizations.

This initiative of an "Alliance for Agricultural Development" takes into account, of course, the on-going process of a Strategic Framework for FAO that we shall discuss at a later point on our Agenda. It takes into account the on-going reflection by the World Food Programme on "a time for change: food aid and development", and also the strategic thinking and reflection that IFAD is passing through. I heard a very good speech by the President of IFAD in the World Food Programme meeting on Saturday, 24 October 1998. There was a lot of "food for thought", and I think we have to think about the issues raised.

In the spirit also of the broader process of UN Reform, and on the follow-up to the World Food Summit, the "Alliance for Agricultural Development" should foresee, first at Headquarters Level and in the field, a permanent joint structure among FAO, WFP and IFAD for analysis and monitoring of the international food and agriculture situation and for the elaboration of a common strategy of intervention, eventually formulated on a continental basis, on a Region-by-Region or a continent-by-continent basis. Second, at a policy level it should also envisage the elaboration of joint country programmes by the three organizations, with the possible participation of other UN Agencies and utilization of funds.

Considering that the strategic goal of food security in the third millennium can only be pursued in a stable way through agriculture and agro-industrial development in the least developed countries and in the Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries, the Italian idea could be considered and discussed among the Regional Groups in order to initiate a comprehensive cooperation on the matter and to reach a broad consensus on sound and well-conceived proposals.

I am sure that this is a complex argument and needs reflection, but usually problems of such magnitude need deep reflection. I think that next year, ECOSOC will start to examine the problems of poverty, and of course poverty starts from rural poverty and from hunger. I think FAO, together with the other food and agriculture organizations in Rome, should take the lead and provide to the ECOSOC meeting next year all the elements to reconsider a problem which is certainly very hard, but is essential for all of us.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

The Thai Delegation would like to take this opportunity to say how happy we are seeing you chair this important meeting. We would also like to congratulate the three Vice-Chairmen, the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee and, of course, the Secretariat. We wish you every success in chairing this meeting.

For Thailand, the current economic and financial turmoil and the expansion of the crisis in the Asian Region have had an impact on the overall growth of our national economy, including some aspects in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, future climate changes which international organizations forecast will result in further impacts on agricultural production throughout the world, as has recently been seen by the effects of *El Niño* and *La Niña*.

In Thailand's case, the effects of natural abnormalities on our main agricultural product, which is rice, are worth mentioning. As we are rice producers, paddy production during the crop year 1997-98 amounted to 23.4 million tonnes, or about 4.7 percent higher than 22.4 million tonnes of the crop year 1996-97, primarily is the result of favourable rice prices in the international market and a favourable climate. Paddy production in the crop year 1998-99 was estimated at 21.5 million tonnes, which is about two million tonnes lower than that of the former crop year. This is due to the fact that during the crop year 1998-99, Thailand will face drought and climate change.

Agriculture has played a much more important role during the years of economic crisis, not only in terms of food and agricultural products but also in terms of job opportunities. A large number of unemployed industrial workers has shifted to work in the agricultural sector. We would therefore like to urge FAO to give more consideration to supporting agriculture and rural development in those countries facing economic crises and those confronting natural abnormalities.

Hirofumi Kugita (Japan)

First of all I would like to join many previous speakers in saying how pleased my delegation is to see you preside over this Council. I also congratulate the three Vice-Chairmen and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee on their appointment. I appreciate the effort made by the Secretariat to prepare two concise and very organized documents on the State of Food and Agriculture.

I would like to make some brief comments on the several points which we are especially concerned about. We are concerned about the slight increase in the number of chronically-undernourished people in the 1994-96 period compared to that in the 1990-92 period. I feel that it

is important to steadily implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action through efforts made by individual Governments, international organizations and civil societies so that we will be able to see a decrease in undernourished people leading to a major goal of the World Food Summit, that is, reducing the number of undernourished people in the world to half the present figure by the year 2015.

Considering recent low rates of cereal stocks to utilization, the estimation of recovery of stocks to 17 percent, which is within FAO's minimum safe level, may show a good sign but it has just reached the minimum level. There is a need to continue to pay due attention to possible adverse effects of fluctuations in local agricultural production, and on prices of agricultural products with low stock levels.

Extraordinary weather patterns, such as *El Niño* or the *La Niña* phenomena since last year, successive torrential rain in South Asia and Hurricane Mitch in Central America, which damaged agricultural production, have reminded us of the weather's impact on agricultural production. In order to tackle these situations, it is important to develop warning systems such as FAO's GIEWS and emergency support systems, as well to improve countries' productivity through sustainable utilization of their resources.

My delegation is pleased to note paragraph 47, namely the expansion of fish production to 121 million tonnes in 1996, an increase of 3.2 percent compared to 1995. Traditionally fish products have contributed substantially to food security, especially among the poor sectors of the populations in developing countries. However, fisheries resources in many parts of the world are over-fished. In this regard, my delegation highly appreciates the recent positive development of the Fisheries Consultation, which was held last October, on management of over-fishing capacity, sea birds and sharks.

I wish to respond to the intervention made by the previous speaker regarding the subsidy to fisheries. My delegation is also against the subsidies leading to over-fishing. This is a bad subsidy. However, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that some subsidies contribute to food security, such as the subsidy for rural development in small-scale fisheries communities or effective fisheries management. This is a good subsidy. My point is that all subsidies are not always bad, and we should consider the positive aspect of certain subsidies too.

Paragraphs 58 to 61 indicate that production and trade of forestry products are sensitive to external factors such as the financial crisis in Asia and forest fires which were caused by *El Niño*. I would also like to refer to paragraph 62, which mentions continued deforestation, especially in developing countries. In this context, we fear that in order to address these issues, FAO should pursue sustainable forest management in collaboration with other international bodies, in particular the Inter-governmental Forum on Forests.

Regarding the issue of multifunctional nature of agriculture, my delegation fully supports the statement made by the delegates of the Republic of Korea and Mauritius. The issue of multifunctional agriculture is being addressed in OECD. We also appreciate a new initiative, taken jointly by FAO and the Netherlands, on the issue of multifunctional agriculture in the forum of Den Bosch II next year. Japan is now preparing to make contributions to this international conference. We are looking forward to having further developments on the issue of multifunctional aspects of agriculture, with the active involvement of FAO, in the near future from an objective point of view.

I wish to refer to several interventions made by some delegates concerning the next WTO negotiations on trade liberalizations. I would like to remind everyone that it is not appropriate for this Council to prejudge the future direction of the trade negotiations. At the same time, we would like to expect the FAO to continue to assist developing countries in preparing for future WTO negotiations, as was mentioned in the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

The Advisory Council on Agriculture of the Prime Minister of Japan issued guidelines on future agriculture policies last September. The Advisory Council was entrusted to review the agricultural policies and to restructure the policies towards the Twenty-First Century. The report suggests the

following basic ideas: to establish a policy for stable food supply; to strengthen the Japanese agricultural structure; to supply food of good quality at reasonable prices; to maintain the multifunctionality of agriculture; to revitalize the rural area; and to contribute to rural development in international communities.

Based on those policy guidelines, the Japanese Government is preparing to enact new basic agriculture laws and new agricultural policies. I believe it is a matter of primary importance for each country to promote domestic production by fully utilizing its domestic resources in a sustainable and responsible manner to ensure food security. Keeping in mind this principle, food importing countries should appropriately combine three elements, namely: domestic production, food imports and reserves, taking into due consideration the specific circumstances of each country to secure stable food supply. It is also important that food exporting countries clearly recognize the responsibility to ensure stable food supplies to their trading partners.

I would like to touch upon the re-negotiation of the Food Aid Convention. I myself participated in the formulation of a new Food Aid Convention which we hope will take effect from 1 July 1999. We believe that a new Food Aid Convention should allow proper flexibility on the eligible products as well as the forms and terms of food aid in line with the WTO, Marrakech and Singapore ministerial decision on this matter, in order to ensure the legitimate level of food aid to developing countries.

Lastly, we would like to briefly introduce our recent contribution in the field of food aid. Japan has decided to provide some countries, including Indonesia, with food aid including rice and fertilizers, to facilitate the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector and to alleviate the hardships in those countries.

Japan also decided to provide a special fund with WFP towards the establishment of food security in developing countries in the Sub-Sahara. In this regard, my delegation would like to highly appreciate the laborious work taken by FAO, especially GIEWS, as well as WFP, to assess the food insecurity situation in Indonesia, as well as other countries.

I would like to conclude by saying Japan would like to pursue collaboration with FAO and WFP to alleviate food insecurity in developing countries.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

Firstly, as the Chair of the Africa Group, I wish on behalf of the Region to convey our warmly-felt wish to you and the elected Vice-Chairmen and the Drafting Committee for a successful process of leading this meeting to meaningful conclusions, which will enhance agricultural development as a whole.

Secondly, I would like to share the South African contribution to this discussion. With regard to document CL 115/2, South Africa would like to commend FAO for the succinct way in which the State of Food and Agriculture in the world is presented. We have taken note with concern of the increase in the number of undernourished people, while recognizing the slight decrease in the proportion of the undernourished people worldwide. We are challenged by the extent of the manifestation of these trends in Africa and Asia, as well as by the reality that there is still an increase in countries needing food aid.

While we agree with the observation of the Report captured in paragraph. 7, that the critical issue is the lack of financial capacity of most of the people to purchase their own food, we feel that there is a need to go further and undertake an assessment of the specific issues which would affect specific areas. Ultimately, we should, as FAO, be able to assess the constraints at a regional, sub-regional and maybe even country-level, to help unpack the nature of the problem of food and security.

In South Africa, in confronting our own reality of transformation, we are currently focusing our attention on developing a national ethos of caring for our natural resources, as a basis of ensuring sustainable and long-term productivity. This is carried out under a national land-care programme.

A second focal area is a thorough re-examination of the norms and standards guiding the provision of agricultural support services in order that they now ensure entrepreneurial agricultural development, particularly among our disadvantaged population groups. We highlight in these strategies the need to harness capacities of the youth and women in our society. Furthermore, under our broad national programme of African Renaissance, we are increasingly looking for partnership arrangements that can contribute to the resolution of some of the African agricultural challenges.

The Report under discussion raises the issues of effective policy instruments, implementation strategies and institutional capacities and arrangements that yield real results. Over and above the need for these in our various countries, we need to take into consideration capacity of countries to respond to the frequent global disaster-linked occurrences which have an impact on our national policies, programmes and capacities. Recent examples of these are the *El Niño* and Hurricane Mitch. Focus on these issues underlies the need for FAO, by using its comprehensive capacity, to enhance its role in bringing these analyses and trends to the attention of Member Governments in a way that promotes a focus on best practice, in other words, what works and, more importantly, why it works. To a large extent, effectively using instruments such as the South-South cooperation can contribute to this exchange of experience.

A second focal thrust emerging in response to the Report is to ensure our emphasis on safeguarding the effectiveness of early warning systems, which can anticipate negative impacts on food security and agricultural development. Over time, in this way, we should be able to improve the capacity, particularly of developing countries facing the problems of vulnerability, to respond more pro-actively to circumvent the negative aspects.

It is our hope that the debate on these issues, and the concerns reflected in paragraph. 64 of the Report, will continue in the FAO fora in order to guide FAO in its mission to eradicate global hunger. South Africa looks forward to actively participating in developing these focus areas as we reaffirm our commitment to supporting the work of FAO.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

Australia notes that this year's State of Food and Agriculture Report presents some mixed results, with improvements in some areas and setbacks in others.

Australia nevertheless welcomes a number of the positive developments highlighted in the Report. In particular, the rate of food availability continued to grow in 1997, with sufficient growth in world cereals production to meet global demand. The FAO Report on the State of Food and Agriculture notes that the current ratio of stocks to expected utilization in 1998 is in the region of 17 to 18 percent, considered by FAO to be the minimum necessary to safeguard world food security.

Australia would note, however, that while the ratio is now 17 to 18 percent, the level of food insecurity has continued to increase. This highlights that the level of stocks and utilization is only one indicator of food security. While we agree with many of the previous speakers that domestic production is important, it is also important to address access and demand aspects, as national Governments, FAO and other participants in the World Food Summit agreed. On access, it was notable that a number of developing countries, such as Ecuador on behalf of GRULAC, emphasized the centrality of trade liberalization in achieving food security. Indeed, how will it also be possible for countries such as Honduras to overcome their massive problems if the exportable agriculture products mentioned by their Minister for Agriculture are denied market access?

The Australian Government considers that agricultural trade liberalization has played, and will continue to play, an important role in improving world food security through improved allocation of resources and the development of efficient agricultural systems. The development of efficient agricultural production in developing countries should be enhanced as subsidies in the developed world are reduced, thus removing long-standing distortions to investment and production decisions.

The forthcoming 1999 WTO negotiations present an important opportunity for all countries to seize the opportunity to further enhance their capacity to improve national economic growth, development and food security through the pursuit of further reductions to distortions in international agricultural production and trade and through improved market access.

I would also like to take up the issue of multifunctionality in agriculture. It is interesting that in these times of financial crisis, there should be cause for maintaining inefficient and destructive policies in the name of justifying continuing high levels of subsidization to agriculture.

Australia recognizes that all countries have legitimate rural development and environmental concerns. However, Australia considers that such objectives do not require measures that are linked to production. Furthermore, such concerns can be efficiently and effectively addressed through targeted, transparent and fully decoupled policies that do not distort agricultural production and trade. The use of multifunctionality to justify high levels of subsidization is in the interests of neither developed nor developing countries. However, they damage developing countries' agricultural interests by denying access to markets for agricultural exports and distorting agricultural trade. The solution to food security involves both the production of more food and the expansion of access to food through increased trade liberalization.

Finally, Australia would like to support the interventions of many of the delegations that have emphasized that one of the most important things that FAO can do to enhance global food security in the area of fisheries is to continue to pursue implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. This is of fundamental importance in ensuring the sustainable management of fisheries resources.

Mrs Batool QURESHI (Pakistan)

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Independent Chairman of the Council. Let me also congratulate the Vice-chairmen and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee and its Members.

Focusing on the document before us, that is, CL 115/2, we note with alarm the rise in the absolute number of the undernourished as estimated up to 1996. We shudder to think what the impact of the Asian financial crisis, *El Niño*, *La Niña* and Hurricane Mitch, as well as several strikes in many countries, would have on this figure. It seems that this could only increase. We are aware that IFAD has done some preliminary studies and has come up with not very optimistic results. Where does this place the progress and commitment of the World Food Summit to reduce the undernourished by half by the year 2015?

We are happy to note that food aid through WFP expanded by 12 percent in 1997, and swelled to almost double the minimum annual target set in 1975. The question, however, remains whether this is sufficient to cope with the rising trend of emergencies. We view with concern the static trend in ODA for agriculture in nominal terms and a reduction in real terms. This is reflective of the general apathy towards the agriculture sector. We feel that this trend would hardly contribute to meeting the objectives of the World Food Summit.

We are glad to note that IFAD has brought its level of programmes back to the pre-1995 level. We feel that there is a requirement to have a targeted increase in ODA for the agriculture sector through a joint strategy involving all bilateral and multilateral actors.

We appreciate the efforts of FAO through its Technical Cooperation Programme, helping the developing countries in chalking out action plans for the future in order to help us to alleviate malnutrition and poverty. We feel that the multisectorial approach must be adopted for sustained eradication of the menace of malnutrition, hunger and poverty.

Pakistan has pledged to take forward the Summit conclusions in its own small way, given its limited resources. The Government has launched a nationwide Social Action Programme, contributing two percent of its GDP.

In the end, I would like to thank you and the Council Members for their patient indulgence.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

My delegation also wishes to welcome your guidance for this Hundred and Fifteenth Council and to congratulate the Vice-Chairs and the Members of the Drafting Group on their well-deserved election. We also express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the production of document CL 115/2, and for its timely supplement. We look forward to receiving the full report, hopefully some time this week.

We observe that world agricultural commodity prices are at cyclical lows. Low prices likely mean low returns from any agricultural producers worldwide and consequently lower food production in the next year or so. In addition, considerable exchange rate uncertainty and income difficulties are being experienced in many countries. These situations challenge the market-oriented policy reforms of the past decade. Canada is confident that the current downturn will be replaced by a return to high prices within one or two years, if governments of major exporting countries refrain from offering stimulative support to their production sectors.

For the most part, Canada sees these low commodity prices as a result of world commodity supply response to the high prices in the mid-1990s and to the weak demand in many markets. Unlike the previous low price period, which we saw in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the role of government interventions in these price declines in this situation is much less important.

Canada believes that maintaining adherence to World Trade Organization commitments will be critical to assuring that market functioning is preserved in the longer term. We are encouraged that so far, by and large, governments have restrained their involvement, but we do note that there are some signs that subsidy levels are increasing.

Canada considers that a well-functioning international market is critical to the well-being of food producers and consumers worldwide, and here we would like to endorse the comments of the Australian delegation concerning the importance of continued trade liberalization and the need to reduce trade and production distorting subsidies. In one year's time, WTO Member Nations will embark on a new Round of Trade Negotiations in Agriculture. While there are a number of new emerging issues, the next Round offers an opportunity for yet further improvement in the functioning of agricultural markets, especially in the areas of increased market access and reduced export subsidies. It will be important for FAO Members to assess the effect of these on FAO's initiatives, such as the targets to reduce the number of malnourished people. Negotiations in the areas of the SPS Agreement and in the environment will also be of critical importance to production and trade, which are both critical to FAO objectives.

Efforts to facilitate the full participation of developing and least-developed countries will be important to a successful round of negotiations. For the past four years, our membership has been requesting this Organization to assist them in preparing for the next round of agricultural negotiations. Assistance by FAO in the form of analysis and support to these countries will be useful in this regard and FAO's work programme should certainly maintain these particular activities.

FAO's assistance in this area is welcomed by all Members because FAO is recognized as a neutral forum for policy discussion and development. It is essential that we, the membership, maintain that neutrality if the Organization is to continue to play this valued role.

Raúl ALEGRETT (Venezuela)

Quiero sumarme a las felicitaciones de las delegaciones que me han precedido por la designación de la Presidencia Independiente del Consejo, por su designación, por la de los Vice-presidentes y el Comité de Redacción. En adición al planteamiento hecho durante esta mañana por nuestro Presidente del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, quisiera transmitir al Consejo algunas reflexiones de mi país.

Venezuela ha hecho notables esfuerzos para adaptarse a las exigencias y compromisos de la globalización, así como también en el cumplimiento del Programa de Acción acordado en la Cumbre Mundial de 1996. Sin embargo, a pesar de avances interesantes en el comercio

internacional, en la orientación de la producción, en la sinceración de costos y precios y el logro de mejoras obtenidas en productividad, el país enfrenta un deterioro en el consumo alimentario y, particularmente, un aumento en los indicadores de desnutrición.

Elemento determinante del deterioro señalado ha sido la limitación en el acceso a alimentos. Esta limitación no responde en mi país a problemas de disponibilidad, sino que fundamentalmente a la brecha creciente entre los ingresos reales de la población y los precios de los alimentos. En este sentido debemos reconocer que el alza de precios y la inestabilidad de los mismos, conspira significativamente contra la seguridad alimentaria y que en algunos países puede realmente afectar la disponibilidad de alimentos. No puede haber seguridad alimentaria sin disminución del hambre y la desnutrición, sin una mejor distribución del ingreso real; y, ello debe ocurrir como consecuencia de la dinámica económica o como una compensación directa a los consumidores pobres. Además, los países deben asegurar una adecuada disponibilidad de divisas para complementar sus requerimientos alimentarios.

En cuanto se refiere a la agricultura propiamente, existen problemas generados en el marco de la globalización que es necesario superar. Existe una competencia desleal que afecta al productor agropecuario de nuestros países. Por una parte se mantienen subsidios e incentivos ajenos a la caja verde y se apoyan también en la producción con aportes significativos, que si bien se enmarcan en dicha caja, representan por su magnitud una inversión que no puede ser asumida por los países en desarrollo. Por otra parte se cierran mercados a productos de nuestra Región por razones atribuidas, no siempre con suficiente fundamentación, a factores técnicos, sanitarios, laborales, de sustentabilidad u otros. Sin divisas, ingresos y por tanto mercados para nuestros productos, ¿cómo podremos aumentar la capacidad de acceso a los alimentos?. Esperamos de la FAO el respaldo necesario para fortalecer nuestras agriculturas a fin de que las mismas puedan cumplir simultáneamente dos funciones: por una parte, el establecimiento de una base de producción de alimentos de consumo masivo que en el marco de una racionalidad aceptable garantice un umbral de seguridad alimentaria y, por la otra, favorecer el desarrollo de las exportaciones agrícolas para que las mismas contribuyan al suministro de las divisas necesarias para diversificar la economía y mejorar los ingresos de la población, permitiendo así el mejoramiento de la disponibilidad y el acceso a los alimentos para una alimentación adecuada a toda nuestra población.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Quisiera señalar que en el marco de la agenda bienal de la FAO para el período 1998-99, mi país junto con considerar de suma importancia el tema de la seguridad alimentaria y estar firmemente comprometido con el seguimiento y aplicación de los acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, manifiesta entre sus prioridades los temas referidos a la conservación de los recursos naturales, el desarrollo del espacio rural y de manera particular lo relacionado con el comercio internacional. La razón de esto último, se fundamenta en que la mayor posibilidad para los países con economías pequeñas como el nuestro para continuar o, en algunos casos, iniciar su desarrollo está íntimamente condicionada a la expansión de su mercado en el ámbito internacional. Ello es válido para todos los sectores económicos y lo es especialmente en el caso del sector agrícola. Muchos países tienen economías aún fuertemente dependientes de la actividad silvo-agropecuaria, por tanto, su capacidad de crecimiento se basa en la dinámica de este sector. El desarrollo de las agriculturas, en las condiciones actuales de globalización e internacionalización de las economías, sólo se ve favorecido en la medida en que se apoya su transformación tecnológica productiva, se moderniza su gestión, se mejora la calidad de sus activos y se facilita el acceso de los productos a los mercados.

Chile ha propiciado simultáneamente estas condiciones. En el ámbito del comercio, el proceso de apertura comercial llevado a cabo por el país con rebajas generalizadas y sostenida de los aranceles ha permitido una mejor gestión del sector agrícola a su favor y ha favorecido la modernización sectorial en su conjunto. Ello beneficia al conjunto del país, al proporcionar los ingresos necesarios para adquirir aquellos bienes y servicios de los cuales no tenemos ventajas competitivas basadas en la eficiencia productiva y que por lo tanto producimos a mayores costos. Hace sólo unos días el Parlamento chileno ha aprobado una reducción gradual y uniforme de

aranceles que nos permitirá reducirlos desde el actual 11 por ciento para llegar a un 6 por ciento a partir del 1° de enero del año 2003. Quiero destacar que esta rebaja ha contado con un amplio respaldo político y de los diversos sectores productivos incluyendo los productores agrícolas. Sin embargo, el mercado internacional está aún lejos de reflejar las ventajas competitivas de los países de la producción de bienes y servicios y promover que éstos lleguen al menor precio posible a quienes los demandan. Ello impide, en la práctica, que países emergentes o en vías de desarrollo y aquellos con serios problemas de seguridad alimentaria puedan efectivamente mejorar de manera significativa sus actuales condiciones; la eliminación total de los subsidios a las exportaciones, principal mecanismo de distorsión de los precios internacionales; la reducción de la ayuda interna directa a las agriculturas cuyo efectos son equivalentes a los subsidios; las restricciones al acceso a los mercados con intenciones proteccionistas; la eliminación de las salvaguardias especiales y el sistema de precios de entrada son algunos de los avances que se deben ir concretando para el logro de una mayor transparencia del mercado internacional. Esta es una de las tareas principales a las cuales está abocado el Gobierno de Chile y, que por ser ella de gran magnitud, requiere el concurso de todos aquellos países especialmente de América Latina y el Caribe que esperan enfrentar el tercer milenio como naciones con economías sanas y fortalecidas.

Estamos convencidos que al avanzar en la liberación del comercio estamos estimulando el desarrollo productivo y tecnológico de la agricultura y proporcionando mejores y mayores alternativas de desarrollo para la población rural. De esta forma, parte de nuestras acciones en el logro de este imperativo estratégico para nuestro desarrollo ha sido favorecer y promover la coordinación entre los países en las diversas oportunidades que se han presentado en el marco de las reuniones regionales, tanto de la FAO como del IICA, con el fin de consensuar posiciones frente a las próximas negociaciones de la OMC. En ambas instancias se ha logrado el mandato para que jueguen un papel activo de secretaría técnica, para apoyar en este sentido los países de la Región. Recientemente en Miami se realizó la primera reunión general de coordinación en el marco de las negociaciones agrícolas para la conformación del área de libre comercio de las Américas y ya una segunda reunión del mismo tenor está prevista para esta semana en la capital de Chile, Santiago.

Con estas dos iniciativas estamos avanzando en esta necesaria coordinación para enfrentar de mejor forma la próxima ronda agrícola. Valoramos altamente el apoyo brindado por la FAO en estas materias y esperamos que ello continúe profundizándose. Por nuestra parte ofrecemos el apoyo y trabajo de nuestros equipos técnicos negociadores tanto a la FAO como a aquellos países que estimen que es de su particular interés. Además mantenemos firme nuestro compromiso y activa participación con el grupo Quence. Del mismo modo Chile acogió favorablemente la petición del Director General de la FAO de participar en el Programa de Cooperación Técnica Sur-Sur, y manifestamos nuestra especial disposición en relación a los países afectados por el Huracán Mitch. Ya hemos solicitado los antecedentes necesarios acerca de las necesidades de cooperación y dependiendo de éstos y de nuestras capacidades, se estructurarán los programas respectivos.

Chile, es un país que junto con sufrir con frecuencia las manifestaciones de la naturaleza ha experimentado la solidaridad de la comunidad internacional, la que acudió a nuestra ayuda en esos difíciles momentos. Comprendemos, por tanto, la situación por la que atraviesan estos hermanos pueblos de Centroamérica y acudiremos en su ayuda en la medida de nuestras posibilidades. Para tal efecto ponemos a disposición nuestras fortalezas en los ámbitos de la organización para las negociaciones comerciales internacionales, promoción comercial de productos de exportación, desarrollo silvícola, protección fito y zoo-sanitaria y especialmente apoyo al desarrollo de la pequeña agricultura.

El gobierno de Chile está convencido de que la única forma de seguir avanzando hacia el desarrollo y, por ende, hacia mejores oportunidades para la población al igual que para las de otros países es la cooperación, tanto al interior de su soberanía como con el resto del mundo y de manera especial con nuestros vecinos de la Región sur de América. En este sentido valoramos la oportunidad de instancias, como la FAO, como espacio para la reflexión de los temas pendientes

de nuestra agricultura de nuestros pueblos y para la formulación de propuestas concretas que faciliten su solución definitiva.

Mrs Hannelore A.H. BENJAMIN (Observer for Dominica)

My delegation would like to congratulate you and the three Vice-Chairmen of Council and Drafting Committee for their election. My delegation would also like to congratulate the Secretariat for preparing the documents before us. These documents will hopefully provide a very constructive foundation for our discussions in the course of these meetings.

My delegation fully supports what has been said this morning by our Chairman of Latin America and the Caribbean, of which Dominica is proudly part of.

I would like to express on behalf of the Secretary-General of CARICOM, the CARICOM States, and on behalf of Dominica, its people, and the Government, and myself our heartfelt sorrow for that what Hurricane Mitch did to Central America, and our condolences go to those who lost their loved ones during the terrible natural disaster.

Hurricane Mitch has unleashed its fury over Central America and left an unbearable devastation behind. My delegation knows that the people in Central America are strong people, and that they will have the courage to rebuild their country again.

My delegation is happy to read that in CL 115/INF/24 FAO responses to natural disasters worldwide, and that FAO fully understands the needs in Central America by not referring to the micro-macro economics, but faces the actual reality as it stands, knowing that what the people in Central America now need is the help of appliances, food, seeds, boats, equipment, you name it; because without a boat a fisherman cannot catch a fish. Without seeds the farmer cannot grow crops.

Food security and health in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala are now at highest risk, and we all know that in achieving food security we need to establish food production. Therefore, targeted programmes for food security should be addressed, in particular, for the people in those countries where employment is already very small and now it might be even smaller, if at all available. Without employment opportunities, poverty will never be reduced, and hunger and malnutrition will never be alleviated.

We in the Caribbean Islands know what our brothers and sisters in Central America are going through. We have faced Hurricane David, Hurricane Hugo, and you name them all. Hurricane David destroyed Dominica to the ground, leaving unbearable devastation behind. Therefore, in our Region, it is an essential premise of agriculture, forestry, marine and sustainable development. This is to ensure that the development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own.

Our people in our Region struggle for survival, for economic stability and human dignity, and for human rights we must help them in securing their food, their welfare and their health. Only then, can we achieve economical growth, or else in the years 2010-2015, we will not talk of 800 million people suffering from hunger and malnutrition, and where FAO would want very much to reduce the figure by half, but we might be talking of 100 million more.

Sustainable development should be a global hallmark for rural development in all developing countries, and through it, we might be able to stop this situation where agricultural production costs are constantly increasing, while the degradation of the productivity decreases.

The performance of economics in the medium-and long-term will depend critically on the performance of the external sector and on the effectiveness of macroeconomic management. Often, we read in the documents of the UN Agencies and international institutions, how the writers do forget what reality proves differently.

Foreign aid to Dominica in particular, in the Caribbean Region, in general, plummeted as donor nations looked increasingly inward or eastward. Yet I have to admit, that in time of crisis they have been there. They have been at our side in full force and solidarity, and for that I thank them.

It is further said, that the Caribbean countries achieved satisfactory economic growth in 1996 and 1997, due to tourism and manufactures. Yet, in most of our countries the GDP fell very sharply. We are still agriculture producing countries, exporting mainly agriculture products. In Dominica the GDP declined to 1.4 percent from 3.7 percent in 1996. The concern, however is, that our countries do not grow as fast on the world market, due to the demise of traditional preferential trade arrangements and the expansion of international competition. Yet, every country in our region should have mutual beneficial trade opportunities.

In Dominica and in our other Caribbean Island States, the unfavourable macroeconomic and external trade climate, and the rate growth calls for demand expansion. We know, and with the focus not only on enhancing the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, environment and women in rural and urban areas where we must enhance the income of peasants to secure their food security and to eradicate their high malnutrition. Therefore, let us take the opportunity provided by this meeting to look forward to the spirit of innovation and cooperation, to achieve outcomes that can be mutually beneficial, in particular, by implementing the World Food Summit recommendations.

Therefore, let us also implement in FAO's next year Conference that what goes beyond decision-making. Let us implement what has so patiently been written. The hungry cannot wait for food, and they to have the right to live in dignity.

I would like to congratulate Canada where my colleague this morning stated that he hopes that the 160 countries that supported the Proclamation of International Year of Mountains and its Resolution will support FAO. My hope goes further. I look forward to have a constructive meeting of the Programme of Work and Budget during the FAO Conference next year in November 1999, and hopefully, FAO will receive that what it needs: extra budget resources and we will have a full consensus on them.

In concluding, I do not want to address, at this moment, the problems of Small Island States because it is my understanding that the Director-General wants to hold a Conference on Small Island States next year. However, it is my understanding that because of constraints in the resources and budget, the Director-General can only allow for a one day conference on small island states.

I do not know whether this will be sufficient, nor do I think that the day should be added to COFI in March, because the people coming from the capitals during March often do not really know the vulnerability our countries face nor may they be able to really respond to what is necessary under discussion. Therefore, I would like to have a better clarification as to when we could have the Conference on Small Island States.

My suggestion would be that we might add it onto the Committee on Food Aid because food aid deals with malnutrition, deals with food security. It deals with so many many aspects that maybe COFI would not be able to do, or at least, it is too short notice because we have not received any documents on it. We do need time to look very carefully at those documents, and provide our capitals with them to see how we go on from there.

Ermond HARTMANS (Observer for Caritas International)

More than an hour ago, the Italian delegate expressed an opinion that he felt it was a disadvantage to talk this late in a Council meeting. Well, this is now an hour ago so I must be at a real disadvantage. Nevertheless, I am going to keep my comments very short and to the point which I would like to direct to the Assistant Director-General, Mr de Haen.

Caritas is a Non-Governmental Organization which is primarily engaged in charitable activities. It is a confederation of economist chapters in 154 countries, which basically concentrates its efforts in giving assistance to emergency situations, such as the ones that we have heard so much about in Latin America and to the poorest of the poor, in needed countries.

We like to look at FAO and are anxious to collaborate with FAO, in the identification of such needs so that we can streamline our activities in an effective manner. We are therefore, particularly, interested in the food situation and food production and trade data which FAO is

providing us. According to The State of Food and Agriculture for 1998, Africa south of the Sahara, as has been mentioned by many speakers, has by far the largest proportion of poor and undernourished people which in some of these countries is as high as 50 percent. In most of these countries, the most important basic staple foods are roots, tubers and pulses.

Unfortunately, The State of Food and Agriculture 1998 does not give any information on the production of these basic food crops. We would like to be informed to what extent these staple foods are properly included in determining crop production levels and the degree of nutrition and malnutrition. This specifically, I direct to the Assistant Director-General. We would appreciate if we could receive in future more information on this important matter.

Hartwig DE HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

There have not been too many questions but may I begin a short statement by thanking the delegates for the many compliments on the document. Of course, we feel grateful for these compliments but we will also strive for still better and more recent information and also, for it to be more forward-looking. This I say in reply to the distinguished delegate of the United States.

If I may just answer the last question posed by Mr Hartmans from Caritas International. The inclusion of information on roots and tubers is sometimes quite difficult because it is not as readily and as recently available as the information on cereals, therefore, we may tend to give more weight to the information on cereals. Please rest assured that we will make still another effort in these regard. Also please be informed that in the Assessment Report, which we have submitted to the CFS earlier this year, we did dwell in more detail on the important role of roots and tubers for food security. You will also see when you look at the forthcoming food outlook that there is a special reference, of course, to the world cassava production. Finally all the aggregate figures on food production do include roots and tubers.

There was a question with regard to the information by the distinguished delegate of Egypt, who requested more recent information on our estimated number of chronically-undernourished. I am sorry to reply that we do not have a more recent estimate. You must understand that in order to arrive at this estimate, we have to go through quite a labourious analysis and calculation of all the food balance sheets of Member Nations and in this case, of developing Member countries. This work is still underway for the year 1997. The latest data arrived late, and it is also a matter of resources which we can put into it but we will do our best, as soon as possible, with such an estimate which depends on the readiness of the food balance sheets.

We have noted the deep concern expressed by many about the slow progress in reaching the target of the World Food Summit in terms of the number of hungry people to be halved by the year 2015 and, of course, the concern expressed about unforeseen factors that continue to compound the difficulties that countries have in this regard. We will, of course, continue to monitor and report to you about this issue.

Many delegates have underlined the importance of sustainable agriculture and rural development to increase food security about the importance of prevention and resilience to emergencies and crises; about the importance of trade for food security and assistance to developing countries in their implementation of the market agreements, and in their preparations for the next round of the multilateral trade negotiations. I take this opportunity to inform you that we have, as requested by you, intensified our work in this regard. I mean our trade related work and rather comprehensive training programme is now ready to be launched. This will be held in various sub-regions and cover all issues and areas of relevance to trade and food and agriculture, including fishery and forestry as far as this applies. We hope that there will be enough demand for this programme so that we can train a large number of delegates of developing countries until the next Round of Trade Negotiations or of experts in the various Ministries who are interacting with their national delegations.

We are also continuing our work with regard to analysis of trade-related issues of interest to our Member Nations and I invite you to look at the Internet where in WAICENT you now find a special page on trade and Uruguay Round-related issues. If you have any comments on it, there is

a question-and-answer page in which you can let us have your comments, and we will try to take care of them.

I think this ends my comments and replies. Probably, I should only like to refer to one final remark regarding the balance of information on progress in world agriculture, on the one hand, and reporting about crises and negative trends of hunger and undernutrition. On the other hand, we noted the statement of the distinguished delegate of the United States and other references by the delegate of Italy. I just want to assure you that we will continue to provide as factual and as balanced information as it is possible.

I think when you look into the documents of FAO, including those presented to the World Food Summit, you will see that we have also always shown the positive achievements made by hundreds of millions of farmers in the world who were able to increase the average food supply *per caput*, even at a time, when the world population continued to grow rather rapidly. I assure that in future we will try to keep this balance between information on the disappointing trends, as well as those on the more encouraging trends. With this, I hope to have answered your questions and commented on some of your remarks.

CHAIRMAN

We have had a most stimulating and rich debate on the current state of food and agriculture. We welcome and we are grateful for the achievements we have made, but at the same time we admit that there is so much that has to be done. There is still a long way to travel if we really want to achieve the goals set by the Summit, as indicated by, for instance, the incidence of malnutrition in various countries. We have also discussed the very close and important links between production of food and trade and other fields. These links are very important indeed, and some of the topics brought up will again be discussed when we go on and reach other Agenda Items in this Council.

Most of the speakers also mentioned the natural disasters. The adverse climatic changes and conditions, and also the financial crisis which began in Asia but which threatens to result in a global depression. We discussed the prospects of our agriculture in light of these natural disasters, of the climatic conditions and the current financial crisis in particular. All these problems somehow translate into serious food insecurity, which is still faced by millions of people.

Several delegates have also emphasized the importance of food and agriculture in helping restore the economic growth of the nations. Some countries with rich natural resources facing financial and economic crisis actually turn to agriculture to help solve the problems faced by the economy. At the same time, they find agriculture not able to do much. Therefore, there are calls for really new thinking in agriculture development. There are calls for serious thinking in terms of renewing the paradigm for agricultural development. There are calls for alliances. This underlines the crucial role expected at the international level from our Organization, and the partnerships it is developing to help the membership face up to these challenges. A full, complete, more detailed Report on the debate that we have just finished will certainly be in the Report of the Council.

VI. OTHER MATTERS (continued)**VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES** (suite)**VI. OTROS ASUNTOS** (continuación)**21. FAO's Reaction to Recent Natural Disasters** (CL 115/INF/24)**21. Réaction de la FAO aux catastrophes naturelles récentes** (CL 115/INF/24)**21. Respuesta de la FAO a las recientes catástrofes naturales** (CL 115/INF/24)**André REGNIER (Assistant Director-General, Technical Cooperation Department)**

Members of the Council are aware of the exceptional series of natural disasters that occurred recently, in particular in Asia and Latin America. FAO would like to inform you briefly of the serious consequences of these disasters and what the Organization has done so far to address them. As you mentioned, the document CL 115/INF/24 has been presented to you outlining the main activities that have been undertaken so far. The most substantive assessment of the damage to the agricultural sector will be available in due course when the various assessment missions now underway have had the opportunity to finalize their work. At this stage, let me give you a short summary of our actions so far for the period July to November.

As you know, logically the most recent disaster was Hurricane Mitch, which swept across several Central American countries between 26 October and 1 November. Paragraphs 38 to 47 of the document refer to that disaster, that has resulted in major human casualties and damage to infrastructure and agricultural production of an unprecedented scale. Honduras and Nicaragua have been the hardest hit. Guatemala and El Salvador have also been severely affected and, to a lesser extent, Costa Rica and some southwestern parts of Mexico and Belize.

The response of FAO was first to alert the donor community, and information could be found in the most recent Special Alert issued by the FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System on 6 November.

Second, we put the FAO expertise and field staff in the different countries at the disposal of the Governments to assess the situations and the needs. To that effect, two missions are now underway, jointly with WFP, in Nicaragua and Honduras to appraise the crop and food situation and assess the most recent needs for agricultural rehabilitation and reconstruction. Based on the findings of these missions, a programme of emergency intervention will be formulated for the immediate rehabilitation of the agricultural sector of each country, and submitted to the donor community as soon as possible.

The Governments of the other countries affected by Hurricane Mitch are assessing the damage with their own resources, and may subsequently submit requests for assistance.

Thirdly, apart from the decisions on emergency food aid, taken by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and the Director-General of FAO, FAO is finalizing two emergency Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCP) for urgent provision of seeds and tools for disaster-affected farmers in Nicaragua and Guatemala. This will permit the delivery of basic agricultural inputs for the current planting season which ends in mid-December. We hope that donor contributions can also be mobilized to catch up the following cropping season.

Fourthly, we are, as a matter of fact, in close touch with the donor community and a number of donors have already indicated their readiness to assist. The Government of the Netherlands, in particular, has already informed FAO that it is pledging financial assistance for relief to victims in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, to be channelled through ongoing FAO projects funded by the Netherlands.

Fifthly, we stand ready to cooperate on the reconstruction side, in full consultation with the United Nations System. In particular, we are contributing to the preparations for the United Nations Appeal for the next six months, and we are also ready to participate with the Inter-American Development Bank in the longer-term reconstruction through the Consultative Group Meeting that is scheduled for the middle of December.

In Latin America, during the period under review, effects of serious disasters also occurred in other countries, in particular, due to the devastating Hurricane George in countries like Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Antigua and Bermuda, St. Kitts and Nevis. Our immediate response in these countries is summarized in paragraphs 28 to 37. Basically, FAO is assessing the situation and the most urgent needs, and the donor community will be kept informed. TCP projects for the urgent supply of agricultural or fisheries inputs are also being finalized for several of them, and should be approved soon.

The other continent where major natural disasters occurred during the period I am reviewing was Asia, and the most hardest hit countries were China and Bangladesh. As far as China is concerned, FAO's response has been the approval of two Technical Cooperation projects on emergency supply of basic agricultural inputs to farmers affected by the flood in the Jiangxi, Hubei and Hunan Provinces. That was in August 1998, and all agricultural inputs have already been procured and distributed to the beneficiaries.

The second TCP with similar scope was in another area, the northeastern province. It was approved on 19 November and will be, of course, implemented straightaway. Moreover, under Swedish funding, FAO is now sending a three-week mission for an in-depth assessment of flood damage and formulation of project proposals for rehabilitating of the agriculture sector. The mission will assess damage in the flood-affected areas, and formulate proposals for immediate relief and short-term rehabilitation. The mission is scheduled to depart on 25 November.

In Bangladesh, apart from closely following the situation through FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment missions and participating in the United Nations Inter-Agency Appeal, FAO has already approved two TCPs for the supply of emergency vegetable seeds to flood-affected areas for hundreds of thousands of flood-affected farmers. It is now operational and a second TCP has also been approved for the emergency supply of veterinary medicines and vaccines for the affected farmers.

Moreover, under a pledge from OPEC, US\$200 thousand for the procurement of agricultural inputs for FAO has also been allocated and will be implemented as soon as possible.

Other countries in the Region, such as India, the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia, were also seriously affected, as you will see from the document before you. In these countries, FAO is also assessing the situation, identifying the needs for agricultural rehabilitation, and will keep the donors fully informed as soon as possible.

To conclude, I wish to underline that FAO will continue to closely interact with other United Nations Agencies, particularly WFP and IFAD here in Rome, to coordinate our interventions and, whenever possible, carry out joint actions focusing on agriculture, livestock and fisheries recovery. However, as you will have noticed, the TCP resources are made available when requested but, in view of the magnitude of these disasters, it is clear that FAO will have to seek additional support from the international donor community to proceed with its programmes. Appeals for funds will therefore be launched to this effect, as and when necessary, and we intend to convene, through informal discussions, our donor community in Rome for consultations when needed.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

With your kind permission, I would like to pass the floor to the delegation of Austria, who would like to speak on this Agenda Item in its capacity as current President of the European Union.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

We appreciate that the Director-General suggested, and all colleagues approved, the introduction of this Item in today's Agenda. Hurricane Mitch was one of the major natural disasters in the last years. We are also aware of the extensive damage caused by floods in some Asian countries.

Sadly, such disasters have resulted in severe setbacks to the improvement of living conditions achieved through hard work in many parts of the world.

With regard to Hurricane Mitch, all currently available resources of the European Union have been mobilized to assist the affected countries in the difficult task of coping with the terrible consequences of this unprecedented disaster. Until now, the European Union has pledged US\$112 million in emergency aid funds. Of this total, US\$78 million have been offered by individual European Union Member States. The possibility of further contributions is currently under discussion.

Some Member States of the European Union have already agreed to relieve the debts of the countries most affected by the disaster. This is an important and concrete instrument for their recovery.

The above-mentioned contributions reaffirmed the long-term engagement of the European Union in the Central American Region. We appreciate the responses of FAO and we look forward to contributions by FAO, closely coordinated with the efforts of other UN Agencies. In addition, we see an important role for international, inter-regional and local NGOs in the long-term rehabilitation of the countries involved.

We want to express our solidarity to all suffering populations. The immediate, as well as long-term relief, is a high priority political aim of the European Union, as witness the European Community Humanitarian Office commitment of US\$ 9 million in 1998 for disasters in the Philippines, India, China and Bangladesh. Over US\$ 3 million have been also provided by ECO with regard to Hurricane George.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

The United States commends FAO for providing a country-by-country update of the devastation wrought by numerous recent natural disasters. FAO's document prepared for discussion of this Agenda Item points to several examples of coordinated responses by the UN Agencies whose mandate foresees such intervention and relief, recovery and rehabilitation efforts. FAO needs to be involved early in these crises to help minimize damage, provide early needs-assessment of potential agricultural damage and contribute to the development of a longer-term agricultural sector strategy for the afflicted economies.

The United States would urge FAO to focus any expanded activities in cost-effective efforts, thoroughly coordinated with Agencies such as WFP and the other humanitarian agencies, which are mandated to perform emergency recovery work. This would avoid duplication of effort, preserve, but not enlarge, FAO's existing mandate and ensure the most effective coordinated approach to post-disaster recovery measures. In particular, FAO can play a role in rehabilitation in countries devastated by natural disasters, such as in Central America recently. The scale of destruction of the agricultural and transportation infrastructures necessitates close collaboration among all UN Agencies tasked with the emergency response and humanitarian assistance and the exploitation of each Agency's demonstrated comparative advantage in each aspect of recovery and rehabilitation.

The Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping Systems (FIVIMS), once in place, will provide information to help target those areas where food security is most threatened. FIVIMS should also assist participating countries to anticipate disaster-relief efforts in the most appropriate manner possible, tailored carefully to local circumstances.

Finally, we are pleased to see that FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme will be an integral part of FAO's participation in agricultural recovery efforts.

Alain PIERRET (France)

La délégation française tient à s'associer aux intervenants précédents pour vous féliciter de votre élection à la Présidence du Conseil, comme aussi les Vice-présidents et les membres du Comité de rédaction à la tête duquel se trouve le Portugal ami.

Les vues de l'Union européenne et de ses Etats membres ayant déjà été exprimées sur ce point 21 de l'ordre du jour, je bornerais mon propos à un commentaire spécifique. Nous avons tous vu les images télévisées des désastres provoqués sur son passage en Amérique centrale par l'ouragan Mitch. Nous avons entendu ce matin le Secrétaire d'Etat à l'agriculture et à l'élevage de la République du Honduras, détailler quelques aspects parmi les plus tragiques de la situation qui prévaut dans son pays. Comme on sait, à travers ses départements d'Outre-mer, la France est présente dans la région Caraïbe. Elle a été particulièrement affectée par le drame qui vient d'atteindre ces pays voisins. Elle est aussitôt intervenue pour leur venir en aide. Le Gouvernement a dérouté vers la zone le navire-école de sa Marine nationale. La Jeanne d'Arc étant un porte-hélicoptères se révélait tout à fait approprié pour apporter l'assistance requise avec ses appareils.

En liaison avec les organisations non-gouvernementales et le secteur privé, des équipes de secours spécialisées, des moyens de purification de l'eau, du matériel sanitaire et des médicaments, des vivres ont été immédiatement envoyés à ces pays. Compte tenu de la brièveté des délais, de la distance considérable, ce sont des quantités importantes qui ont été ainsi transportées. Elles sont malheureusement dérisoires au regard des besoins.

Au cours de sa visite sur place, il y a une semaine, le Président de la République a donc annoncé que la France annulait la dette de ces pays à son égard, dette évaluée à 650 millions de francs, soit environ 120 millions de dollars. Il a, d'autre part, proposé que se tienne aussi rapidement que possible un Sommet mondial pour examiner les mesures à prendre en vue de la reconstruction de la région.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Queremos agradecer primero al Director General por haber sugerido la inclusión de este Tema, para nosotros muy importante, así como el señor Regnier por la presentación de la información.

La tragedia que ha tenido lugar en Centroamérica por el Huracán Mitch pone de manifiesto una vez más la vulnerabilidad de muchos países pobres que se enfrentan a situaciones climáticas adversas. Mi país como otros muchos han contribuido de una manera rápida y solidaria hacia esta Región. Nosotros estimamos que Centroamérica requerirá de un esfuerzo sostenido, el proceso de rehabilitación y de desarrollo durará muchísimos años por lo cual pedimos que las actividades y las acciones que ahora se están emprendiendo hacia la Región no disminuyan sino que se mantengan en el tiempo. La cuestión que nosotros pedimos a la FAO es que vigile; queremos también en este contexto reconocer la acción de la FAO así como la acción del PMA por su rapidez y por su eficiencia. Hay unos elementos que nosotros consideramos deben reforzarse particularmente por lo que se refiere a la alerta temprana y esta experiencia, pone de manifiesto lo que se ha discutido mucho tanto aquí como en el PMA respecto a la importancia de la ayuda al desarrollo. Nosotros consideramos que la ayuda al desarrollo provea a todos los países de mejores mecanismos para enfrentar catástrofes de este tipo. La ayuda a la emergencia, desde luego, es una contribución muy valiosa pero consideramos que la ayuda al desarrollo reviste una importancia doble en el sentido de que fortalece a los países frente a estas situaciones.

Finalmente, queremos reconocer la posición de algunos países que además de la ayuda de emergencia que han otorgado, han adoptado una actitud que nosotros consideramos ejemplar y es la cancelación de la deuda externa. Un problema que pesa mucho sobre los hombros de estas poblaciones ya golpeadas por diferentes catástrofes.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Quisiéramos comenzar subrayando uno de los párrafos leídos por Ecuador en nombre de nuestros países de América Latina y el Caribe, y cito: "En consecuencia se debe reforzar el sistema mundial de información y alerta y otros programas pertinentes para que en una acción conjunta y coordinada se continúe brindando apoyo para prevenir y contrarrestar los daños ocasionados por estos fenómenos así como proceder a la formulación de programas de reconstrucción del aparato productivo de los estados afectados".

Queremos destacar la clara, detallada y precisa declaración escuchada, al señor Regnier la cual agradecemos mucho; una introducción a este Tema de plena actualidad, así como también agradecer a la FAO al haber introducido el Tema en este Consejo.

Nos vamos a referir muy concretamente al Huracán Mitch. Como indican los expertos en el tema este ha sido uno de los fenómenos meteorológicos más devastadores de la historia. La problemática de Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador nos obliga a tomar medidas urgentes para revertir esta situación. Miles de personas han muerto, otras miles ven amenazadas sus vidas a causa de epidemias y enfermedades que les azotan, los alimentos escasean y tenemos que tomar acción. Estos países necesitan apoyo, se ha considerado que los daños provocados retrasan sus economías en 20 años lo que sin duda es motivo de gran preocupación. Para reactivar la producción de alimentos en estos países se requieren tres fases: socorro, rehabilitación y desarrollo, pero para ello se necesitan recursos y acciones concretas y urgentes.

Cuba, país pobre y bloqueado, afectado recientemente también por un fenómeno meteorológico, ha reaccionado ante la problemática de nuestros hermanos centroamericanos y estamos dispuestos a enviar de forma inmediata y gratuita 2000 médicos a Honduras y a Guatemala y a cualquier otro país afectado por el huracán para prestar servicios por tiempo indefinido en los lugares más apartados que carezcan de asistencia médica directa, trabajando en estrecha cooperación con los organismos internacionales de salud, médico del país y la red policlínica y hospitales nacionales.

Como expresó nuestro Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores en su visita a Honduras, también ofrecemos a estos países 500 becas al año para formar médicos en Cuba. Lógicamente condonamos la deuda que pudieran tener con nuestro país algunos de los países afectados, y creo que el señor Regnier habló de este problema. Para tal efecto, con una propuesta muy concreta, proponemos que la FAO debe llevar a cabo un proyecto de semillas con la urgencia que requiere sembrar en este mes de noviembre, coincidiendo su ciclo de producción tal como tenemos información con la terminación de los productos existentes de la ayuda de emergencia y además brindar asistencia técnica especializada para la prevención y preparación para enfrentar situaciones de desastres naturales.

Pedro Arturo SEVILLA GAMERO (Honduras)

La realidad es que mis palabras de esta mañana eran específicas para agradecer a la FAO y a sus organizaciones por la ayuda humanitaria que nos dieron en el preciso momento que la necesitamos. La FAO ha actuado con rapidez ante la emergencia, su tarea principal será, sin embargo, mucho más importante en el futuro inmediato cuando los países afectados emprendamos la tarea y proyectos de rehabilitación y reconstrucción de la capacidad de producción agrícola. En ese sentido, las capacidades y experiencia de la FAO y su conocimiento de las realidades cada uno de los países, serán de gran utilidad en apoyo al esfuerzo internacional, multilateral o bilateral que se espera se concrete en la medida en que lo ameritan las consecuencias del desastre. Confiamos en que la FAO y los países donantes realicen un esfuerzo de coordinación para que la experiencia técnica de la Organización sea plenamente utilizada en la preparación y puesta en marcha de los proyectos de rehabilitación y reconstrucción de la capacidad productiva de la agricultura de Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador.

La ayuda del Programa Mundial de Alimentos a Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador ha sido estructurada en tres fases: primero, como mencionó el señor Representante de Cuba, la fase de emergencia inmediata, el PMA puso a disposición de los cuatro países afectados la existencia de alimentos de los proyectos que actualmente está realizando este organismo en estos países, lo que permitió atender de inmediato y de manera oportuna y urgente a las poblaciones más afectadas; segundo, aprobación de una operación regional de urgencia para las víctimas del huracán en los cuatro países, esta operación por un costo total del PMA de 58,4 millones de dólares permitiría atender a 1 125 000 personas durante un período de seis meses. Un apoyo decidido se ha recibido por parte de los Gobiernos de Canadá, Francia, Estados Unidos, Italia, Japón y se espera en los próximos días recibir otras contribuciones para la efectiva puesta en marcha de esta operación de urgencia; tercero, un documento para la rehabilitación y reconstrucción será presentado a la Junta Ejecutiva del Programa Mundial de Alimentos en su

sesión de enero de 1999, un proyecto regional orientado a la rehabilitación y reconstrucción de los cuatro países afectados en el área.

Por último, el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) está revisando los programas existentes en los cuatro países de manera tal de ajustarlos a la situación cambiada por el huracán. En tal sentido se han reforzado los contratos introduciendo cambios que permitan favorecer los componentes de infraestructura social, autoconstrucción, energía eléctrica, puentes, caminos, agua, letrinas que impliquen obra completa de restructuración siempre con la filosofía participativa de inclusión de las municipalidades y beneficiarios de los proyectos en las zonas seriamente afectadas. Para los proyectos que están en discusión se han asignado 100 000 dólares adicionales. Para 1999 el FIDA tiene programados cinco proyectos nuevos: dos para Honduras, uno que estamos negociando casualmente a partir del día de mañana y que finalizaremos el jueves para ponerlo en proyecto en 1999; un proyecto para Nicaragua, otro para Guatemala y otro para El Salvador, por un total que oscila entre los 75 y 100 millones de dólares, de los cuales el FIDA incorporará elementos que permitan atender la nueva situación que se ha venido a crear como consecuencia del Huracán Mitch.

Se anunció que el Reino Unido creó un fondo multilateral de 10 millones de dólares para el servicio de la deuda de los países afectados y Dinamarca creó un fondo de apoyo a Honduras a través del BID. Así como mencioné nuestro agradecimiento esta mañana al Gobierno y pueblo de México, también quiero agradecer en nombre de estos países afectados por el Huracán Mitch, a los Gobiernos de Italia cuyo Ministro de Cooperación estuvo con nosotros la semana pasada; al Gobierno de España que con la presencia del Príncipe Felipe de Borbón y la condonación de la deuda externa a nuestros países, ha sido uno de los países que más nos ha ayudado; al Gobierno de Holanda igualmente por la condonación de la deuda externa; al Gobierno del Japón, en primer lugar, por los 2 mil millones de yenes que está aportando al PMA por la ayuda alimentaria y por toda la ayuda que su gobierno nos ha dado en la reconstrucción de puentes y carreteras; al Gobierno de Taiwán, que también nos ha ayudado como país donante; a Francia cuya ayuda, como lo mencionó su Representante, ha sido de gran valor y mucho más la visita personal del Presidente Chirac a nuestros países; Alemania, cuya Ministra de Cooperación Externa estuvo con nosotros y ha estado cooperando de manera valiosa en los cuatro países.

También hemos tenido el apoyo y sugerencia de varios países para darnos el apoyo en el Club de París cuando tengamos que discutir lo de nuestra deuda externa. A Austria, Brasil y Cuba que también condonaron la deuda externa de nuestros países, a todos los hermanos sudamericanos, Argentina, Chile, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Brasil, que se hicieron presentes con ayudas de toda naturaleza, a la República Dominicana que aún azotada por el Huracán George, nos ayudó en este preciso momento. A Australia y Nueva Zelandia que han ofrecido a través de su Representante en nuestro país ayudarnos a rehacer nuestro hato ganadero, a los Estados Unidos especialmente por los 24,8 millones de dólares que está aportando al PMA y que también tuvimos la visita de la señora Primera Dama de la Nación, señora Clinton, de la señora Gore, esposa del Vice-presidente, de la señora Bush, esposa del ex-Presidente George Bush, quienes personalmente dieron el apoyo al pueblo y Gobierno de Honduras y de Centroamérica.

Con esto, yo quiero agradecer en nombre del doctor Mario de Franco, Ministro de Agricultura y Desarrollo Forestal de Nicaragua; del ingeniero Ricardo Quiñones, Ministro de Agricultura y Ganadería de El Salvador; del Licenciado Mariano Ventura, Ministro de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación de Guatemala; del doctor Esteban Brenes, Ministro de Agricultura y Ganadería de Costa Rica, y del ingeniero Manuel Miranda, Ministro de Agricultura y Desarrollo Agropecuario de Panamá y en el mío propio, de nuestros presidentes, de nuestros gobiernos, a todos los países del mundo que nos han dado la mano y que estén seguros que esa ayuda se va a tratar con las manos limpias, se va a tratar con toda sinceridad y con el cariño que todos ustedes nos han dado.

CHAIRMAN

The Delegate of China has asked to exercise his Right of Reply.

Right of Reply
Droit de Réponse
Derecho de Réplica

LI ZHENG DONG (China)

The Chinese Delegation would like to make a formal statement regarding Item 21. Our delegation noted with serious concern the erroneous reference to Taiwan, China, as "the Government of Taiwan" in the intervention made by the delegate of Honduras under Item 21: FAO's Reaction to Recent Natural Disasters. In accordance with the relevant UN Resolutions, Taiwan is an integral part of the People's Republic of China. The Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole and only legitimate Government of China. Therefore, Taiwan should not be called the "Government of Taiwan".

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados)

Let me first congratulate you and other officers on your elections and commend the Director-General on his characteristic concern and initiative in having this very important Agenda Item brought before us. I regret that we are debating it so late in the afternoon and I was, in fact, tempted to request that we defer it until tomorrow but it occurred to me that, since it is so urgent and important, we cannot say that we want it to be done *mañana*.

I would like to thank FAO for the very rapid assistance to my colleagues in the Caribbean and also to thank the donor agencies for their very rapid assistance. I would also like to empathize with the Caribbean and Latin American countries which have been affected adversely: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Belize (which has not been mentioned so much), Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico (which have been affected by one of the two hurricanes, either George or Mitch), Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, and also our colleagues from the Asian countries, Bangladesh, China and so on who have been actually affected by one form of disaster or the other.

In the Caribbean we have an active volcano in Montserrat. We have not mentioned it at all, I believe, because Montserrat is not a Member of this Organization but it is a very serious devastating natural disaster. An earthquake has driven a lot of people from the island, and has had a very devastating affect on the agriculture in that country.

It seems to me, in spite of the very rapid responses, we need to further develop those systems for even more rapid response. For example, I noticed that some projects are still being considered by FAO some months after the disaster has taken place. It seems to me that there is a need, and I have suggested this before, for some standing fund which will be administered by a very small committee (a committee of two or one), the Director-General and perhaps the Head of the Regional Office in the countries involved and with very careful consultations with the Governments so that there can be an even more rapid response than we currently have. Each time there is a disaster it seems as though we go and ask for contributions. I am not saying this should not be done, I know very often that people do not contribute until there is a disaster at hand, but it seems that we must find ways of putting some systems in place for not only having a fund but perhaps stockpiling of equipment and so on and information under constant review which would help us to respond very, very rapidly to disasters that take place.

My delegation also considers that with the "opportunity" presented by the disasters, we should try hard to reconstruct our agricultural systems in a way that we would not be so likely to have the kind of damage that we have had in the past. I know that sometimes certain things cannot be avoided but certainly in terms of drainage, in many of our countries, the systems can be improved to avoid the flooding that we have sometimes had.

There are other matters relating to crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry for which we could find ways and means of trying to avoid certain devastation in the future, for example, early warning systems and certain systems to sensitize the public. One of the problems we have in many of our countries is that the public very often do not believe that there is going to be a disaster. In

Barbados we have a saying that God is a Barbadian so He is not going to be likely to damage His own country. I think lots of countries have that attitude, that we are not going to get hurt, it is not going to happen to us but it can really happen to almost any country. Who would have thought that Rome could have been so cold? I always had this view of Rome as being a very warm place and luckily I was told, "You had better come prepared," and I did come prepared, and I am quite warm now but, in fact, who would of thought? So, there are certain things that you do not think can happen to your own country and countries that feel that it cannot happen to them, but it is gradually happening to all of us. This should inspire all of the countries to really contribute to the fund that the Barbados delegation is suggesting that we set up - some sort of standing fund with money, equipment, airplanes, or, at least, access to them, so that we could respond very quickly.

In some of our countries, we need a lot of help with the legislation affecting reconstruction. I mentioned the World Trade Organization and wondered how I would fit that in. Certainly, as the countries grapple with a new arrangement in terms of trade and so on, if we can get that right, it may in fact help our systems. We need a lot of help with legislation and assistance, and guidance when having to deal with more developed countries in terms of trade and agricultural projects. If not, what will happen is that a lot of developed countries will come out on top even in a situation where the developing countries should, in fact, be prospering.

Take the whole question of subsidies, which is an issue that we know is a problem in that there is a rule against subsidies. Some countries, however, are subsidizing in a way that it does not look like subsidy. We have to get to understand some of those ways of doing things so that we can be within the law, and still do what has to be done if our systems are going to improve. I am making the point that as we face disasters, we must look at ways of restructuring in a way that would help us to be better off after the disaster than before, like rebuilding a city after a devastating fire.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

After listening to the introduction on the matter by Mr Régnier, and after studying the document CL 115/INF 24, the Indonesian Delegation welcomes the FAO initiative and such important information on FAO's response to lessen the effects of natural disasters.

It seems to my delegation that FAO is very concerned that the natural disasters occurred in Member Nations. This means that FAO will make every effort to help the suffering of people in those countries.

Based on this information, my delegation would like to associate itself with the FAO appeal to donors to assist those suffering countries in all Regions.

Finally, my delegation appreciates and continues supporting to the FAO's responses in these matters in the future.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

While the Africa Group has not really had the opportunity to study the information provided in detail, I would like, in the capacity as Chair of the Group, to join in expressing deepfelt solidarity and moral support to all the countries which have recently experienced the devastating consequences of natural disasters. We would like to commend FAO and the World Food Programme on their prompt response to the recent natural disasters, and especially recognize the relevance of having this issue discussed at this level today.

While these responses will deal to some extent with the immediate crisis, the longer-term strategy to avert the impact of the more fundamental damage done to the infrastructure and agricultural capacities of these countries requires our serious attention.

I would therefore like to encourage all who are able to respond to the disasters to do this within both contexts, and to do so generously. The significance of the existence of capacity within FAO to respond in terms of using the TCP and its working partnerships, especially with the World Food Programme, demonstrates the importance of these instruments now and for the future.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I am speaking as Chairman of the Group of 77 and on behalf of my delegation.

Our Council is meeting in its Hundred and Fifteenth Session, following a number of natural disasters in a number of continents in the Southern Hemisphere, affecting the developing countries. While the Council is meeting it is indeed a pleasure to see the Director-General throw his full weight behind these regions out of his belief in the role of the Organization as a Specialized Agency of the UN System mandated, according to its Constitution, to exert every effort to ensure food and agriculture for all peoples in the world.

The disasters in most of the countries in the stricken regions, e.g. Bangladesh and Sudan a few months ago and the countries of Central America, in particular El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala about a month ago, have led to the flooding of their strategic stocks of cereals and to the flooding of cultivated areas. Most of the agricultural infrastructures have been destroyed, not to speak of the loss of lives and displacement of tens of thousands of people. The overall loss, as reported in the newspapers and mass media, in the agricultural sector alone is estimated to be over US\$ 4 billion.

The donor countries have been forthcoming and generous in their pledges or in their direct support at bilateral levels. We have followed the situation here in FAO, and the Emergency and Relief Operations Division has made preparations to contribute to mitigating the consequences of those disasters before diseases spread, and before the numbers of the poor and disadvantaged increase.

We look forward to FAO being the focal point for other Specialized Agencies active in this field and to being the centre of attraction of resources from donors and the donor community. There is no doubt in our mind that, through those joint efforts and through the cooperation of the international community, we will be able to overcome those crises in order to bring the smile back to the faces of the children who bear the brunt of the dire consequences of these disasters.

This is my first intervention and, at the beginning, I did not wholeheartedly congratulate you and your Vice-Chairmen and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee for your well-deserved appointments. We also welcome Mr Régnier, the Assistant Director-General.

We are certain that the Council will adopt serious and active-oriented recommendations that will be of assistance to our peoples.

Ignacio TRUEBA JAINAGA (Observador de España)

En primer lugar, como es la primera intervención de la delegación española, quiero felicitarle y desearle grandes éxitos al frente de esta sesión 115^o del Consejo, felicitación que hago extensiva también a los miembros del Comité de Redacción. Como país de la Unión Europea, quiero suscribir y apoyar la declaración que ha hecho la presidencia austríaca con anterioridad sobre este Tema. Pero desearía hacer algunas consideraciones particulares centrando mi intervención en los daños provocados por el Huracán Mitch.

Quisiera hacer una breve intervención sobre dicha catástrofe. Esta catástrofe ha supuesto en América Central y principalmente en cuatro países del Grupo de América Latina, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador, un asunto grave. Este argumento es particularmente difícil pensando en la seguridad alimentaria de estos países y no puede dejar indiferente a este Consejo. Por ello nos alegramos que pueda ser aquí tratado, circunstancia que sin duda podrá contribuir a paliar las graves consecuencias del huracán. Además de las pérdidas de vidas humanas, que siempre resulta la tragedia más grave, tenemos que lamentar la destrucción de una gran parte de los países afectados con infraestructuras que quedan en un estado parecido al que había hace veinte años, junto con la pérdida de las cosechas, y todo ello pone en peligro la seguridad alimentaria a corto y medio plazo. Según las informaciones que tenemos, la primera cosecha que se podrá recoger será en el próximo mes de agosto o septiembre. Quisiera indicar que la tragedia del Huracán Mitch ha sido sin duda el hecho que más ha conmovido a la opinión pública

española, la movilización popular fue y esta siendo enorme. La población española ha sentido grandemente esta catástrofe y en este sentimiento ha participado también tanto el Gobierno Español como el Príncipe de España visitando estos países en los momentos difíciles.

La ayuda española se ha concretado en los siguientes puntos: una ayuda de emergencia de 11.6 millones de dólares con cargo al Gobierno; por otra parte, ayuda alimentaria bilateral a través del PMA por un importe de 7 millones de dólares; el envío de un barco del ejército español, el Galicia, con equipos de ingenieros, 1200 toneladas de ayuda de emergencia y tres helicópteros; la condonación de la deuda bilateral de Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador y Belize; y un paquete de ayuda financiera exento de intereses por un importe de 117 millones de dólares. En total, estamos hablando de cifras que se acercan a los 200 millones de dólares.

Pero el panorama actual de los países hace que la ayuda inmediata no sea suficiente, como el Excelentísimo señor Ministro de Agricultura de Honduras ha declarado recientemente. Se hace necesaria la rehabilitación y el desarrollo, la rehabilitación de la capacidad productiva agrícola y ganadera de forma que la seguridad alimentaria a medio y largo plazo quede asegurada. Por ello alentamos a la FAO y a sus Países Miembros a proseguir sus trabajos, especialmente a través de su sistema de información y alerta de forma que no tengamos que lamentar otra vez daños similares en esa o en cualquier otra parte del mundo. Pero la actividad de la FAO y sus Países Miembros no debe quedarse allí. En estos momentos se impone también la participación en la reconstrucción de las infraestructuras y la reconstrucción de la capacidad de producción, de modo que la población y la economía de estos países sufra lo menos posible.

Nuestro país desea también contribuir en esta segunda etapa y desde aquí mostramos nuestros deseos de que la seguridad alimentaria de estos países quede asegurada en el futuro. Quiero informar también que recientemente una misión conjunta de España y de la FAO, al amparo y en el desarrollo precisamente del proyecto de seguridad alimentaria con un presupuesto de 2 millones de dólares para esta zona, ha realizado sus trabajos en Nicaragua, en Honduras y en Guatemala, identificando proyectos y posibles soluciones de cara al futuro.

Considero que la FAO, el PMA y el FIDA tienen una magnífica ocasión para trabajar juntos, para coordinar sus esfuerzos, no sólo en Roma sino en el campo, codo con codo con las administraciones públicas de los países afectados, las ONGs, los grupos sociales, los agricultores, los beneficiarios y los grupos meta. Esta ocasión no debe ser desperdiciada y el papel rector de la FAO debe hacerse notar.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for Philippines)

Coming from a country which experiences an average of 25 winds per year, of which four to five will be very destructive, the Philippine Delegation would like to express its sympathies to other countries suffering from the same natural calamities as we do.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Director-General for adding this Agenda Item to our deliberations.

While we do appreciate the reactions made by the Secretariat to natural disasters like these, we believe that, based on our experience, preparations for such occurrences are much better than reacting to such occurrences. In this regard, we would like to commend the tremendous and heroic efforts exerted by the people and military of China in combatting what could have been a worse situation in the floods that ravaged them recently. It serves as an exemplary model of meeting natural disasters head on, and in the spirit of self-reliance.

There is very little that the Secretariat can do in reacting to a natural disaster such as what struck China, Bangladesh and Central America. Technical Cooperation Programmes are dwindling and they are limited to around US\$250 000, literally, a teeny-weeny drop in the bucket of a hurricane. Provision for vegetable seeds and tools will take a long time to germinate. We believe that the usefulness of this Organization, as far as natural disasters are concerned, lies in sending out investment missions to make project preparations, and in fitting in the natural element with the project appraisal, proposal and design. In this way, the FAO projects being executed, aside from

meeting the requirements of gender, vulnerable poorest of the poor, environmental and other variables, should also be able to withstand natural calamities or prevent losses resulting from potential natural calamities.

Finally, we share in the sentiments that the Organization should play a more active role and better coordinate efforts with other international organizations in the immediate aftermath to natural disasters.

TRAN MINH QUOC (Observer for Viet Nam)

First, I would like to take this opportunity to express once again the deep sympathy and support of the Vietnamese Government and people to the Government and peoples of the Central American countries that were hit by Hurricane Mitch, as well as other countries that have suffered natural calamities.

We also express high appreciation for the initiative of the Director-General of FAO in including this Item on our Agenda, and we also commend the Secretariat and Mr Régnier for the Report that has been presented to us.

We wish that the people of those stricken countries will enjoy large international assistance in overcoming the effects of the disasters. As a frequent victim of national calamities ourselves, we understand that the full damage and destruction caused to material and human lives can hardly be fully measured in a short time, and that will take decades for a full recovery. That is why we support the appeal of the countries in the Region for stronger coordination between FAO and other organizations such as WFP, IFAD and others in dealing with the aftermath of the disasters. We support the call for stronger linkages between the provision of emergency aid and the implementation of projects that provide a longer-term solutions to disaster-struck areas.

CHAIRMAN

This should conclude our discussion on this item and we thank Mr Régnier for his introduction and all the Members that have made their intervention.

Meeting rose at 18.45 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 45

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.45 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
THIRD PLENARY MEETING TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
24 November 1998

**The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

II. WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION (cont'd)**II. SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE (suite)****II. SITUACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACIÓN**

(continuación)

5. Report of the Twenty-fourth Session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, June 1998) (CL 115/11)**5. Rapport de la vingt-quatrième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (Rome, juin 1998) (CL 115/11)****5. Informe del 24º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (Roma, junio de 1998) (CL 115/11)****5.1 Follow-up to the World Food Summit (CL 115/11 paras 11 to 30; CL 115/INF/19)****5.1 Suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation (CL 115/11 par. 11 à 30; CL 115/19)****5.1 Seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación (CL 115/11 párrs. 11 a 30; CL 115/INF/19)****5.2 Other Matters Arising out of the Report****5.2 Autres questions découlant du rapport****5.2 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el Informe****CHAIRMAN**

The Third Plenary Meeting of the Hundred and Fifteenth Council will convene now. I would like to remind all delegates that meetings of the Council would begin at 9.30 a.m. So tomorrow we will also convene at 9.30 a.m. instead at 10.00 a.m.

Our first Item this morning will be the Report of the Twenty-fourth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, with a follow-up to the World Food Summit and Other Matters Arising out of the Report.

We now move to Item 5 of our Agenda, Report of the Twenty-fourth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, including Item 5.1 on Follow-up to the World Food Summit and Item 5.2 on Other Matters Arising out of the Report. The relative documents are CL 115/11 and CL 115/INF/19. This latter document concerns the preparation of the Special Ministerial Conference on Agriculture and Small Island Developing States. Document CL 115/11, before us sets out how the Committee reiterated the need to make concerted efforts to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action, emphasizing that future reporting and monitoring should be seen in this context. It also agreed to monitor the World Food Summit Plan of Action in clusters of commitments, starting in the year 2000 and completing two full cycles of the entire Plan of Action before the mid-term review in 2006.

The Committee also gave the CFS Bureau specific mandates: to work with the Secretariat on the development of indicators and reporting formats for monitoring progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action, and to hold consultations and review innovative approaches to the identification of thematic issues as background for the decisions to be taken by the Committee at its future sessions.

I would like to ask the Secretariat whether it wishes to make any additional introductory remarks to this Item. If not, then the floor is now open for interventions and debate.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for the document that was submitted to us and we would like to draw your attention to the need to stress the following aspects in the document.

The food situation is still very critical in many developing countries. We require considerable efforts in order to ensure food security in many developing countries and the realization of objectives of the Committee on Food Security in order to reduce by half the number of people who suffer from under-nutrition by the date indicated. We have to stress the importance of the

Programme of the Committee on Food Security and Self-Cooperation, and Egypt in this respect has begun to implement activities in cooperation with two African countries, Tanzania and Djibouti.

We are currently making the necessary arrangements for cooperation with five other countries. We also feel that we could use food aid and deplore the use of food as a means of political pressure. We also stress the need to have closer cooperation between FAO and the other international organizations which are concerned with this matter, as well as the need to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action. We also have to assess the lessons learned from the *El Niño* phenomenon, as well as the way we can face this type of phenomenon in the future.

As for trade, trade and food products are essential in order to attain food security. We have to work in order to provide developing countries with the technical aid that they require, and also to create the necessary infrastructure through the exchange of information and technology transfers so that they can work within a true partnership and take advantage of the world trade system. We also have to work to ensure that information systems on food insecurity, or the lack of food security, as well as on malnutrition in the world, are in place.

As for the preparation of reports in the future, this is also a very important point. These are the most important points that we should stress in order to reach food security.

Mme Rollande LEDUC (Canada)

Le Canada aimerait profiter de ce point à l'ordre du jour pour annoncer qu'il a lancé son Plan d'action pour la sécurité alimentaire à l'occasion de la Journée mondiale de l'alimentation, le 16 octobre dernier, conformément à ses engagements du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Je crois comprendre qu'une copie a été remise à chacun des membres du Conseil.

Le Plan d'action pour la sécurité alimentaire est le fruit des efforts déployés par le Groupe consultatif mixte composé de représentants des gouvernements et de la société civile. Ceux-ci ont réalisé un consensus sur les mesures à prendre pour s'attaquer aux problèmes de l'insécurité alimentaire.

Le Plan d'action du Canada renferme les sept engagements du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Il prévoit des activités et des initiatives nationales et internationales pour relever les nombreux défis de la sécurité alimentaire et, notamment au niveau domestique, ceux qui consistent à assurer un approvisionnement d'aliments sains et nutritifs, à trouver des façons écologiques et économiques durables d'accroître la production alimentaire et faire la promotion des programmes de santé, de nutrition et d'éducation.

Le Plan d'action appuie également, au niveau international, la lutte contre la pauvreté, point de mire du programme canadien d'aide au développement. Il nous exhorte également à contribuer à surveiller de près nos activités de développement, tant au niveau communautaire que sur la scène internationale, pour voir si elles contribuent réellement à la sécurité alimentaire, surtout à celle des populations les plus vulnérables.

Dans le but de mettre en œuvre le Plan d'action du Canada pour la sécurité alimentaire, le Gouvernement du Canada a décidé de créer un bureau qui aidera à coordonner les activités prévues dans le Plan, à les surveiller, et à rendre compte. Nous pourrions ainsi mieux évaluer les efforts que nous déployons pour réaliser les objectifs du Sommet. La contribution de la société civile au processus de consultation nous a été cruciale dans la préparation du Plan d'action canadien. C'est la société civile qui, en quelque sorte, a joué le rôle de catalyseur dans la détermination des enjeux prioritaires du Canada et des mesures nécessaires à incorporer dans le Plan. Sur ce point, compte tenu du rôle décisif que la société civile a pu jouer au sein du développement du Plan d'action canadien, nous croyons qu'il est important de prôner l'adoption de modalités visant à favoriser une participation efficace des principaux intervenants de la société civile aux travaux du CSA.

Ms Mary Ann KEEFE (United States of America)

Two years after the World Food Summit, the international community has made progress in improving the response to food insecurity. However, much more remains to be done. We congratulate the many nations that have begun their work to meet the World Food Summit goal.

The United States is pleased to report that we are nearing completion of our National Action Plan on Food Security. In October, our draft Plan received the endorsement of our Civil Society Advisory Committee and we hope to release it to the public early next year. The Plan was drafted by an inter-agency group of US Government representatives in collaboration with the Advisory Committee whose membership is drawn from all sectors of civil society, including NGOs, private industry, academia and the native American Indian Cherokee nation. The diversity of both government representation and civil society representation has been essential in making our Plan one that can speak for the nation as a whole. We recognized, as did the Summit Plan of Action, that food security is not accomplished by Governments alone, but by individuals, households and communities of all types working with Government toward a common goal.

In the same way, it is the combined efforts of all of our individual countries that will ultimately achieve the goal of reducing by half global undernutrition. So we urge those countries that have not yet seriously undertaken the work of responding to the World Food Summit to do so.

The United States accepts the report of the June meeting of the Committee on World Food Security submitted to FAO, and concurs with its findings.

We are concerned that, to date, the issue of the role of civil society in the Committee on Food Security has not been given enough attention. We urge the Secretariat to remember its commitment to place the issue of broadening civil society participation on the agenda of the next Committee on Food Security meeting. We also suggest that the Secretariat seek the advice of the Committee on Food Security Members on the content of the discussion paper that will be distributed on the subject prior to the next meeting. We need to recognize the important role of civil society in the follow-up to the World Food Summit, and determine the most appropriate way to engage them in that process.

Our ability to monitor progress toward the World Food Summit goal is going to be key in meeting that goal. One of the most important tools that we have to measure this is the report that countries make to the Committee on Food Security. We appreciate the good work that the Committee has done thus far to improve the reporting guidelines, but we want to ensure that the reports remain focused on specific actions taken and discuss real outcomes measured against anticipated results, rather than listing good intentions. It is also crucial that the timing of reports be structured at long enough intervals to allow time to demonstrate the results of new programmes or policies. We also agree with the Committee's Report that it would be wise to re-schedule the Committee on Food Security meetings so that in even years they are held after the FAO regional meetings. This would enable us to take advantage of country reports presented at the regional meetings.

It is often said "If it doesn't get measured, it doesn't get done." If we want to eventually eliminate hunger, we need to measure and map where it exists and identify and monitor the factors that contribute to both chronic and transitory food insecurity on global, national and household levels. The Food Insecurity Vulnerability Information and Mapping System, known as (FIVIMS), has the potential to be a powerful tool to do all of these things and to provide policy makers not only with data, but with decision-making instruments and guides for both short and long-term interventions. Because of this, we appreciate the efforts to make the national FIVIMS system more responsive to the needs of the countries that will implement it.

However, FIVIMS is still in the early stages of planning and progress needs to be accelerated. Particularly important will be determining which data systems already exist, both at the international and national level, what FIVIMS can do to improve the coordination, accessibility and usefulness of the existing data and which, if any, additional data need to be collected. This has not yet been done, and is a necessary first step to determine where the System should focus its

efforts. It is also essential, if we hope to use the System to its fullest potential, that in addition to providing information on existing hunger and food insecurity, FIVIMS also include data that contribute to our understanding of structural vulnerability to food insecurity. If properly designed and implemented, FIVIMS will be a new tool to link food systems and development and build long-term sustainable food security. We hope that a concrete Work Plan will be implemented to guide the process of bringing FIVIMS from possibility to actualization in a timely fashion.

Thank you for this opportunity to give an update on the United States' progress on our Action Plan on Food Security. In conclusion, I would like to offer my congratulations to Canada on the successful completion of their Plan.

Mme Ivone DIAS DA GRAÇA (Gabon)

Intervenant pour la première fois, la délégation gabonaise tient à vous exprimer sa satisfaction de vous voir présider notre 115ème session et vous souhaite plein succès. Nous tenons également à féliciter les trois Vice-Présidents élus ainsi que le Comité de rédaction et son Président. Nous remercions le Secrétariat de la FAO pour la préparation des documents qui nous sont soumis au cours de cette session.

Avant de nous consacrer à l'examen du rapport de la sécurité alimentaire proprement dit, nous voudrions faire, avec votre permission, quelques courtes remarques concernant la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture, n'étant pas intervenus sur ce point. Nous déplorons l'augmentation du nombre des personnes sous-alimentées, notamment en Afrique subsaharienne. Nous tenons à exprimer notre préoccupation devant le nombre de pays en développement confrontés à une crise alimentaire aiguë, qui est passé de 29 en novembre 1997 à 40 aujourd'hui. Nous notons que cette évolution négative est, en grande partie, attribuable aux phénomènes climatiques *El Niño* et *La Niña*. Nous réitérons notre solidarité, déjà exprimée par l'Afrique du sud au nom du Groupe africain, aux pays d'Amérique centrale durement touchés par le Cyclone Mitch.

Nous ne pouvons nous empêcher devant les dernières catastrophes dites naturelles de nous poser des questions et de nous intéresser aux débats d'experts internationaux sur ces questions climatiques. Il apparaît que si, jusqu'à présent, les scientifiques adoptent une prudence légitime et estiment que la série des catastrophes qu'a connue notre planète ces derniers mois n'est pas une preuve du changement climatique, divers groupes d'experts sont, eux, arrivés à la conclusion suivante: le désordre climatique éventuellement provoqué par l'activité humaine et, en l'occurrence, par la consommation des pays les plus développés, touchera d'abord les pays les plus pauvres qui subissent déjà la situation profondément inégalitaire que nous savons. A cet égard, rappelons que la Convention sur le climat, adoptée à Rio en 1992 et discutée ce mois-ci à Buenos Aires, lie pour la première fois environnement et économie et engage les pays co-signataires à poursuivre l'objectif d'une limite à la consommation matérielle chiffrée à Kyoto en 1997.

Dans le rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire soumis à notre examen, nous trouvons au paragraphe 29 le rappel par le Comité de la décision de Marrakech relative aux mesures concernant les effets négatifs possibles du programme de réforme commerciale sur les pays en développement les moins avancés. Peut-être serait-il opportun pour la communauté internationale de reprendre le concept contenu dans la décision de Marrakech et d'élaborer le même type de mécanismes d'aide aux pays démunis, à savoir: les pays présentant la plus forte consommation, elle-même liée aux plus grands bénéfices économiques, pourraient venir en aide aux pays les moins développés affectés par les désastres climatiques pour faire face ensemble aux périls communs de désastre écologique.

En ce qui concerne le reste du rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale qui nous est soumis, nous voudrions faire les observations suivantes: nous l'appuyons dans son ensemble et reprenons à notre compte l'appel qui y figure à déployer tous les efforts pour la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action, et pour tenter d'atteindre l'objectif de la réduction de moitié du nombre de personnes sous-alimentées d'ici 2015. Nous soulignons également dans ce rapport la nécessité pour les pays en développement de continuer à bénéficier d'un appui technique et financier international, et

faisons nôtre l'appui apporté par de nombreux délégués au Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire et à la coopération Sud-Sud. Dans cet esprit, le Gabon vient de participer à un premier échange de vues avec la FAO, au cours duquel mon Gouvernement a manifesté son intérêt pour la mise en œuvre du Plan national du Programme spécial et s'est déclaré prêt à prendre les engagements de contrepartie organisationnels et financiers pour sa réalisation. Dans ce cadre, le Gabon a demandé à la République populaire de Chine de pouvoir bénéficier de son expérience en matière agricole à travers la participation à ce programme d'experts chinois, et nous lui réitérons ici cette demande.

Nous tenons à remercier la FAO et son Directeur général, Monsieur Jacques Diouf, pour l'appui apporté au Gabon dans son effort pour un redressement agricole et la recherche d'une situation nutritionnelle adéquate de la population gabonaise dont les carences s'expriment plus en termes de qualité que de quantité. Nous appuyons particulièrement ce qui est décrit au paragraphe 20 de ce rapport, à savoir la poursuite de la coopération entre la FAO et le Haut commissariat des Nations Unies aux droits de l'homme pour la mise en œuvre de l'objectif 7.4 du Plan d'action concernant le droit à une nourriture adéquate et le droit fondamental de chacun d'être à l'abri de la faim, et demandons au Secrétariat de tenir les Pays Membres au courant de l'évolution du débat sur la teneur et les moyens d'application de ces droits. Nous appuyons les suggestions contenues dans le paragraphe 26. Enfin, nous tenons à appuyer particulièrement les paragraphes 27 à 29 du rapport et notamment les demandes faites au Secrétariat par le Comité d'entreprendre une étude de faisabilité sur les moyens d'inciter les pays en développement à utiliser des instruments de gestion des risques pour parer aux fluctuations des cours, d'une part, et d'autre part, celles d'envisager une formation dans ce domaine. Comme nous l'a montré la grave crise financière survenue depuis, ces propositions du Comité demeurent plus que jamais pertinentes.

Pour terminer, nous appuyons la recommandation du CSA concernant la tenue de ses sessions, qui devraient avoir lieu les années paires, après que toutes les conférences régionales aient achevé leur travaux.

LIANG QU (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all I would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing this excellent document. The Chinese delegation noted that since the World Food Summit, FAO has done a large amount of work to carry out WFS follow-up activities. FAO has re-adjusted its work priorities and prepared agricultural development strategy towards 2010 for many countries. FAO has made the necessary arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the World Food Summit Rome Declaration and Plan of Action at national, regional and international levels. Also "Telefood" has been organized along with World Food Day celebrations.

All this has played an active role in enhancing the social awareness of food issues, mobilizing interest from all social sectors to encourage them to make their contribution to the realization of the World Food Summit objectives. Meanwhile we have noted that since the World Food Summit, all Governments have undertaken substantial actions to achieve food security based on the situations in their own countries, and progress has been made. However, we should be mindful of the fact that we are faced with a very heavy task if we are to decrease the number of malnourished people by half by the year 2015. This requires all governments and the international community to make greater efforts and take practical measures to accomplish the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

China is an agricultural country with a huge population. The food security situation in China will have a great impact on the global food security situation as a whole. Therefore, the Chinese Government has always set great store by food security issues and considered feeding its people as our top priority. We intensified our efforts and formulated a series of policies after the World Food Summit aimed at strengthening and protecting our agriculture, increasing agricultural investment, improving production conditions so as to provide enough food and clothing to one fourth of the world's population. We have made good progress of course.

China is a country with a severe shortage of land and water resources, the average availability being one-third and one-fourth, respectively, of the world average. Also there are still 50 million people living in abject poverty. We shall always in addition to uphold our policy of maintaining agriculture as our top priority in our national economic development, further promoting rural reform in accordance with socialist market economy principles, stabilizing management mechanisms based on the family contractual responsibility system, increase agricultural investment through multiple channels, promoting agricultural infrastructure development, protecting ecological environment; adhering to the strategy of invigorating agriculture with the assistance of education, science and technology; and achieving agricultural growth through technical progress and training of labourers to ensure sustainable agricultural development.

It is very necessary to monitor and evaluate the progress of World Food Summit follow-up activities. We wish FAO to give more technical assistance in this regard to developing countries, and believe that the active involvement of civil society in CFS work will be conducive to implementing World Food Summit follow-up activities. However, the intergovernmental nature of CFS should be taken into consideration when it comes to civil society's participation, and relevant rules and regulations should be followed.

J. STUPPEL (United Kingdom)

I would like to ask that the floor be given to Austria, so that he can speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

The European Community and its Member States welcome the Report on the Twenty-fourth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, and take this opportunity to draw your attention to those aspects which we consider to be of importance.

In respect of the follow-up of the World Food Summit we would like to see the following points taken into account. First, the effective and meaningful implementation of the Plan of Action has to be recognized as being of central importance. Second, the responsibility for the implementation of measures under the Plan of Action should be kept primarily within national competence, whereas the responsibility for the monitoring of the implementation should rest with the international bodies concerned.

The Committee on World Food Security should have a keyhole in coordinating such monitoring. The CFS should use innovative approaches in setting its agenda. The dramatic issues which the Committee is invited to consider should be identified, taking into account the contributions of the FAO Technical Committees and those on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Commodity Problems as well as the contributions of the Regional Conferences. Member Nations and NGOs should also be encouraged to contribute to this process. The identification and discussion of dramatic issues within Regional Groups may improve the functioning of regional conferences making them more attractive in their contents and in their vitality of discussion.

We appreciate that many countries have already taken measures to formulate National Plans of Action in compliance with a participatory approach and that the contributions of the private sector and NGOs have been included in their deliberations. A large number of participants to the Summit, Governments, European Community, UN Agencies, international organizations and regional bodies, have already forwarded their implementation reports to the Secretariat. A large number of reports are however still awaited. We therefore encourage the timely forwarding of the implementation reports in accordance with the proposed reporting format.

It is very important that all available information be given to the Secretariat, also with a view to enabling it to develop a set of food security indicators. This will enable us to have a complete picture of the process leading to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Allow me to express Uganda's appreciation to the Director-General of FAO, Dr Jacques Diouf, for his personal effort in following up the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Director-General has this year toured several countries, mostly developing countries, which are affected by malnutrition, poverty and hunger, to see for himself how they are progressing on food security. I bring my Government's appreciation as one of the countries which was visited by the Director-General in July 1998. Uganda wishes to thank the Director-General and the FAO Committee on Awards for bestowing on our Vice-President, Her Excellency Dr Speciosa Wandira-Kazibwe, the Ceres Award which she received on this visit. Awards were also given to our President and to the Foreign Minister.

Uganda's Vice-President, herself a farmer, is a mobilizer for food security, but most importantly, she is the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. She is the first lady to receive this award in Africa and one of the four in the world. We are grateful to FAO for this distinguished recognition. As Her Excellency promised in her acceptance speech, Uganda is determined to keep her name off the list of food-deficit countries, and aims at having net export of food so as to help out the less endowed countries.

My President, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, was this year one of the two leaders who shared the global award for the most distinguished persons who contributed to the fight against hunger. This double achievement for the two topmost political leaders of Uganda, from two independent bodies, is a sign of confidence and performance of the National Resistance Government.

Allow me once again this year to emphasize the three major goals set by the Government to bring development to Uganda and to eradicate poverty and food insecurity. These are:

- The provision of free Universal Primary Education. Through this policy, enrolment for primary education has risen now from about 2.5 million children in 1996 to about 5.4 million pupils in 1998. I wish to reiterate the inseparable relationship between illiteracy and poverty, and therefore affirm that education is a prerequisite to sustainable food security and poverty eradication.
- There has been increased investment and industrialization in Uganda. The Government has deliberately provided incentives for investors to set up industries and, by so doing, offer employment which contributes to food security. Agro-processing is being promoted to provide a better market for produce and a better earning for the farmers.
- Modernization of agriculture as a follow-up to the World Food Summit commitment.

During the visit of the Director-General to Uganda, the Modernization of Agriculture Plan was presented to him. The Plan has already been approved by the Cabinet. Local councils and civic leaders have been sensitized to the Plan. A national campaign for food security based on the strategies embodied in the Modernization of Agriculture Plan is being carried out, spearheaded by the Vice-President who is also the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The campaign has been waged district by district, and will eventually move from the grassroots administrative level to ensure farmers' awareness. The goals of the Modernization of Agriculture Plan are substantiated by earlier policies of privatization and liberalization. In the Plan, we aim to transform small-scale, conservative subsistence agriculture into a small-scale, commercial modern agriculture that enhances food security and profit.

Through privatization, parastatal bodies are now managed by private investors. In the case of agricultural processing, liberalization has increased the farmers' income and stimulated production. The major example in Uganda's case is milk production and processing where there are several private entrepreneurs processing pasteurized milk, butter, cheese and other milk products. Uganda, which depended on powdered milk donated by World Food Programme in 1986, today produces nearly 600 million litres of milk per year and is now managing collection, processing and redistribution of milk.

Our Plan of Action, embodied in the Modernization of Agriculture Strategy, aims firstly at provision of water for agricultural production. Having noted that the climate is changing, we have adopted a method where water is vital. We have therefore embarked on a mobilization exercise to encourage each household and farm unit to harvest water and preserve a water source that can be used for livestock and/or irrigation. Uganda is grateful to FAO, which has offered a TCP under the Special Programme for Food Security to set up pilot irrigation sites and develop a bankable project for the country-wide irrigation programme. Arrangements are underway to solicit South-South cooperation, and I will be glad if Member Nations here with expertise will cooperate with Uganda, and can acknowledge my call.

Research and extension farmer linkages have been recognized as one of the key factors in the development of a food security programme, and my Government has set aside US\$ 4 million to employ an extra 808 extension graduates at sub-country level to assist farmers.

Targeting zonal commercial production by providing better planting and stocking materials has been identified as vital, and the Government has made an emergency injection of US\$ 2 million to initiate gardens and nurseries of high-yielding varieties of bananas, horticulture, coffee and oil seeds, so that farmers will be able to access them, improve their incomes and also their food security. A programme to zone out the country for different crop and livestock production is underway under the auspices of DANIDA, to whom we are grateful. This programme will ensure tradable quantities of particular commodities and therefore will remove the constraint of marketing. It will also stimulate rural agro-processing, and result in better prices for the farmer.

Food security cannot be attained if crop and animal production is threatened by diseases, pests and parasites. This is therefore one of the major areas of focus in the Modernization Strategy. In the livestock sector, we embarked on a nationwide Rinderpest and contagious bovine pleuropneumonia vaccination campaign. Uganda was threatened by outbreaks of Rinderpest from three neighbouring states. The vaccination campaign has totally kept the disease outside our borders, and we are grateful to the European Union who through OAU/IBAR provided funds for the two disease vaccination. We also thank FAO for an emergency TCP that also assisted with this exercise.

This year, Uganda wants to tackle the growing problem of tsetse fly. Much of Uganda is today infested with the tsetse fly and meaningful animal production will undoubtedly be curtailed. A project supported by the European Union called "Farming in Tsetse Control Areas" is underway, but is of limited scope. We appeal for more international support to fight this zoonotic disease that reduces income from livestock, affects food security and weakens or even kills people.

Disease control in the crop sector continues. Last year, while addressing the FAO Conference, I expressed my fear that the coffee industry was facing a catastrophe caused by the coffee wilt disease. At that time, that disease had just started to enter Uganda from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Today, that disease has spread into quite a few districts of Uganda and is worrying. It will undermine people's income and lead to food insecurity. Coffee is the highest foreign exchange earner of Uganda, forming 56 percent of the earnings. The economic base of Uganda could therefore dwindle unless this disease is arrested through control or through development of resistant varieties of coffee. I am, once again, calling upon researchers and research-supporting bodies to focus on coffee wilt disease with a view to finding a solution to its increasing spread in Africa. In addition to coffee wilt disease there is also a growing danger of coffee rust. I understand Uganda will benefit from support through the Common Fund for Commodities. We are grateful.

Uganda continued to adhere to the World Food Summit Commitments by celebrating this year's World Food Day. We thank FAO for choosing a very appropriate and befitting theme, "Women Feed the World". We in Uganda have recognized the importance and indispensable role of women in food security. In our new Constitution, promulgated in 1995, affirmative action programmes were established and a mandatory one-third of all membership of councils was allocated for women so that they could participate in decision-taking. Indeed, in Uganda the Vice-President is a woman.

In Africa and other developing countries, women comprise more than 80 percent of the agricultural work force and yet they work on land that traditionally belongs to men. This erodes their confidence, since men can, at their own will, sell off land destabilize the entire family. In order to empower women and ensure stability of family life and food security, and provide for a fixed income, the 1998 Uganda Land Act provides women with security of land. A man cannot sell off land on which there is a matrimonial home or on which the family ordinarily resides or derives livelihood without the consent of his spouse. These provisions have greatly motivated women in Uganda, and will improve food security prospects.

Finally, Uganda will next month, December 1998, host the Technical Consultative Paris Club Meeting. This forum of the most powerful economies of the world throughout the developing world is a welcome event to my country. Uganda hopes that this will result in more support for the developing countries in general, and for Uganda in particular. We look forward to support that empowers us to fight poverty, and bring sustainable food security based on production.

Kamal PANDE (India)

We have looked at the paper from the viewpoint of developing countries for whom, balancing the imperatives of economic growth with considerations leading to equity, through the implementation of creatively-designed programmes aimed at the alleviation of poverty, remains a major concern. Ensuring global self-sufficiency, hand in hand with household-level food self-reliance, is another responsibility all nations are required to discharge towards their people. Agricultural development achieves the twin objectives of ensuring the availability of food gains through increased productivity, as well as access to it by the vulnerable sections of the society.

Moreover, given the price fluctuations in international commodity markets, self-reliance in agricultural production is a *sine qua non* of food security in highly populous countries, such as India.

It is pertinent to note that the developing world has contributed 68 percent of the incremental production in cereals globally in the 1980s, thanks to the efforts of millions of small farmers. The effects of trade liberalization, arising out of the Uruguay Round Agreement, on resource-poor farmers of developing countries, are, of course, a serious concern. The Committee on Food Security, at its last meeting, also recalled the Marrakech decision on measures relating to the possible negative effects of the reform programmes on the least-developed and net-food importing developing countries.

My delegation, therefore, wishes to reiterate our feeling that food insecurity, caused by trade liberalization, is not confined merely to the net-food importing countries, but to all developing countries, many of which are primarily agrarian. Agriculture in these countries is not practiced as a commercial activity, in the sense it is understood in the developed countries. The majority of the rural population of India is engaged in subsistence farming, which is a major instrument for ensuring food security in the country. Well over 50 percent of our rural population comprises farm labour and small farmers, who are net consumers of food items. Withdrawal of domestic support to the agricultural sector would certainly reduce the ability of the small and marginal farmers to access farm inputs, defeating all attempts at enhancing production and productivity. It is a well-known fact that their ability to respond to market changes, by way of shifts in the cropping pattern, or controlling the volume of production, is very limited.

The numbers which may be affected in this manner are staggering. In India alone, there are over 18 million farming families who farm on less than 2 hectares of land. These holdings constitute more than 70 percent of the total area under cultivation.

My delegation wishes to highlight the strong correlation between trade liberalization and the possibility of an adverse impact on food security. It is precisely for this reason that the Agreement on Agriculture in the WTO calls upon the Members to examine the actual experience of trade liberalization, and its impact on certain non-trade concerns, notably food security.

We, therefore, fear that the absence of an analysis of the effects of trade liberalization on food security, and the FAO Secretariat Report on the assessment of food security, will considerably diminish the value of that Report, especially when viewed in the context of food security being an integral part of the mandate of this Organization.

It will be recalled that this point was made during the meeting of the Committee on Food Security held in June 1998. In spite of the general agreement evident in that forum, we are disappointed that this has not been included in the Report of the Committee. My delegation, therefore, wishes to reiterate the need to include an analysis of the effects of trade liberalization on the food security of nations, in the Report on the Assessment of Food Security, presented to the Committee on Food Security.

Let us not forget what the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, said; 'Even God did not appear before hungry men except in the shape of a morsel of food'.

Nahi SHIBANI (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

At the outset, I should like to express our deep appreciation for the great efforts deployed in order to increase food production, particularly the great efforts deployed by the Secretariat of FAO under the leadership of the Director-General. FAO is following up on the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the World Food Summit in 1996. It is clear that this activity is greater than any previous activity in this field.

I am not going to go into detail on points already discussed, specifically the importance of implementation and the difficulties faced in this process, but I will deal in brief with the following points.

With regard to what Syria is undertaking, I'd like to say that my country has paid great attention to the implementation of the commitments and the Summit Plan of Action. Committees have been established and have laid down timetables for implementation, and we have submitted to FAO a report on this action. We are also promoting the "Telefood" programme, in coordination with the FAO Office in Syria.

We developed some practical plans, in order to intensify the activities of farmers through continued follow-up, and through the optimum use of seeds and fertilizers, as well as other inputs. Thus, farmers have been able to increase their production at a rate of two percent when compared to other farmers. Here we would like to say that the link between researchers and farmers had a great impact on the increase of productivity.

Syria has also started to implement new rural development projects in many sensitive areas of the country. Some of these projects have been funded by IFAD and by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

Moreover, Syria has given utmost priority to the agricultural sector, and the productivity rate has increased at a rate of three to seven percent per year. Farmers from poor rural areas and women are playing a major role in the development efforts.

We were expecting to achieve greater rates of development, but there have been some factors beyond our control. Seventy-eight percent of the agricultural surface of Syria depends on rainfall. The rainfall seasons are varying and different. On the other hand, great parts of Syria are still being occupied by the Israelis, and these surface areas are not taken into account. The population in these areas, who have been displaced, are considered to be among the poorest in society. They are suffering from unemployment, after having been food producers for a long time.

The increase of food production is a common responsibility of states and international organizations. Accordingly, we cannot achieve a great increase in production in these occupied areas. In the light of this instability, we need to work together to achieve the legitimacy of these areas in order to increase the food production.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the Secretariat for this excellent paper submitted to us, and for its cooperation. We do support paragraphs 27 and 28 of this document, and we would like to

support those who have asked for strengthening the role of FAO, so that it can give further technical assistance to the countries requiring it.

Mohammad MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh)

The World Food Summit of 1996 has given hope to millions around the world that concerted international actions will be undertaken to eradicate hunger and poverty in the world. The world leaders made commitments to take urgent measures to reduce the number of the undernourished to half the current level by the year 2015. A Plan of Action to realize those commitments has also been agreed upon.

We believe that the main responsibility to implement those measures falls squarely on national Governments. Most of the countries, including Bangladesh, in accordance with the commitments made in the Summit, have undertaken measures to reorient, where necessary, their policies and programmes. But a review and evaluation of the progress made so far will help us to identify the good practices that can be emulated by others and to shun those practices that are not so helpful.

My delegation is in full agreement with the issues raised by the Committee on World Food Security in this Report. The present format of country reports highlights the policies and actions that have been undertaken to realize the World Food Summit objectives, but it does not give very clear indications as to the degree to which the Summit objectives are being fulfilled in concrete terms. Thus, it is imperative that not only actions, but outcomes, are also given due consideration. The reason for this is that in many instances, policies do not necessarily translate into concrete results.

In view of the above, it is vital that the Inter-agency Working Group that has been set up to establish the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System develop, within a specified timeframe, broad-based and user-specific food security indicators to enable us to assess performance and to take the necessary corrective measures.

The World Food Summit Plan of Action outlines strategies and steps that are required to be implemented to alleviate poverty. However, this is not an easy task in less developed countries, given the constraints that beset the economies in general, and the agricultural sector in particular. The supply response in less developed countries is constrained mainly by two factors. The first of these is frequent natural occurrences as such floods, drought and pests, which give rise to price increases and yield uncertainties. The second regards structural impediments, including low productivity technologies, low level of human capital, unequal access to productive resources, poor infrastructure and market institutions and inadequate provision of credit.

These problems are too formidable to be tackled by less developed countries alone, given their poor financial and technological capabilities. Thus, increased technical and financial assistance are required to be made available to these countries. Special attention should be given to support initiatives that are aimed at building mechanisms designed to cope with nature-induced devastation of agriculture and food production systems and to improve the existing low levels of technology in agriculture.

In concluding, we would like to reiterate the important role of FAO's Special Programme for Food Security and South-South cooperation in this regard. FAO's initiative in persuading the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank and the Regional Development Banks, to reorient the focus towards agricultural development and food production areas, is also praiseworthy. The reality today in many areas, especially in South Asia, is that Green Revolution technology, in many cases, has reached a saturation point, and its contribution to environmental degradation is well-known. Indeed, the time has arrived for a second Green Revolution, which must incorporate an environmentally-friendly, productivity-improving technology, to lead agricultural development in the next millennium. FAO can take the initiative in this regard, especially in cooperation with CGIAR institutions.

Last, but not least, we believe FAO's cooperation with other UN Agencies and bilateral cooperation institutions will also be vital in implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Paimin SUHARNO (Indonesia)

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing the comprehensive document CL 115/11.

First of all, with regard to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, we wish to report that Indonesia has established inter-departmental coordination mechanisms and also taken some measures to formulate a national Plan of Action. One of the measures was carried out through the National Seminar on Food and Nutrition held quite recently.

Regarding the *El Niño* phenomenon and the Asian financial crisis, our delegation supports the suggestion of the Committee for having an analysis of the impact of *El Niño* and the crisis on food security. We hope some coping mechanisms could be recommended for further implementation.

Our delegation also fully supports the development of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) as a management tool in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. We understand the difficulties in drawing conclusions on the reports submitted by the member countries on the progress of the implementation of the WFS PoA. Therefore, we agree with the Committee in assessing the reporting format and in developing reliable and consistent indicators for more thorough analysis of food security.

Indonesia has not yet selected the permanent focal point for the development of FIVIMS. For the time being, the Secretariat General of the Department of Agriculture could act as a temporary focal point.

We would like to report that the FIVIMS-related activities in Indonesia are going on now, coordinated so far by the State Ministry of Food Affairs. The system, called "Food and Nutrition Early Warning System", includes three components: first, the monitoring of the food situation and nutritional status of the population up to district level; second, the nutritional status of children under five (pre-school) at village level; and third, the development of a food and nutrition information network.

The food security indicators used in the system are food availability and food accessibility. Household access to food has been improved through more efficient food marketing, including food distribution. The government intervention through a pricing policy has also contributed to the betterment of economic access to food. For example, to mitigate the negative impact of the economic crisis on food entitlements the Government of Indonesia, through the National Logistics Agency (BULOG) has distributed and subsidized rice to the targeted group of more than seven million families as of November 1998, under the Social Safety Net programme.

For additional information, we realize that in recent years our rice self-sufficiency and food security have been rather discouraging. The productivity has reached the levelling-off stage while agricultural land is converted into industrial and housing estates. Rice production shortfall has also been exacerbated by *El Niño*, by the wide spread of pests and diseases as well as by the reduced fertilizer application due to the economic crisis.

The consumption of rice, however, has steadily gone up in line with the increase in the income and the population of the consumers. Staple food imports require large amounts of foreign exchange which is prohibitive under the economic crisis, therefore boosting domestic rice production is economically and politically important.

Some of the efforts to attain rice self-sufficiency are as follows: first, to refrain from cheap rice price policy (i.e. commodity subsidy), which penalizes the producers; second, to improve productivity and cropping intensity through the application of science and technology; third, to utilize potentially productive lands such as dry land, swampy peat land and tidal land; fourth, to

ensure the smooth supply of high quality seed and other inputs; and fifth, to improve the provision of capital and production credits to the farmers.

Finally, to further address the issue of food insecurity, the Ministry of Agriculture has just launched a project called the "Improvement of National Food Security through the Empowerment of Farmers". The project will upgrade the quality of intensification programmes, increase the harvested area through new agricultural land cultivation, as well as improve cropping intensity. The project is expected to boost rice output by approximately five million tonnes in addition to the growth of production of maize, soybean, wheat and livestock.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Mi país desea expresar su beneplácito por los resultados del 24º período de Sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria. Consideramos que en esa Reunión se lograron importantes avances respecto a la instrumentación del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre. En este contexto deseamos reiterar el compromiso de México con dichos acuerdos y señalar que se trabaja en la implementación de lo convenido en el Plan de Acción, en especial a través del Programa PROGRESA que aborda el problema de la inseguridad alimentaria desde una perspectiva amplia, incluyendo los elementos de salud y educación.

Deseamos señalar la necesidad que en el contexto del seguimiento de los compromisos adoptados por la comunidad internacional en el Programa de Acción de la Cumbre, la Secretaría perfeccione los indicadores cuantitativos y cualitativos para evaluar los avances en el cumplimiento de dichos compromisos, incluyendo los aspectos relativos al acceso a los alimentos que consideramos son fundamentales y no limitarlos exclusivamente a la vertiente de la disponibilidad. Esperamos, así mismo, en relación con los formatos para la presentación de informes, que éstos sean sencillos, flexibles y efectivos y que estos documentos incluyan datos que contengan información de fácil lectura, de tal forma que permitan evaluar si se ha avanzado hacia la meta propuesta para reducir a la mitad el número de personas con hambre en el mundo para el 2015. También creemos que los informes deberán abordar aspectos relacionados con los esfuerzos realizados en contra de la desnutrición y tomar en consideración no sólo los avances, sino también los retrocesos que se registren en los países.

Si bien, la agenda de la próxima Reunión del Comité de Seguridad ha sido decidida, nos gustaría que en esa ocasión se otorgara un énfasis particular a los efectos que las catástrofes naturales que han tenido lugar recientemente sean analizadas desde la perspectiva de la seguridad alimentaria. Por otro lado, nos gustaría que la Secretaría nos proporcionara una información sobre los resultados y la manera como incidirá en los trabajos de la FAO la reciente consulta que tuvo lugar la semana pasada, aquí en Roma, sobre el derecho a la alimentación.

Por último, deseamos señalar nuestra aceptación en relación a la propuesta para que los períodos de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria se realicen en los años pares.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

The critical importance of the CFS, within our responsibility as FAO, to give effect to the World Food Summit Plan of Action is highlighted by the substantive elements reflected in the Report under discussion.

I am informed that the last meeting was not only productive, but also reflected the fact that there is a much broader set of common concerns and approaches among Member Nations on the issue, and I believe Council should note this positive development.

The Africa Group generally endorses the contents of the Report, and I would like to highlight a few aspects which are of significance to our continent.

We recognize the difficulty of reaching finalization on the appropriate framework for preparing report and analysing progress being made with regard to the attainment of world food security. This complexity, however, should not deter the Committee from capturing progress, identifying

constraints and proposing more focussed interventions for the attention of FAO in terms of our established targets of reducing the undernourished people in the world.

Regarding developing a consistent set of indicators to be used for a more thorough and disaggregated analysis of food security, I wish to emphasize the fact that this is indeed basic to the successful assessment and monitoring of progress in Africa. I would, therefore, like to suggest that a special focus on improving the capacities of countries within problem-ridden Regions be made, in the process of developing and applying the indicators.

Naturally, this implies ensuring commensurate resources and strategic support measures are made available to countries which are resource-limited because continued and targeted technical and financial support to developing countries will go a long way in enabling FAO to monitor and quantify with greater precision progress towards attaining world food security.

South Africa notes progress with regard to the interrogation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action Objective 7.4, relating to the right to adequate food and continues to express support for initiatives in this regard. This process is actually mirrored at the country level. The active human rights culture being developed in South Africa necessitates this.

As we progress in our quest to resolve the world food security situation, as FAO we should continuously strive for an improvement in our understanding of the nature of the problems and the interventions we use to resolve these. In this regard, I wish to bring to the attention of Council the importance of the proposals contained in paragraph 24, as well as the linked paragraphs for African and other developing countries. Time is not under our control and I propose some urgency in giving effect to developing capacities of developing countries to deal with risk management.

Finally, I wish to commend the Director-General of FAO for the theme used in our worldwide commemoration of World Food Day this year. In South Africa the theme "Women Feed the World" coincided with the end of our national focus on a Year of Science, Engineering and Technology. This overlap gave us the opportunity to bring attention to the plight of the decline in resources being made available for agricultural research and the opportunities that exist for using indigenous knowledge and food for enhancing the development agenda. This resulted in a heightened awareness in our country on the need to work for food for all for life.

Finally, of interest to African development, I wish to reiterate a point made earlier about the need for FAO to enhance the precision, availability and distribution of critical information necessary to improve decision-making, which impacts on food security and reducing the vulnerability of poor communities.

While we note the progress being made in our capacities to predict problem areas, we need increasingly to be able to anticipate the impact on nutrition and poverty levels.

Thomas NDIVE MOKAKE (Cameroon)

First of all, I would like to say that it is usually the practice when the Chairman of a Region speaks that a country delegate takes the floor, because we just listened to South Africa as the President of the African Group. However, since I have been given the floor I think I better make good use of it, because we are in a democratic society.

What my delegation would like to draw to the attention of the Council is that measuring progress in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action does not only require qualitative assessments but, most importantly, quantitative assessments. Consequently, my delegation welcomes the development and operationalization of FIVIMS, and are supported by the United States delegation. However, national agricultural surveys and statistics are equally vital so as to constitute baseline data in enhancing an effective monitoring process on the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action because, without such baseline data we cannot see if we are making progress or not. The proof is that sometimes FAO asks for statistics on developing countries and they hardly get them because this exercise has not been performed. Experience has shown that the conduct of agriculture surveys and statistics is very costly to developing countries

living with economic crisis. Their priorities are to feed the people and to provide a basic infrastructure. So these surveys are very costly and expensive.

Some of these countries have not conducted any such surveys since the early 1990s due to economic hardships. In fact, in some of these countries, since USAID withdrew assistance in this venture no other donor has assumed this responsibility. We cannot be talking about food security when we do not have baseline data to compare the implementation of the Plan of Action.

Finally, the FAO Secretariat should produce a calendar formulating the implementation process, bearing in mind that the next FAO Regional Conferences will be in the year 2000. This calendar will enable developing countries to seek international financial and technical assistance in order to carry out the agriculture surveys and statistics, and that would serve as baseline data.

To summarize, my delegation is appealing to international donor support to assist those developing countries that are in need to conduct agricultural surveys and statistics because this will form the baseline data that will be used to monitor the progress that they are going to make in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action at a country level.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Luego de tener lugar en el mes de junio el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, llegamos al 115º Consejo de la FAO, sin lugar a duda el evento más importante de nuestra Organización en 1998, razón por la cual nuestra delegación desea expresar algunas consideraciones en este punto de vital importancia.

Señalaba al principio la Reunión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria por ser la instancia adecuada para encauzar los acuerdos de la Cumbre, su Plan de Acción y su Declaración Política. La Cumbre representó el último gran esfuerzo de este siglo y sus acuerdos comprometen los primeros años del próximo por cumplir con la vieja promesa de "alimentos para todos" y la nueva, de lograrlo de manera sostenible. No es por tanto, la culminación de un proceso sino el comienzo de una voluntad política ya manifestada al más alto nivel, como palanca impulsora para concebir e implantar una estrategia de seguridad alimentaria más exitosa que en el pasado. Es una carrera con meta que ya arrancó. Ahora nos corresponde combinar lo teórico con lo práctico, pues la población continúa creciendo y en mayor medida se incrementa el número de hambrientos en el mundo.

Es necesario un esfuerzo internacional. Millones de personas necesitan de la cooperación y la colaboración internacional. No queremos recordar el resultado de la Conferencia de 1974 ni los efectos de la década perdida, ni tampoco el incumplido acuerdo de destinar el 0,7 por ciento del producto nacional bruto de los países desarrollados para la asistencia oficial para el desarrollo, ratificado en 1995 en la Cumbre de Desarrollo Social. Estamos aquí todos los presentes para que aquello no ocurra.

Hace un tiempo encontré un trabajo del Director General que se refería al Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria de enero de 1996 y cito textual: "Los miembros del Comité pidieron que la Declaración Política fuera más contundente e hiciera hincapié en la importancia de que el compromiso fuera inmediato y las medidas se adoptaran con carácter urgente". Subrayo esto último, pues nos lleva a reafirmar que ante un problema y una necesidad sólo existe un camino: buscar una solución.

Esta introducción nos permite instar al Consejo a que en el marco de sus funciones y reglamentaciones proponga medidas urgentes para cumplir los acuerdos emanados de la Cumbre. Propuesta que no es necesario emprender como tarea inmediata por que no es posible dilatar su ejecución y nos referiremos muy concretamente a uno de los temas más analizados y debatidos en la Cumbre Mundial y finalmente aprobado. En la Declaración de Roma se precisó y cito textual: "Los alimentos no deberían utilizarse como instrumento de presión política y económica. Reafirmamos la importancia de la cooperación y la solidaridad internacional así como la necesidad de abstenerse de aplicar medidas unilaterales que no estén en consonancia con el Derecho Internacional y con la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y pongan en peligro la seguridad

alimentaria". En el Plan de Acción, compromiso 4, párrafo 37, al final se reiteró que habrá que abstenerse de aplicar medidas unilaterales que no estén en consonancia con las obligaciones de la Organización Mundial del Comercio.

No creo necesario retrotraernos a toda la argumentación presentada en la Cumbre sobre el Tema sino tan sólo hacer referencia a los acontecimientos que han ocurrido después de la Cumbre y que son de plena actualidad. En el 24º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria efectuado en el mes de junio se expresó en el Artículo 18 de su informe final que los alimentos no deberían utilizarse como instrumento de presión política y económica, y la necesidad de abstenerse de aplicar medidas unilaterales que no estén en consonancia con el Derecho Internacional y con la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y ponga en peligro la seguridad alimentaria. Por su parte, la 25ª Conferencia Regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe celebrada en Nassau, Bahamas, del 16 al 20 de junio de 1998, en su informe final, Artículo 47, rechazó el uso de los alimentos como arma de presión política y económica. Posteriormente, por séptima vez consecutiva, la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, el pasado 14 de octubre, bajo el título "Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico comercial y financiero de los Estados Unidos contra Cuba" adoptó dicha Resolución por 157 votos a favor y 2 en contra. Días después, el 26 de octubre, nuevamente la Asamblea General de la ONU, con el voto favorable de más de 80 países, pide la inmediata derogación de las leyes de carácter extraterritorial promulgado unilateralmente, exhortando una vez más a todos los estados para que no reconozcan o apliquen medidas coercitivas y leyes extraterritoriales impuestas por un estado de forma unilateral. Solamente se opusieron dos países, claro, los mismos países de la votación anterior.

Llamo la atención para que se observe que en cada votación de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas sobre este tema, se refleja cada vez más la tendencia hacia el rechazo casi unánime de la Comunidad Internacional y un aislamiento a semejante política que, no sólo es contra Cuba, sino que pone en peligro la estabilidad del orden internacional por su carácter extraterritorial en contradicción con las normas internacionales, pretendiendo dictar arbitraria e ilegalmente reglas para ser cumplidas por otros Estados. Pero aún más, los días 17 y 18 de octubre, en la Reunión Cumbre Iberoamericana que tuvo lugar en Portugal, los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de todas las naciones latinoamericanas junto a España y Portugal, al igual que en las cumbres anteriores, rechazaron de forma más amplia y categórica el bloqueo contra Cuba.

Estamos analizando un acuerdo de la Cumbre que fue aprobado por países bloqueados y bloqueadores, y subrayo, su no cumplimiento es una flagrante violación del mismo. Los elementos aportados han sido amplios y la paciencia de todos los colegas aquí presentes ha sido generosa. Pero solicito que se nos entienda, que sólo hemos manifestado hechos objetivos, sin otras consideraciones humanas que el sufrimiento de un pueblo que por más de 40 años se ha visto privado de alimentos, medicinas y medios de vida, que constituye un acto de extrema crueldad, circunstancias que en definitiva nunca doblegarán el valor y el coraje de Cuba, de sus mujeres, hombres y hasta sus niños que han hecho gala histórica de su firmeza y dignidad.

Suresh Chundre SEEBALLUCK (Mauritius)

My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for this paper which, together with the paper on the Status of Food and Security Situation around the world and the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

The Committee on World Food Security in its Report has made a number of suggestions and proposals, namely: the refining of format for reporting progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action recommendations; the development of a set of indicators for further analysis of food security; the need for FAO to devote additional resources for the development of Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping Systems; assistance to developing countries to increase their preparedness for the future WTO negotiations in agriculture; and the recommendations with regard to Small Island States.

My delegation urges FAO to give due consideration to all these suggestions.

With regard to Small Island States, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to support the suggestion made by the distinguished observer from Dominica yesterday, that FAO should not simply tie consideration of the problems relating to Small Island States with either COFI or COFO or COAG meetings.

The problems faced by Small Island States are indeed unique and cannot simply be lumped together in the same basket as those of all developing countries. Their smallness, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters and highly limited internal markets illustrate their uniqueness.

My delegation would therefore request FAO to make an additional effort to convene a special session to consider specifically the problem of Small Island States. There are about 40 such states around the world and some of them run the risk of simply disappearing from the world map in the future.

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Brasil en primer lugar desea indicar a las demás delegaciones que el discurso del Representante de Cuba merece una seria y cuidadosa reflexión. Brasil está realizando una política de seguridad alimentaria, a partir de la Cumbre de la Alimentación, quizás sin paragon entre todas las políticas de desarrollo que ha puesto en marcha desde los años 50, cuando de la creación de Brasilia y la puesta en marcha de los planes volcados hacia la industria y la energía, sea por su metodología innovadora por la cual la participación de la sociedad civil se reviste de especial importancia, sea por el alcance social de sus resultados que debe contemplar uno de los más vastos territorios nacionales en el planeta, la seguridad alimentaria moviliza hoy importantes recursos humanos y financieros. De esa forma, la Secretaría Ejecutiva del Programa Comunidad Solidaria en calidad de punto focal para el seguimiento de la Cumbre, ha coordinado la creación de un Comité Nacional para conducir los trabajos de discusión y elaboración de los reportes nacionales previstos para los próximos bienios. Así la ejecución del Plan de Acción adoptado en dicha Cumbre tiene en Brasil el aval de una estructura estrechamente vinculada en tres personas jurídicas y representativas del poder nacional: el Gobierno Federal que refleja la voluntad del pueblo que lo eligió y ahora lo reeligió, las entidades no-gubernamentales, empresariales, constituidas sin fines lucrativos, es decir las ONGs, y la Comunidad Académica. Por ello y con base en las decisiones del 24º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, el segundo informe brasileño concentrará su trabajo en los compromisos 1, 2 y 5 del Plan de Acción de Roma sin descuidar el del análisis del compromiso 7 y principalmente el inciso 7.4 que tiene que ver con la cuestión del derecho a la alimentación y que a nuestro juicio, deberá sobrepasar todos los demás documentos que podrán ser producidos en el contexto del seguimiento de la Cumbre.

Como ejemplo de la extensión de la política brasileña de seguridad alimentaria, Brasil inauguró el 17 de este mes de noviembre el Banco de Datos sobre Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional de los años 90, desarrollado por un grupo de trabajo multi-sectorial donde se encuentran, además del Gobierno, representantes del Instituto Brasileño de Estadísticas de la Universidad de São Paulo, de la Universidad de Campinas y de la ONG de nombre IBASE. Su sistema se compone de 50 indicadores agrupados en los siguientes 5 subsistemas: sociales, nutricionales, disponibilidad y acceso a los alimentos, programas sociales volcados a la alimentación y datos básicos. Teniendo en consideración la heterogeneidad del país, el Banco de Datos trata de ofrecer informaciones desagregadas por unidad de la Federación y por macroregión. Existen asimismo informes desagregados por género, edades e ingresos. Los datos más recientes disponibles en mi país sobre el tema están en el Banco, además pueden ser consultados a través de la Página Web del Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas Aplicadas. Su dirección electrónica se encuentra a disposición en nuestra Representación Permanente.

Finalmente mi delegación vuelve a repetir lo que ha ya propuesto en el último período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria: Brasil desarrolla por medios propios varios proyectos de extensión rural en el ámbito de su política de seguridad alimentaria. Dichos proyectos son dirigidos de forma diferenciada a las distintas regiones con sus diferentes características

climáticas, topográficas e hidrográficas. Todas ellas, sin embargo, adaptadas a las necesidades, posibilidades y limitaciones de un país en vías de desarrollo. La Empresa Brasileña de Investigación Agropecuaria, conocida en todo el mundo por su excelencia en el campo de genética agrícola y adaptación de semillas y plantas a dichas regiones, es el punto de apoyo principal a estos proyectos.

Mi país está preparado a transferir esas experiencias de resultados positivos ampliamente comprobados a los demás países en desarrollo. En la medida de lo posible ya lo ha hecho principalmente en países de Africa de idioma portugués a través de la Agencia Brasileña de Cooperación y también a través de determinados programas de cooperación de la FAO, como el PESA, en el cual se propone participar. Pero eso no es suficiente. Sabemos que una buena parte de los países desarrollados tienen en sus respectivos ministerios o secretarías de cooperación el principal brazo de sus políticas externas. Brasil les propone una sociedad A su disposición están nuestros proyectos, que los utilicen, y a nuestros técnicos o sus recursos financieros para su ejecución en países tan o más necesitados que el nuestro. Estamos seguros de que ahorrarían tiempo y dinero y participarían más eficazmente como patrocinadores, como promotores de un verdadero programa de cooperación Sur-Sur.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénegal)

J'ai la redoutable mission de vous délivrer une déclaration de notre délégation avec la bénédiction du Ministre d'Etat, Ministre de l'agriculture du Sénégal, présent avec nous. Il y a deux ans les Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement réunis ici même à Rome ont tenu un Sommet mondial de l'alimentation se fixant pour objectif cardinal de réduire de moitié le nombre de personnes sous-alimentées par rapport aux niveaux de 1996 et ce au plus tard pour 2015. La présence ici aujourd'hui d'une douzaine de Ministres chargés de l'agriculture souligne l'importance accordée par les Régions au suivi du Plan d'action du Sommet et à la réalisation de cet objectif. En effet, la Conférence générale de la FAO se réunissant tous les deux ans, notre Conseil constitue bien l'Organe directeur le plus approprié pour souligner le niveau politique de l'engagement de Rome.

Pour ce qui le concerne, le Sénégal a pris des mesures concrètes. En effet, dès le mois de juin 1998, par décret présidentiel mon pays a institué un Conseil national sur la sécurité alimentaire dont le Secrétariat est assuré par la cellule agro-sylvopastorale de la Direction de l'agriculture, Conseil présidé par son Excellence Monsieur le Premier Ministre et la vice-présidence étant assurée par le Ministre d'Etat, Ministre de l'agriculture.

Ce Conseil est l'Organe de suivi, d'évaluation au Plan national du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Ce Conseil regroupe la société civile dans ses diverses composantes, c'est à dire, tous les départements ministériels concernés par la sécurité alimentaire ainsi que nos partenaires au développement, impliqués à titre d'observateur. Par ailleurs, le Sénégal prépare activement son Plan national d'action grâce à la coopération de la FAO et des Pays-Bas qui devrait par la mise en place d'une stratégie de la sécurité alimentaire déboucher sur un Plan d'action. D'ailleurs, l'équipe de consultants à cet effet, est présente actuellement au Sénégal.

Nous souhaiterions féliciter le Canada, qui déjà a été un précurseur du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation avec la célébration du 50ème anniversaire de la fondation de notre Organisation, le Canada donc qui nous a déjà fait savoir avoir adopté son Plan d'action national. Nous espérons qu'avec l'aide de la coopération internationale nous pourrions également multiplier le nombre de pays qui auront adopté leurs plans nationaux et qui auront ainsi concrètement assuré le suivi du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

A présent, et comme vous le savez puisque cela a été montré en mondovision, le Sénégal a célébré à l'instar d'autres membres de la Communauté internationale la Journée mondiale de l'alimentation à travers *Telefood*, et cela a été l'occasion pour notre pays d'organiser une grande soirée de gala, présidée par son Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République et son épouse, suivie également d'un Mega concert. Nous pensons que ces actions de *Telefood* s'insèrent bien dans le suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation et constituent une source supplémentaire de revenus et de ressources pour la mise en œuvre de projets bien ciblés.

S'agissant à présent du rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale soumis par le Secrétariat, nous voudrions féliciter le Secrétariat pour la présentation de ce document fort utile et nous associer à tous ceux qui ont approuvé les conclusions majeures de cette session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. C'est parce que nous pensons qu'à chaque moment de notre action, nous devons avoir en vue la réalisation de l'objectif qui consiste à réduire de moitié le nombre de personnes sous-alimentées, d'ici à l'an 2015, objectif majeur et qui doit nous permettre avec l'aide du Secrétariat de voir à chaque moment où nous nous situons dans la réalisation de celui-ci. C'est pourquoi nous sommes d'accord avec les Etats-Unis que les rapports présentés au CSA doivent être ciblés pour permettre à chaque fois de mesurer l'écart qui nous sépare de la réalisation de cet objectif fondamental. C'est pourquoi, également, nous voudrions souligner la recommandation du CSA, qui consiste à demander au Secrétariat d'élaborer un cadre d'analyse pour nous permettre d'évaluer ces progrès - ce qui a été difficile lors de la dernière session du Comité.

Un autre outil utile pour l'évaluation de cet objectif se trouve être le SICIAV (Système d'information et de cartographie sur la sécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité). Pour ce qui le concerne le Sénégal également a désigné un point focal qui se trouve être la cellule sylvo-agropastorale dépendant de la Direction de l'agriculture du Ministère sénégalais de l'agriculture.

Autre élément important souligné dans le Rapport du CSA se trouve être l'objectif 7.4 du Plan d'action du Sommet concernant le droit à la nourriture adéquate et le droit fondamental de chacun d'être à l'abri de la faim. Nous nous réjouissons à cet égard de la consultation d'experts, la deuxième du genre, que le Haut commissariat aux droits de l'homme de Genève a tenu récemment à Rome même, en collaboration avec la FAO et d'autres institutions internationales, et à propos de laquelle nous espérons pouvoir obtenir ne serait-ce qu'un rapport oral lors de l'examen d'autres points de notre ordre du jour.

Permettez-nous également de souligner pour nous en féliciter le document du Secrétariat qui met en exergue les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre du Programme spécial de la FAO qui entre désormais dans l'histoire comme contribution majeure au suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. De même, nous nous félicitons qu'en suivi du Sommet, le Secrétariat prépare actuellement la Conférence ministérielle spéciale dédiée aux Petits états insulaires en développement comme pour marquer notre solidarité à ces derniers. Nous pensons que l'élan doit être maintenu, que le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation ne doit pas être un autre Sommet de plus, mais doit être pour nous une occasion de remplir notre mission historique par rapport à la majorité souffrante de l'humanité, que constituent nos pays.

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados)

The Barbados delegation is happy to see document CL 115/11, for which we commend all those responsible.

We wish to highlight, in particular, paragraph 17 of that document which reads: "Several delegates from developing countries emphasized the need for continued international technical and financial support to their efforts at implementing the WFS Plan of Action." I wish to emphasize that need for ongoing South-South technical assistance for what we call Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries.

The second part of that paragraph 17 also states: "Many delegates, mainly from developing countries, mentioned the important role of the FAO Special Programme for Food Security and of South-South cooperation." In this connection, a number of delegates emphasized the need for water harnessing and water harvesting, especially in Africa, in order to develop agriculture and reduce poverty and food insecurity.

Now let me say that I do not think it is only in Africa because, certainly in the Caribbean Region, water harvesting, or water harnessing, in many of our countries is a very important area. In fact, they say it is one of the areas of the future. In many of our countries, there is the perennial paradox of roaring rivers and, in some cases, small streams, rushing into the sea or into the ocean, pouring thousands of gallons of water, side-by-side with the almost annual incidence of drought

and water shortages and the attendant adverse effects on crops and livestock., and even on fisheries, where the rivers may dry up.

Let me thank the Director-General and FAO staff for their technical and other assistance to a very scenic area of Barbados, which is called a Scotland District. I suppose it is called that because it compares in beauty. I perhaps feel it is a little more beautiful than parts by that name in parts of the United Kingdom. I have seen both and I believe I am in a better position than my United Kingdom colleague to make the comment. But springs of pure, filtered water on clay soils cause slippages and provoke destruction of infrastructure, particularly roads and bridges, and undermine houses that sometimes fall down the sides of the hills.

There are plans to change this situation, including identifying and harnessing springs, to stabilize the soils, and also taking steps to transform this area into a tourist attraction with lakes, exotic birds, scenic trails and so on.

A related aspect of water harvesting regards irrigation. Again, I should like to thank the Director-General for provision, through FAO, of an expert who recently came to Barbados to assist with aspects of irrigation. In Barbados and in other countries in the Caribbean and Latin America and in other parts of the world, there is need in my experience for very basic information, knowledge and skills about irrigation for agriculture. Basic questions I have heard farmers ask were things like: How often do I need to irrigate? Is it once a day, twice a day, every day? How much water should I use? What about the types of soils and the types of crops?

Clearly, there is need for the sharing of very basic knowledge, perhaps through seminars, workshops, or on farms or smallholdings which provide actual examples of good irrigation practices. Written texts, couched in very simple language, and other visual materials like videos and films, which deal with practical, realife situations could be very useful here.

Let me now briefly mention, as I come towards a close, a few initiatives which we in Barbados believe can be very useful in enhancing food security, and which we have in fact been practicing. The Government of Barbados, like those of other Caribbean countries, continues to give financial and other assistance, like accommodation and staffing, to the 4H Club, which caters to the young and the young-at-heart. It is a group of young people to whom we give money, accommodation and staffing every year.

Secondly, incentives are being offered like direct grants and rebates on expenditure, for irrigation and other equipment to farmers, farmers' organizations and cooperatives. They include the Rural Development Commission, which is in its infancy - it is just over a year old. That Commission is now offering soft loans to farmers, many of them young people and many of them female. That same Commission has arranged training programmes for these loan applicants to assist them with money and other aspects of management. Consideration is being given in the Ministry of Agriculture to the secondment or release of technical staff members to assist the Rural Development Commission in evaluating applications for loans by farmers and persons wishing to become involved in agri-business, and in monitoring the use of funds by loan beneficiaries to promote cost-effectiveness.

The Ministry, with outside assistance, is actively involved in a review of the structure and function of the Ministry itself. We are doing some auto-evaluations to redefine roles and promote greater efficiency. We are even looking at the whole question of the suitability of the location of the Ministry. The extension services are also under very close scrutiny, to coordinate and focus the work of the various agencies involved. There are about four or five different agencies which are actively involved in this extension work, and very often there is not enough dialogue and coordination between them.

Finally, a National Consultation on Sugar, followed by a National Consultation on Agriculture, are being planned for next month. In fact, the dates have already been set, 9 to 11 December, in which all of the stakeholders will come together to provide inputs into discussions on all aspects of agriculture, from policy right down to practice in the fields. A similar National Consultation on Fisheries has already taken place, some time last week, with the assistance of an outside agency.

These are the initiatives taken by Barbados in its response to the follow-up to World Food Security and implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Apoyamos el documento preparado por la Secretaría y las conclusiones, dado que en su momento nuestra delegación contribuyó a los trabajos del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria.

Quisiera ser breve en cuanto a no ampliar la posición que mi delegación efectuó el día de ayer. Pero, necesariamente tenemos que rectificar algunos conceptos. En algún momento se ha asegurado en este Consejo, que los efectos de la liberalización del comercio afectaban a casi todos los países en desarrollo. Yo no sé que vivencias basadas en la realidad se tienen para efectuar este tipo de afirmaciones, pero en principio creo que deben estar equivocadas; y, afirmar también que la liberalización del comercio tiene efectos negativos en la seguridad alimentaria, los resultados de los últimos años parecerían desmentirlo. Debo recordar que, como bien cita el documento al párrafo 29, el Comité recordó el compromiso cuarto del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, señalando que el comercio es un elemento decisivo para alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria. Nuestro Presidente del Grupo Latino Americano también lo recordó en su discurso del día de ayer, donde afirmaba que la liberalización del comercio constituye un elemento fundamental en la seguridad alimentaria, por lo que existe la necesidad de continuar con el proceso de apertura de los mercados, eliminando subsidios a las exportaciones y evitando la discriminación en las condiciones de acceso a los mercados de los productos básicos agrícolas. Lo que reviste múltiples facetas en especial a través del uso de medidas zoo y fitosanitarias sin base científica que son usadas como barreras al comercio.

Ahora bien, en los documentos que hemos analizado ayer, cito en particular el CL 115/2/FO 63, se dice que los precios de muchos productos alimenticios y de otro tipo descendieron en los últimos meses. Yo agregaría años, por lo menos en los últimos dos o tres, causando dificultades económicas a muchos exportadores agrícolas, pero llevando también un alivio muy oportuno a los importadores netos de alimentos, especialmente los más pobres.

Podemos repasar en esos documentos, también, cuales son los precios de los principales productos y cómo descendieron en esos meses. Podemos examinar el trigo, el maíz, la cebada, el sorgo, etc. Ahora, este efecto de descenso de los precios en ningún momento en estos documentos está señalado por una causa directa o vinculante con la liberalización del comercio agrícola. Se podrá decir que a lo mejor la Secretaría no lo tuvo en cuenta, pero seguramente yo quiero creer que la Secretaría no lo tuvo en cuenta porque en realidad no existe esa vinculación directa entre la liberalización del comercio, después de la Ronda de Uruguay, y las realidades del día de hoy. Es más, salvo el pico pronunciado en el año 1995, donde todavía no habían entrado a surtir efecto los acuerdos de la Ronda, la tendencia de los últimos tres años ha ido en descenso; jugando siempre con dos factores, por un lado precios en descenso y por otro lado mayor oferta. Sin duda alguna, estos dos elementos son centrales para que la suficiencia alimentaria, como se proclama, tenga efectos en el largo plazo duraderos, de modo tal que en principio los datos de la realidad con la que contamos, salvo que existan aportaciones que desconocemos, indicarían que la liberalización del comercio ha tenido efectos positivos. Si nos referimos a los pequeños productores, la experiencia de mi país indica que muchos pequeños productores con horizontes de comercio más amplios pueden enfocar estrategias a través de alianzas asociativas, cooperación, cooperativas de empresas, etc., tienen un mercado más amplio. Los problemas para los pequeños productores, en general son de otro tipo y, como lo decíamos antes, están enfocados en aquellas barreras de acceso a algunos de los principales mercados. De modo tal que por lo menos en los estudios efectuados o en los informes económicos efectuados en los últimos tiempos no hay ningún elemento que prevea una vinculación directa entre la liberalización del comercio y la afectación de pequeños productores. Yo creo que en realidad es al revés, lo que debemos tener en cuenta son aquellos factores que limitan la posibilidad de crecimiento de los pequeños productores, es decir mercados más ampliados.

En los documentos hay dos elementos centrales que han influido en las últimas fluctuaciones a la baja de los precios: la crisis financiera en algunas regiones del mundo y los desastres naturales.

Estos se han conjugado negativamente para los precios de algunos productos. Pero, la liberalización no es el origen del problema de descenso de los precios. Por lo que vemos en la coyuntura de los últimos tres años, la crisis de los precios a la baja, son las crisis financieras y los desastres naturales. Por lo tanto, mi delegación, quiere ser muy enfática en cuanto a que este Consejo no recepte declaraciones que no tengan verdadera evidencia. Es cierto que la liberación del comercio puede tener efectos, si los queremos analizar tenemos que contemplar aquellos que dicen que son negativos, pero también aquellos que son positivos, pero con elementos ciertos, comprobados y no con meras frases declarativas.

CHAIRMAN

I will repeat we are very seriously behind in our time scheduling. Of course we are always willing to go into night if necessary. However, there are indeed alternatives. We certainly do not like to impose time limits for each delegation. We know that this also indicates the very strong commitment felt by Member Nations on the topics now under discussion. However, I would like to appeal also on another alternative, that is to submit the written statement and deliver a shortened version of the written statement by delegates.

Pedro PINTO da SILVA (Portugal)

I will be very brief but first I wish to congratulate you and to wish you all the best in your mandate as Independent Chairman of the Council. I wish also to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen and the Members of the Drafting Committee who were also elected.

As a Member of the European Union, Portugal strongly supports the declaration made by the distinguished representative of Austria on behalf of European Union Member States. In addition to subscribing to this joint position and in its quality as an elected member of the Council, Portugal wishes to call your kind attention as well as that of the Council to paragraph 27 of the Report of the last Session of the Committee on World Food Security.

As recognized in the present draft of the FAO Strategic Framework, financial instruments will play an ever-increasing role in the definition and implementation of food security policies both by agencies of the UN System, but also by Governments. Particularly vulnerable will be the poorest countries which will be the last to use sophisticated financial instruments to protect themselves from the risks of high volatility in world market prices, a volatility exacerbated in the last financial crisis.

The relative importance of this instability will always be highest in these countries, sometimes with effects that will have direct and disastrous bearing on the food security of the people, on their populations, on their men, their women, and their children. An initiative to give expertise in financial hedging instruments was introduced by my country, Portugal, and adopted at the last meeting of the Committee on World Food Security as paragraph 27 of the Report. We believe that this initiative has received wide support and no opposition at the last CFS, and we believe that it is a small, but fair and just, help to the less fortunate countries.

Mrs Batool QURESHI (Pakistan)

We commend the Secretariat for preparing a comprehensive report of the Committee on World Food Security. We would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council very briefly that Pakistan, as a follow-up to the World Food Summit, has prepared its national Plan of Action based on its requirements involving all sections of civil society, with particular emphasis on the role of women in contributing to food security. Recognizing the multi-dimensional nature of the problem, a critical input into this Plan is the Poverty Alleviation Fund established with support from multilateral and bilateral donors to administer small loans for community-based initiatives through non-governmental organizations.

I would also like to follow South Africa in commending the Director-General in the choice of the theme of World Food Day, that is "Women Feed the World", a role that is not recognized formally in the developing world. Pakistan, along with the rest of the nations, celebrated World Food Day emphasizing the role of women in contributing to food security. Celebrations were also

due as Pakistan noted an improved performance in its agriculture sector, particularly cereal crops, as a result of sound policy based on incentives and massive campaigns. In fact, 1998 was declared the Year of Feed in a bid to obtain self-sufficiency, and we are hoping we will have a good crop this year.

Pakistan has also started preparing projects under the Special Programme for Food Security with the help of FAO for which we are grateful to FAO. While welcoming the Report of the Committee on Food Security, we feel the concern that a couple of years down the line from the Summit the Committee is still grappling with reporting formats.

We wish to emphasize the inter-agency cooperation, and note with satisfaction the efforts made at the Headquarters level. We would like to stress that this cooperation needs to be visible at the grassroots level also.

Finally, we understand the importance of FIVIMS, and support the Committee's request contained in paragraph 32 of its Report.

Hirofumi KUGITA (Japan)

Regarding the follow-up to the World Food Summit, I would like to support the Committee's agreement under which it will start monitoring the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action in the year 2000 and will undertake two full cycles of reviews before the mid-term review in 2006. Since basic information for the monitoring will come from reports from countries and international organizations, I think that the report format should be simple enough not to impose excessive burdens on reporters. The format also should be designed in such a way that the Secretariat can easily analyse to what extent and how the World Food Summit target is being attained. Since the content of reports could be different between developed countries and developing countries, I feel that it is a good idea to prepare separate formats for them.

As to development of FIVIMS, we are of the view that the cause of food insecurity is not limited to poverty. We think that the causes of food insecurity include not only poverty, hunger and undernourishment, but also weather abnormalities and financial crises. With this recognition, Japan is now funding the Trust Fund Project to support Asian countries in the development of FIVIMS on a regional basis, and to contribute to the attainment of comprehensive food security which we expect to go beyond a hunger map at the national level.

Finally I would like to refer to the issue of rescheduling the date of the CFS meeting in even years. In the last Regional Conference, Japan expressed its readiness to host the next Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in 2000. On this occasion I would like to draw your attention to our domestic situation, that is, it is highly likely that the next Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific could be held in September, or later in the year 2000, to avoid the time conflict with another international event which would be held in June or July 2000. We support the basic idea of rescheduling the date of the CFS meeting, but I hope that our suggestion will be taken into account and some exceptions should be permitted for this issue. We prefer the following formulation, that is, the CFS meeting in even years should be rescheduled, to be held in principle after all Regional Conferences have finished their work.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

Just a few methodological remarks to stress the importance of utilizing appropriate methodological instruments to establish priorities and to measure the impact of different actions. This is a reference in the document which is certainly highly commendable.

I would like also to stress the importance of maintaining two levels of evaluation: the global level to identify the countries or the group of countries most vulnerable and the medium-term impact of the policies of development implemented; and the second one, a national level to better follow the weaker groups. In that framework, we can put the exercise to be methodologically-defined on what should be the national Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) at the national level and, as a consequence, on which informative basis the global one could act.

On the basis of the Italian experience -- and Italy has made food security a priority -- it is important that the exercise take account both of the need of technical and financial sustainability, and of the need of representing an evolution, and not a repetition, of all the countries that the System tried to help are already doing. It is also important to take into account technological innovations and the new methodologies of analysis that could make the system most appropriate, and I refer to the need to identify the most appropriate indicators as the Representative of the European Union has just stated.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

I wish to make three short points, if I may, which are based on today's wide-ranging and very interesting discussions.

The first is to take up and very strongly support the intervention by Argentina. Australia made a long statement yesterday, and I would certainly not wish to repeat again our statement about the linkages between food security and trade, and the advantages of trade liberalization. It was interesting to hear this morning countries such as Uganda mention that price liberalization had increased farmers' incomes. I am sure that associated with that price liberalization was market liberalization, even if only domestically.

The second point I would make is in relation to Small Island Developing States. The South-West Pacific Region, which Australia represents on the Council, has seven, out of Nine Members which are Small Island Developing States. We would strongly support the observations of Dominica, Mauritius and others, that the challenges and problems of Small Island Developing States need to be recognized and addressed in their own right. We would not like these addressed, as appears to be in some cases, as apparent after-thoughts and tack-ons to various meetings.

The final point I would pick up is in relation to the one recommendation which came out of the CFS, which the Council was asked to particularly note. This related to the timing in even years, and the rescheduling of the Regional Conferences. We would strongly support that recommendation. We think it is a very important input to the gathering of information and the exchange of lessons learned at the regional level. We would not want to see a change from that to "in principle", but we are very sure that the Organization could certainly apply flexibility so that that recommendation could indeed take practical effect in all cases.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Sin querer ser repetitivo, señor Presidente, la Delegación de Chile considera oportuno una vez más recordar que la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación constituyó y constituye un hecho de gran relevancia en la vida y en el trabajo de esta Organización con lo cual agradecemos la oportunidad y acierto de la decisión adoptada por el Director General en su oportunidad.

Se congregaron Jefes de Estado y Gobierno por primera vez para comprometerse políticamente ante la opinión pública internacional, compromiso que fue consensuado a través de un agotador proceso negociador que tomó un largo año de continuas e interminables negociaciones, de las cuales fueron testigos muchos de los asistentes a este Consejo.

El Plan de Acción y la Declaración Política ha sido obtenido por decisión de los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno. Se transformó en el documento estratégico que le da a la Organización y a sus Miembros la obligación de aplicar. No deseamos aquí recordar todos los esfuerzos y recursos invertidos en este gran proceso negociador que permitió identificar los elementos y variables relevantes que son necesarios para alcanzar una reducción importante del hambre y la malnutrición para el año 2015. En este sentido, quisiera hacer una referencia cruzada con otro Tema de la Agenda porque creemos es tremendamente importante, y me estoy refiriendo al nuevo proceso iniciado por la Organización destinado a definir un Marco Estratégico para la FAO del año 2000-2015.

¿Si el Plan de Acción constituye el documento estratégico nunca antes obtenido con un consenso político tan amplio, porqué iniciar un nuevo proceso que define estrategias y objetivos de toda la Organización, basados en métodos de preferencias estadísticas y que perfectamente podrían

modificar las prioridades y el orden de los acuerdos alcanzados en el Plan de Acción? ¿Porqué definir estas nuevas prioridades que deben recogerse en los próximos Programas de Labores y Presupuesto de la Organización? Nos referiremos más detalladamente a estos aspectos bajo el Tema correspondiente, pero queríamos llamar la atención de la mesa sobre esta vinculación que creemos que era fundamental mencionar.

Por otra parte, señor Presidente, estamos firmemente convencidos que si queremos materializar el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre, deberemos aunar nuestros esfuerzos entre la Organización y sus Estados Miembros.

Agradecemos el estupendo informe que ha preparado la Secretaría y que nos permitirá seguir avanzando en la materialización de los acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial. En ese contexto quisiéramos subrayar la importancia que tiene FIVIMS. La Delegación de Chile, el Gobierno de Chile, estima que es una herramienta de gran utilidad y que los recientes desastres naturales refuerzan cuán importante es una pronta puesta en práctica de este instrumento, con lo cual se requiere que la Organización ponga a disposición mayores recursos para su pronta implementación.

También creemos importante aprovechar las complementariedades y sinergia de la cooperación entre los países en desarrollo para la mejor materialización de FIVIMS. Creo que ello permitirá compartir realidades entre países en desarrollo, y aprovechar las ventajas comparativas y los desarrollos relativos que tienen esos países.

Quisiera también aprovechar la ocasión para informar que Chile ya ha elaborado su Plan de Acción en el marco de la Cumbre Mundial de Alimentación y como parte adicional a este esfuerzo también está reforzando su solidaridad internacional con la finalidad de desarrollar una acción de cooperación internacional Sur-Sur que permita a otros países de menor desarrollo poder aprovechar la ventaja comparativa y *know how* que Chile tiene, específicamente en el sector agrícola y exportador como lo mencionamos ya ayer.

Finalmente, quisiéramos reforzar nuevamente en que la única forma de combatir el hambre y la malnutrición a nivel mundial es una pronta y efectiva puesta en práctica del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial.

Mrs Hannelore A.H. BENJAMIN (Observer for Dominica)

I will be very brief, but I would like to bring to your attention the following, and I would like the Council Members may be to think about what I have to say.

I would like to say that most Small Island States have not received document CL 115/INF/19 until this morning. Some have never even seen it. Some have never got it. So therefore, since it is under discussion this afternoon, and we have had no time to look at the papers, one on trade, another on intensification of agriculture and a third on environment, we would rather like the Small Island States to meet this afternoon or tomorrow morning to quickly discuss the issues. We would then ask the Council Members to agree to discuss this paper later in the week instead of this afternoon. At least, it would give us some time to reflect on what has been said in the document, which is so important to our Small Island States.

Also, we would like to ask the donors to be so kind, because FAO does not have the necessary resources to convene a separate conference on Small Island States, but it is somehow connected with the Ministerial Meetings. First we have the Ministerial Meeting on Forestry, then on Fisheries, and then the Ministerial Conference on Agriculture for Small Island Developing States, which will be held on 12 March. Since we have not received any papers, we find it very difficult to make our statements accordingly. We would like the donors to be so kind and to come forward and make extra resources available to the thirty-six Small Island States Member Nations to ensure their participation in this Meeting.

The main thing is that I do not know whether every Government can attend this Conference on 12 March. We are aware that the island of Mauritius celebrates its National Day on that day.

Others might not be available, and again, other islands or other Ministers do not always cover agriculture, fisheries and forestry matters together.

Coming back to the paper, I would kindly request that we do not discuss it this afternoon, as it is said in the document CL 115/OD/2, but have it later in the week so that we have time to reflect on it and make our statements accordingly.

I want to thank Australia in particular, who has always been on our side when we discuss Small Island States and all our needs. I look forward to receiving a positive answer from you.

H.E. Archbishop Alois WAGNER (Observer for the Holy See)

Taking the floor in this meeting of the FAO Council, first of all I wish to congratulate the Director-General for the level of the documentation and studies submitted to our examination and decision. The precise data showing the agricultural situation in its particular aspects, i.e. environment, food aid, sustainable development, should encourage the future action of FAO in achieving the goals of the World Food Summit and in underlining the engagement in food and agriculture policies by Governments, especially in the developing countries.

The Delegation of the Holy See thinks that one of the objectives to eliminate hunger and malnutrition is the training and education of those who participate in agriculture's activities at different levels and responsibility. In fact, as underlined in the analysis on the world agricultural situation, the agricultural sector, food production processes and financial exchanges require the utmost attention from both national entities and from international cooperation agencies.

With reference to this Item, following the very important and interesting position expressed by the distinguished speakers, may I bring to your attention some priorities:

First, there is the need for education and encouragement of young people to recognize the importance of agriculture in each country and in the world society. It is a look for the future.

Second, a spiritual encouragement of young people is very important in assuring them that agriculture will be seen as the culture and the cultivation of the earth in the future. Culture and cultivation to promote nutrition will depend on us. We know how much is destroyed by wars, but agricultural work is one of the oldest human professions - agricultural activity performed by men in favour of their fellow-men. In other words, an activity that represents the culture of solidarity. This is a spiritual view, an understanding that looking for nutrition means always achieving solidarity in the concrete way. All Governments are responsible for this.

The Delegation of the Holy See considers particularly important the question of the training and education of young people. It considers that every international objective or programme should include these points: First, agriculture is not only a material or technical process, although it is very often expressed in this sense. Agriculture, in fact, is a realization of the human culture since the soil is cultivated and produces nutrition for people. In our technical, industrial and administrative societies, too often our engagement is blind to the value of agriculture. Second, young people should be taught that working in the field of agriculture is an economic activity. In their school programmes, they should be encouraged to consider the greater ramifications of this profession, that to be a farm worker means helping to meet, and to find a real fundamental way of nutrition of the world. Third, each developing country should be aware of the importance of agriculture and its development, recognizing that it is a human profession. Agriculture projects are important for the nutrition of all peoples. Agriculture is important because through it we defend ourselves and protect our fruitful lands against the encroachment of the desert – a big problem. Agriculture is a profession that remains autonomous, self-sufficient, independent. A farmer remains a free man. Even nowadays, it seems he is the only one who can be a free man, at least in certain areas, even today. Four, it is very important that the education of young people include more than technical and professional understanding. One can be calm and happy by being a farmer.

My delegations considers that all technical aspects are very important in agricultural activities. In addition to technical considerations, however, we should also examine more human aspects - the ethical view showing that the Earth, meaning the soil, is God to all peoples.

Fundamentally, producing nutrition means assisting all people in their human existence. Ways should be open for the agriculture profession to respond to the great call to help our neighbours.

I am convinced that you, as responsible Representatives of so many countries of the world, will agree with me that the field of agriculture is essential, and that to be a farmer is a most worthy profession.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (Special Adviser to the Director-General for World Food Summit Follow-up (SAD))

I would just like to make two or three very general points. We have heard in a number of interventions this morning that to achieve the objectives of the Plan of Action will require the concerted efforts of all relevant actors. Indeed, it has been very gratifying to note how many countries have developed or are developing mechanisms at the national level which bring together governmental and non-governmental or civil society representatives across a broad spectrum.

The question raised by the delegate of Chile, with regard to FAO's own response, will receive further consideration, I think, this afternoon in the discussion on the Strategic Framework. But I would just point out that, of course, the Strategic Framework proposals are a further definition and refinement of FAO's response, as one of many actors, to the commitments undertaken by Member Nations in the Plan of Action.

I wanted to bring to the Council's attention two other initiatives by FAO partner organizations, at the international level, which again, form part of this array of initiatives taken to further follow-up and involve all those who need to be involved as time goes on.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - whom, as you know, received a mandate under Objective 7.4 of the World Food Summit Plan of Action - held a second Expert Consultation on the Right to Adequate Food as a Human Right, here in FAO Headquarters on 18-19 November. The delegate of Mexico had requested information on the outcome of the Meeting. It was well attended by experts, NGOs, representatives of the UN System and observers for Member Nations. The Bureau of the CFS and the Chairmen of the various Regional Groups and other FAO Bodies, such as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of CCLM, were specifically invited. The Meeting adopted a series of concrete conclusions and recommendations.

Of particular interest, was the adoption of a working definition of the "Right to Food", and a series of recommendations for future action regarding its implementation. These included the adoption of National Strategies and Framework legislation at the national level. International agencies were encouraged to provide assistance on these matters as requested.

The Meeting also stressed the need to consolidate efforts to promote inter-agency training in the field of human rights, and expressed strong support for Chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies to organize a Seminar with international, financial and trade institutions to enhance dialogue and encourage consultation on a regular basis. This Meeting, I would reiterate, was an initiative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The other initiative is one taken by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. You may recall that, during the World Food Summit, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in cooperation with the Parliament of Italy, held a special Parliamentarians' Day and the results of that Meeting were reported to the World Food Summit at its closing session. In subsequent meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which groups parliaments from close to 140 countries around the world, the decision was taken to further support follow-up to the World Food Summit through a specialized Inter-Parliamentary Conference entitled: Attaining the World Food Summit's Objectives through a Sustainable Development Strategy.

This Conference is going to take place from this coming Sunday, 29 November 1998 through 2 December 1998, here in Rome. It is organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, again with the collaboration of the Parliament of Italy and support from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. FAO is providing technical support and facilities for the Conference from Monday through Wednesday. It will take place here in the Red Room, having started at the Chamber of Deputies on Sunday.

The hope is that the Conference will renew, strengthen and focus commitment by Parliaments to the actions necessary nationally, including appropriate regulatory and legislative measures, budgetary allocations and general oversight and promotion of action by others in their domestic contexts.

By the time of the next CFS I am confident that there will be more such initiatives to report. In the meantime I would like to ask, Mr Chairman, if you would turn over the floor to Mr Vercueil for detailed reactions and answers to this morning's discussion.

J. VERCUEIL (Directeur de la Division de l'analyse du développement agricole et économique)

Je poursuis les clarifications et informations souhaitées par le Conseil. Sur le sujet, qui vient d'être évoqué de différentes façons, de la participation de la société civile, le Secrétariat a en préparation un document sur la participation élargie de la société civile et autres partenaires aux travaux du Comité sur la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. Ce document servira de base de discussion au CSA lors de sa prochaine session et sera distribué très largement et bien en avance de la session, de façon à permettre un débat et des consultations sur ce document au sein des Pays membres, en préparation pour la session. Ceci a été fait selon les orientations, les demandes formulées par le CSA dans son rapport aux paragraphes 42 et 44 du document CL 115/11.

Deuxièmement, sur la question de l'étude de faisabilité de la formation dans les pays en développement pour l'utilisation d'instruments de gestion des risques de marché, ici encore, à la demande du CSA, un accord de coopération avec le Secrétariat de la CNUCED, la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le commerce et le développement, a été passé pour la réalisation de ce travail.

Troisièmement, de nombreux délégués ont exprimé l'importance qu'ils attachaient au développement du Système d'information sur l'insécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité, aussi bien au niveau international qu'au niveau national. Le Groupe interagences de travail sur ce système a tenu la semaine dernière, à Washington, sa troisième réunion au siège de la Banque mondiale. Je rappelle que la première réunion avait été tenue au siège de la FAO, la seconde au siège du FIDA. Lors de cette troisième session de travail, il a été convenu d'un Plan de travail détaillé pour la mise en oeuvre de systèmes d'information et de cartographie sur l'insécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité, aussi bien au niveau national qu'au niveau international. Les tâches et responsabilités des différentes parties prenantes à ce Groupe de travail interagences ont été clairement définies, y compris la clarification du rôle du Coordonnateur résident des Nations Unies, dans le cadre de ce système-là, comme point focal pour acheminer le support aux pays individuels, dans la mise en oeuvre et l'assistance à des systèmes nationaux d'information et cartographie (SICIAV).

Enfin, un élément important du développement de la mise en oeuvre de systèmes est la désignation de points focaux par les Gouvernements nationaux au niveau national. De nombreux pays ont déjà établi ces points focaux. Nous avons entendu ce matin même certains d'entre eux le signaler au Conseil, mais nous souhaitons inviter ardemment tous les Pays membres qui ne l'ont pas encore fait à désigner leurs points focaux pour le Système d'information et de cartographie sur l'insécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité au niveau national.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Je vais parler seulement des petits Etats insulaires. Bien entendu, le souci et le devoir du Secrétariat a été de répondre à l'invitation de la vingt-neuvième session de la Conférence en novembre 1997, laquelle, reconnaissant les difficultés particulières de ces petits Etats insulaires, appelait à organiser une conférence internationale sur l'agriculture dans ces pays comme suivi du

Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Nous l'avons fait sous une double contrainte. La première est celle des ressources. Aucun soutien à une telle Conférence n'est prévu à notre Programme régulier. La seconde contrainte est une contrainte de calendrier, qui est très chargé en début d'année 1999 avec, vous le savez, les réunions du Comité de l'agriculture, celui des forêts, celui de la pêche et celui des produits de base.

C'est en raison de ces différentes contraintes que nous avons proposé de tenir cette Conférence en une seule journée, mais en trois sessions (nous aurons donc une session de nuit), le 12 mars prochain. Je souligne par ailleurs que des discussions préalables sur l'agriculture des petits Etats insulaires auront lieu au Comité de l'agriculture, au Comité des pêches, au Comité des forêts et au Comité des produits de base, dans les domaines sectoriels du mandat de chacun d'entre eux, discussions préalables qui nourriront le débat sur la Conférence du 12 mars elle-même. Donc, c'est une Conférence à deux niveaux, des discussions préalables au sein des comités et ensuite une Conférence de synthèse, en trois sessions, le 12 mars prochain.

Le choix de la date du 12 mars a, bien entendu, voulu tenir compte du fait qu'il fallait que cette date soit postérieure à la réunion des comités, et aussi que de nombreux, responsables de l'agriculture...

CHAIRMAN

Mr Carsalade, Brazil wants to interrupt and take the floor, if it is possible.

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Sin intención de interrumpir en el medio de la cuestión, y dirigiéndome al Director de Agricultura que ha hablado antes del señor que tiene ahora la palabra, la delegación pediría encarecidamente al Secretariado que distribuyera el documento sobre la participación ampliada de la sociedad civil en las discusiones del CSA en tiempo hábil, antes de la próxima reunión del CSA, para que nuestros Gobiernos tengan tiempo suficiente de leerlo.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Je reprends donc en justifiant le choix de la date du 12 mars, qui devait être postérieure à la réunion de ces comités. Elle a aussi été choisie en raison du fait que nombreux des responsables de l'agriculture des petites îles sont aussi responsables de la pêche et/ou des forêts. Nous avons donc placé cette Conférence immédiatement après celles relatives aux forêts et aux pêches, la même semaine.

Une lettre d'invitation vous sera adressée avec un Ordre du jour commenté dans les prochains jours. Nous transmettrons ultérieurement trois documents techniques et un projet de Plan d'action, que votre Secrétariat prépare en ce moment activement.

Je conclurai enfin en lançant à nouveau un appel aux donateurs potentiels, afin qu'ils consentent un soutien financier le plus large possible, et à leur pleine participation à cette entreprise, afin de trouver ensemble les voies de développement pour ces petits Etats vulnérables mais très importants. C'est peut-être aussi, s'agissant de documents intérimaires, une des raisons du retard de la distribution du document, puisque nous avons souhaité vous faire le dernier état des lieux possible pour pouvoir le soumettre à l'occasion de ce Conseil.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to thank the Secretariat for the response and the answers to the questions.

That concludes our discussion on this Agenda Item. Before I adjourn, the delegate of the United States has asked to exercise his Right of Reply.

Right of Reply

Droit de Réponse

Derecho de Réplica

Michael SOUTHWICK (United States of America)

We would like, briefly, to exercise our Right of Reply.

The United States takes exception to remarks that accuse us of extreme cruelty. Those remarks also attacked United States policy. Nonetheless, the policy remains.

For the record, the United States does not maintain a blockade against Cuba. Furthermore, we believe our policies are not a flagrant violation of international law.

As for the question of cruelty, it should be answered by those who deny to their citizens basic human rights and freedoms. As everyone in this hall well knows, the United States and its people have always demonstrated great generosity in providing all kinds of assistance to people of many countries suffering from natural or man-made disasters. This year alone, the United States will contribute over US\$ 900 million to the World Food Programme. These funds and this food support hungry people in countries where we have both productive and unproductive government-to-government relations, including North Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The problems of the Cuban economy and the sufferings of the Cuban people are not the product of any action or inaction by the United States. Cuban suffering is instead the result of continued mismanagement, by the Cuban authorities themselves, over a period of nearly forty years.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

No quiero establecer un diálogo político. Hice yo mi declaración y creo que fuimos muy claros y precisos en ella. Además fue muy seria y con datos muy precisos que creo no debo repetir.

Si la firmeza y la defensa de nuestros principios de soberanía son definidos como ataques, pues estamos sí atacando. Lo expresado son acontecimientos internacionales, ahí están sus acuerdos, no creo necesario explicar esto. Solamente dos países están en contra, Estados Unidos e Israel. Existió compromiso y voluntad política en los acuerdos de la Cumbre; ¿por qué no se cumplen? no vamos a retrotraernos, ya creo que Chile hizo toda la historia y durante el proceso de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. El derecho internacional se maneja según beneficie un país en contra de la voluntad mayoritaria de la mayoría de los países del mundo. Es la era de la hegemonía. También decimos que cuando un país poderoso en ese supuesto poder abusa de los más débiles, está demostrando debilidad en su interior.

Termino con una reflexión. Aquí se ha hablado de que la paz y la seguridad alimentaria tienen una vinculación muy grande. Si esto es el ejemplo del supuesto país más poderoso del mundo, yo creo que tendríamos que hacer una reflexión sobre que advenimiento tendremos para el próximo milenio.

The Meeting rose at 12.50 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 50

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.50 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
FOURTH PLENARY MEETING QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
24 November 1998

**The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.40 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

**IV. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
IV. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À
L'ADMINISTRATION**

**IV. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y
ADMINISTRATIVOS**

8. FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 (CL 115/4 paras 6 to 9; CL 115/7 paras 5 to 12; CL 115/8 paras 6 to 21; CL 115/12; CL 115/19 paras 7 to 22; CL 115/INF/22)

8. Cadre stratégique pour la FAO 2000-2015 (CL 115/4 par. 6 à 9; CL 115/7 par. 5 à 12; CL 115/8 par. 6 à 21; CL 115/12; CL 115/19 par. 7 à 22; CL 115/INF/22)

8. Marco Estratégico para la FAO, 2000-2015 (CL 115/4 párrs. 6 a 9; CL 115/7 párrs. 5 a 12; CL 115/8 párrs. 6 a 21; CL 115/12; CL 115/19 párrs. 7 a 22; CL 115/INF/22)

CHAIRMAN

We reconvene our session and we now come to Item 8, FAO's Strategic Framework, 2000-2015, Version 1.0, document CL 115/12. Also relevant to the debate are documents CL 115/INF/22, which provides supplementary information, the report of the Joint Meeting, documents CL 115/4 and CL 115/19, and those of the Programme Committee, documents CL 115/7 and CL 115/8.

The main document Version 1.0 and its supplement represent the first stage of vast supportive analytical work that will continue until a definitive text is approved by the next Conference.

I should like to give the floor to Mr Wade and Ms Killingsworth, who will jointly talk through a short audio-visual presentation.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

I will start the ball rolling and talk a little bit about the process that we followed. Then, Ms Killingsworth will take up the ball in talking about the strategic objectives that we developed, and how we approached that.

This is just a little bit of background to this introduction. I will not repeat what all you have heard before, but I will apologize to those Permanent Representatives in Rome who have seen a substantial part of this Presentation in the past. However, we felt it was worth doing because there are so many delegates coming from capitals who have not received this information

You will recall that the original information is contained in the document JM 97/1, which described the new Programme Planning Process, as presented to the Programme and Finance Committees in September 1997. That followed through eventually to the Conference in November 1997, where we had Resolution 6/97, which was about the FAO 2000 Project on the Strategic Framework.

We have held a number of briefings: in June when we went through the questionnaire with Permanent Representatives, and another one in October when we went through Version 1.0, the document that you have before you. Today's introduction is intended to quickly go through the process that we followed, so you understand what has gone on prior to the drafting of this document, and to give you a reasonable introduction to its contents.

The foundation for our work has been FAO's mandate as laid down in the Basic Texts. This exercise is not about changing mandates - it is about defining where FAO can best apply its efforts over the next 10 to 15 years, within the mandates that have already been established. We have specifically used the Basic Texts on the subject of Strategic Planning in Non-profit Organizations to assist us in this exercise. The references are there, and in the document, for your information.

Internally we went through a very considerable exercise to try and ensure that everybody could be involved. We held briefings with each Department, both at the level of its Assistant Director-General and then for those involved in the actual exercise. Every Department took advantage of a training arrangement, whereby a "facilitator" or "trainer" was made available to go through the

entire process of developing a Strategic Framework, that is, through the stakeholder analysis, through the external analysis, etc., and then that knowledge was applied to carry on the work thereafter.

Members' involvement in Version 1.0 has first and foremost been through the reflection of their views in the responses to the questionnaire, where we sought your advice on what you considered to be the priority areas, and where we also asked you to identify those areas where you thought you would want to use FAO's services.

There were 77 responses to the original questionnaire at the time we published the document CL 115/12, so the Annex to that document, Annex 1, takes account of 77 responses. However, the latest document you received over the last few days, that is CL 115/INF/22, contains an update which includes a total of 114 responses. As a matter of interest, we are still receiving replies, and we still hope to get an even better response rate.

We, of course, expect Members to be further involved in this process. We expect to revise Version 1.0 which you now have before you as a result of your comments, and produce Version 2.0 for the Technical Committees which meet in January, February and March. Version 3.0 which will come back to the Council through the Programme and Finance Committees in May and June 1999, and then finally Version 4.0 will go through a similar process to the Conference for its eventual approval.

I will now talk to you about consultation with external partners. We have made great efforts to ensure that the ideas that we are presenting to you are also, if I may say, bounced off or passed to our external partners to see what their reactions are. So we have sent this document to all Members of the UN ACC. We have sent it to the international financing institutions, several Intergovernmental and Non-governmental Organizations, a list of eminent persons and academics, particularly those people we involved during the World Food Summit in examining the technical documentation for the Summit, and of course the CGIAR. Approximately 350 copies of this document have gone out for comment. However, that was relatively recently, so we only have a few responses at this stage, ten from NGOs and three from UN ACC Members. So far, the responses have been constructive and supportive, although I would have to say that it is probably too early to draw conclusions.

I wish to turn now to the process that we followed. I think the first important step was the analysis of the external environment. What you see in the document is not what was done. We did a great deal more than that and, in fact, we followed the classic methodology of looking at those forces and trends in the area of political forces and trends, economic, social and technological areas that could impact the Organization in terms of opportunities or threats over the next 10 to 15 years. We produced internally eight trend-oriented internal discussion papers, or substantial documents. These were supported by six Departmental analyses on the same basis but concentrating on the sectoral perspective and then, finally, we produced a 9 000 word summary. What you see in the document, however, is the section called "Looking Towards 2015", where you have the major trends and the global perspectives for food security. Of course, you also see the effect of this analysis in the rationale for the strategies in Parts 2 and 3 of the document.

With regard to the internal analysis, here our approach was to ask each of the technical Departments to carry out a review of the inputs, ways of working and support structures that were behind their activities. We asked them to sharpen the analysis by looking at their top 10 successes and then their top 10 failures, and to look at them from the perspective of inputs, ways of working and support structures. As a result of that analysis, they came up with a list of "recipes for success" - I guess you could term this as being the strengths that they felt contributed to success - and "pitfalls to avoid" or, if you like, the weaknesses that they felt had to be addressed if we were going to be successful.

In the document, this became part of the rationale for the Corporate Strategies and the Strategic Objectives, in the sense that we built on the strengths to try to come up with strategic objectives

which were realistic in terms of the Organization's capacity. At the same time, these inputs were synthesized to produce the Cross-Organizational Issues you find in Part 3.

Turning now to the business of developing strategies themselves, I should clarify that we turned to the basic authoritative texts we had. We had developed the series of Strategic Objectives from the results of the questionnaires, and from the analyses that we carried out. Then, we went back to the Departments and posed the question: "What are you going to do to work towards the achievement of those objectives?" We used Bryson, who comes up with two worksheets for this purpose. The first one actually tries to get you to identify the options that you could pursue in support of achieving the objective then, to examine what barriers exist to prevent you from realizing those options, how you overcome the barriers, what inputs you would need from partners, be they external or internal. That exercise, I might mention here, resulted in Options being addressed at the Departmental-level and the conclusion of that process being provided to assist us in developing the statements of strategies you find in the document.

So, if I can just go through the output of this internal process, it involved identifying the Purpose of the Strategy, identifying its Relationship to FAO's Objectives and the Key Elements of the Strategy. In each case, identified what the indicators for success would be, particularly in terms of impact or benefit to the client and then, finally, we listed for each Strategy who our partners would be. When I say our partners, I mean from the Departmental point of view, so those partners could well include other internal partners within the Organization or, of course, as they often did, external partners. In the document, this synthesis appears in Part 2, so under each Strategic Objective you find a very abbreviated couple of paragraphs defining the Strategy. I have to say that this is one of the areas of the documents that we finally had to cut back. I should perhaps mention that this document was 40 000 words long when we were close to publication but the Director-General felt that it was excessive in length and indigestible, so you do see a very much-reduced document in which we were not able to list everything that we did.

With regard to partnerships and alliances, I know that many Members feel that this is a critical and very important area. You should be aware that, throughout the process, we have been paying particular attention to it. For every Strategy, we have a detailed list of partners and of their role *vis-à-vis* FAO. Is the partner leading the particular Strategy? Is the partner contributing to it in collaboration with FAO? Is it a leadership role for FAO? We produced in fact a 4 000-word Summary by Strategic Objective and Role but that is not in the document. What you have in the document is a Summary Statement for each Strategic Objective. Then, you have one cross-Organizational issue entitled "Broadening Partnerships and Alliances", which also addresses the issue.

I come now towards the end of describing the process, but I cannot leave out the regional involvement. While a great deal of the work was done in Headquarters, it should be recognized that we have involved our Regional Offices quite extensively. Briefings were held for the Regional Representatives in Rome. They were given copies of Bryson's book and Smith's Best Practice Paper, with which you are probably familiar, and then we sought their input on a number of steps as we went through the process. Interestingly, we asked them to complete the same questionnaire that you as Members completed but to give us their perceptions of the Regions' needs as opposed to the individual country needs. We compared the two, and fed back the information to them so that they had a better understanding of what the country-level needs were. I have to say that there was very close correlation between the two. There was a good understanding of what the requirements were.

Closing on my part of the introduction, I would just like to say that after an awful lot of effort within the Secretariat, a great deal of analysis and, I am afraid, rather large piles of paper, you have before you a necessarily selective synthesis of this whole exercise in the form of Version 1.0 of the document.

I would now like to pass the floor to Ms Killingsworth, who will deal with the Strategies themselves.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (Special Adviser to the Director-General for World Food Summit Follow-up (SAD))

Mr Wade has explained why we call this document, Version 1.0 of the Strategic Framework, a work in progress. First, because it is only Version 1.0, and we expect four versions before the process is completed at the Conference next year. Second, it is a highly distilled product of a very large amount of work, which Mr Wade has just described, and it is somewhat of a hybrid. In order to give you at least a flavour of the Secretariat analysis which went into the preparation of these proposals, you have in Part 1 in particular a very summarized description of the "External Trends and Global Perspectives". Then, in Parts 2 and 3, "Proposals for FAO's Response to the Challenges in the Internal and the External Environment", as we identified them.

You also have in CL 115/INF/22, the document which has just been produced, some further clarifications which were requested by the Programme and Finance Committees to facilitate your consideration of Version 1.0 at the time of this Council.

It has been suggested that future versions will need to be progressively more synthesized and briefer, simpler and more focused, in order to facilitate adoption by the Conference. The suggestion has been made that Part 1, "External Trends and Global Perspectives", could be removed from the document in future versions because it does, in fact, reflect only a summary of the analytical work done, and because over the coming months you will, in the various committees which will consider the Strategic Framework, also be considering many of these issues in more depth under other Items of the Agendas, as you have already done yesterday, when you looked at the "State of Food and Agriculture".

Possible additions to the next versions are a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement. This is a recommendation made by the Programme and Finance Committees for the Council's consideration. To facilitate that discussion, the Secretariat has included in CL 112/INF/22, the draft Mission, Values and Vision Statements which we had prepared as part of our process and which are totally consistent and compatible with the proposals you find in Part 2 and Part 3 of the document. It is, in fact, those two Parts which the Council will probably wish to concentrate on, because they contain the main proposals for the Strategic Framework.

They are based on two major principles: one was interdisciplinarity, to group the sectoral strategies from different units within strategies to address multisectoral challenges, and the other was partnerships. The strategies aim also to mobilize all appropriate means of action, normative and operational, to address the problems.

Going on to Part 2, which contains the "Corporate Strategies", paras. 10, 11 and 12 of CL 112/INF/22 describe, in more detail than I can now, the options we considered for an organizing principle for the Strategic Framework, and the reasons why the Secretariat arrived at the conclusion that we wished to propose the one you have before you, which consists of five major Corporate Strategies and Twelve Strategic Objectives.

The Committees asked us to give you further information on the rationale for these Strategies, for the grouping of the Strategic Objectives within them, and also for the sequence. Let me say first of all that Strategies A through E are not, in the Secretariat's view, presented in an order of priority. They are equally important to us, and they were presented in that sequence because it seemed to us a logical progression.

I will start with "Corporate Strategy A". Here we began with the indication of an ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, between the affluent and the poor. The World Food Summit, in calling for extraordinary efforts to assist countries to achieve the target of halving the number of hungry by no later than 2015, recognized that there would be a need for focus on the poorest and most vulnerable. So, in terms of FAO's response, the proposal here is to tackle the most urgent problems in various ways: first, through the development route, and by addressing the problem of poverty; secondly, through targeted programmes for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; and thirdly, towards actions to deal with the immense suffering caused by humanitarian crises and by natural disasters. These are also a form of targeted action, and that is essentially the

reason why the “Strategic Objective” dealing with emergencies was placed within this Corporate Strategy.

“Corporate Strategy B” addresses the search for more effective mechanisms, agreements and norms to guide relations among nations, in the area of trade but also in other areas. Within FAO's sphere of competence, we judged that it is very well placed to both facilitate international agreements and to provide advice to countries, on their domestic policy and regulatory frameworks, and also on measures they need to take to be able to participate fully in the international system in an increasingly interdependent world.

“Corporate Strategy C”, instead, addresses the challenge of how agriculture will ensure food supply and availability for growing populations in rapidly urbanizing societies and constantly changing environments. It will be essential for countries to make the correct strategic choices and that is not just with regard to production, but also to questions upstream and downstream of agricultural production. The Strategy addresses the very important issue of productivity, including closing the yield gap, which in many developing countries could result in rapid improvement of incomes and food availability among the rural poor.

We were asked on a number of occasions why “Corporate Strategy D” was not merged with the previous one. It deals, in fact, with the other side of the coin, conserving the resource base for future generations. Obviously, they are very closely related, these two strategies. At the same time, though the goals involved need not be incompatible, different means of action are needed, different approaches in many cases, and we thought that it would be clearer to maintain differentiated and separate identities for these issues to preserve the integrity of the Organization's commitment to natural resource conservation and sustainable management.

“Corporate Strategy E” is last, but certainly not least. It deals with a global information and communication revolution, which needs to be accompanied also by international commitment to promoting the common welfare. We have strategic objectives dealing with what has been a major FAO contribution already over the past 50 years, in the area of information collection and dissemination and analysis. Another covers the advocacy role which the World Food Summit has made even more actual, even more crucial, I would say. The Summit was one of the most ambitious expressions of FAO's role as a neutral forum in which countries came together to address common problems in the area of food, agriculture and nutrition. It is now necessary for the international community, as a whole, to fulfil its promises. The Organization's voice here, through fora such as the Committee on World Food Security and through other broad catalytic measures requested of FAO, such as you were already discussing this morning, is important as we go forward in the implementation of the Summit Plan of Action.

Part 3 deals with strategies to address issues which affect all units and programmes in the Organization, essentially strategies to ensure ever-increased efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness to Members' needs by the FAO Secretariat. The Programme and Finance Committees considered that the strategies outlined here, perhaps with a little bit less of the detail on the analysis which went into preparing them, should continue to be an integral part of the Strategic Framework.

Looking toward Version 2.0, we are anxious to have Council Members' views on the Corporate Strategies and Objectives, on the cross-organizational issues and any views on the recommendation that there should be Mission and Vision Statements incorporated in the next version. We will also be taking into account in preparing that version, right after the Council's meeting, all responses we have received from partner organizations.

Before concluding, I will just go over briefly the latest results of the questionnaire to Member Nations which, as you know, was sent out last June, so we have had more time to receive responses. This is the latest update, more detail on which is given to you in CL 112/INF/22. Basically, we have got 37 additional replies, so now we have a total of 114 responses from Members, or 65 percent of the Membership. They are still coming in and we will be continuing our follow-up and analysis of the results. They still show strong support for Members' goals, with

debate essentially limited to wording. There still is a clear majority attaching high or very high priority to all the goal-related areas of work, which basically correspond, with some changes, to the five Corporate Strategies you have in Version 1.0. We have had consistently improved ratings since July on Members' views of FAO as a central or major provider of services.

That brings the Presentation to a close. Thank you for your attention and we look forward with great interest to the Council's debate on this Item.

CHAIRMAN

I now invite interventions by the delegations.

Klaus GARCKE (Germany)

I would be grateful if I could with your permission, pass the floor to the delegation of Austria, the acting Presidency of the European Union.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to express our views on the Strategic Framework.

Before going into its substance I would like to express our thanks to the Secretariat for the useful and informative Presentation given just now to us.

With the documents the Secretariat demonstrates its intention to implement rapidly the Conference Resolution on FAO 2000. We think that the document is a good basis for discussion. Including the members in the discussion from an early stage is essential, since the process of Strategic Framework will only be successful if the ideas and wishes of all Members are heard and taken into account.

In order to understand the background to the paper better we would welcome seeing details on the sources used by the FAO Secretariat. A summary synthesizing the internal discussions, included as an annex to the document, as was the case with the replies of the Members to the questionnaire, would be a useful addition.

We should bear in mind that the scope of the Strategic Framework is the period 2000 to 2015. In this context, for the European Union the Strategic Framework is a real opportunity to help FAO in defining the main thrust of its policy, as well as its long-term priorities in accordance with its mandate.

For this reason, we are looking for something more visionary and focused on the "Strategic Options" for this period. We would wish to see Part 1 of the document shorter, and at the same time sharper, concentrating on the main trends in the Regions and clarifying FAO's role in response to the long-term trends identified in this part of this document.

The rapidly changing situations in Asia, Russia and Central America should be included. They will definitely also have an impact on the long-term strategic goals of FAO. Analysis of population trends should be taken into consideration, including possible consequences. Reference should be made to the growing number of women affected by poverty.

It should be remembered that the original intention was to adjust the objectives and activities of the Organization. This is important in relation to the "Strategic Objectives" of Part 2 of the document. This section of the document would need to be redefined, as the present draft gives the impression of tasks to be fulfilled, or areas of work to be undertaken, rather than an attempt to clearly define "Strategic Objectives" for the future.

One major concern should be to better position FAO in the international scene, strengthening its image as a Centre of Excellence and developing partnerships with other international organizations and civil society. This should, however, all be expressed in an action-oriented way.

With this in mind, the European Union would like to stress the four main challenges that FAO has to face. These are: definition of objectives according to comparative advantages;

development of criteria for setting priorities; redistribution of resources within the available FAO budget; coordination and cooperation with all involved partners.

Let me go to the first point, definition of objectives according to comparative advantages. We believe that the task of establishing FAO's targets is to identify, define and strengthen its comparative advantages. It may be understood from reading the current version of the "Strategic Framework" document that FAO's primary role is to assist the Members and the international community to achieve food security, in particular, by making essential contributions to the follow-up of the World Food Summit. In reality, this is but one of FAO's several roles, while responsibility for the implementation of the Summit's objectives lies with the Members.

We believe that FAO's comparative advantages lie primarily in its normative activities in the areas of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and sustainable development supported by complementary field activities, because these two types of activities mutually reinforce each other.

FAO is an universally recognized Centre of Excellence regarding its functions of data gathering and evaluation and its advice in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food policies. We would, therefore, look to FAO to build on these strengths and, accordingly, these should become areas of highest priority in future Programmes of Work.

We see FAO's role in emergencies as very specific and concentrating on monitoring, prevention, early warning and rehabilitation. In crisis situations, cooperation with the World Food Programme should be strengthened. In the field of international development cooperation, FAO is one of several players and should collaborate with other UN Bodies, bearing in mind the overall objectives to support separate and collective action of Members to ensure food security for all and eradicate poverty in the context of sustainable development.

On the second point, development of criteria for setting priorities, we would like to underline that it will be essential to develop operational criteria for finding priorities for FAO. We recognize that Part 2 of the document does contain a number of objectives, but it fails to provide any information about their priorities. Introducing a ranking system to bring these objectives into a clear order would be a significant improvement over this first draft.

The priorities would have to focus on the strength of FAO in line with the objectives to be defined. We acknowledge that a tentative beginning is made in paragraph 102 of the FAO document, which we welcome but would wish to see developed further. This is a precondition for adequate translation of the Strategic Framework to the Medium-Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget.

Concerning the third point, redistribution of resources within the FAO available budget, it is clear that defining and implementing priorities will have to include a redistribution of resources - providing more funds of the regular budget to some structural units and less to others. With that in mind, we would like to have more information in the document concerning the regular budget, and the raising and use of extra-budgetary resources.

In the document, the Secretariat has referred to its plans to mobilize donations from private individuals. In this regard, it should be recalled that the Members should take the measures they consider appropriate in cooperation with elements of the civil society. In this context, as is generally the case, we wish that FAO continues to work in close collaboration with NGOs.

The document envisages an enlarged cooperation with the private sector. Properly managed, this can bring about positive effects for technology transfer and market access. In this connection, we would like to seek further clarification from the Secretariat as regards the newly-introduced concept of "client-first" mentality, mentioned in paragraph 132© of the "Strategic Framework" document, to meet the expectation of donors, including the private donors. When mobilizing private sector resources, FAO must not jeopardize its position as a reliable and independent partner and its unique role as neutral international platform.

Let me now go to the fourth point, coordination and cooperation with all involved partners. The document does not provide a clear answer as to how FAO is responding to the changed structures

of the UN regarding its operational activities, so that FAO's programmes and activities would fully use the potential for increased effectiveness and synergy with UN structures and concepts, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the United Nations Development Group.

It does not address the question of how strategic options to be established in FAO's Strategic Framework can effectively be integrated within the more general context of the work of the UN and its Specialized Agencies and programmes. In particular, cooperation and synergies in the respective field operations need to be developed further. Furthermore, we would like to stress that FAO should strengthen cooperation with the other international organizations and civil society in order to assure the consolidation of its role as a Centre of Excellence. This should avoid duplication or gaps, while promoting FAO's expertise and developing a synergy of common interest.

Consequently, FAO has to complete its strategy by examining its relations with its partners in accordance with the recommendations of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, and in particular, the assessment of value added and level of complementarity of UN Agencies involved and, more specifically, the other Rome-based Agencies, as well as the Bretton Wood institutions. This would, in particular, involve specifying joint fields of action to be pursued to ensure more complementarity in a context of partnership with other UN agencies, while respecting the given mandates and defining the strategic relations that FAO could develop with them both at Headquarters and field levels.

Maximum synergy between FAO, World Food Programme and IFAD has to be achieved by identifying the specific strains of the organizations and focusing their activities on areas where they are most competent. This approach should begin here in Rome and implies improved coordination, task sharing and synergy efforts between the three Rome-based organizations, including field operations.

We would encourage the full membership of FAO to think about the issues we have raised. If the Strategic Framework is to serve the purpose for which it is intended, some far-reaching decisions and changes will have to be made. We still have a lot of work to do together to prepare the adoption of the Strategic Framework by the next Conference. We are convinced that, with the contribution of the full membership and taking into account their fundamental concerns, FAO will be able to establish an effective and well-focused Strategic Framework.

Marcelo FERNÁNDEZ DE CORDOBA PONCE (Observador de Ecuador)

Una vez más se me ha concedido el honor de hablar en nombre de los países de Latinoamérica y del Caribe. En primer lugar, permítame reiterar nuestro apoyo a los resultados de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, hito histórico en la vida de la Organización. La Declaración Política y el Plan de Acción acordados por los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno constituyen, en opinión de nuestra Región, el esquema conceptual que debe orientar los trabajos futuros de la FAO y del proceso de discusión del Marco Estratégico 2000-2015. La discusión en este Consejo del proyecto del Marco Estratégico para la FAO es el punto de partida adecuado para los debates intergubernamentales sobre el Tema y reviste particular trascendencia para el futuro de la Organización. Por ello, se busca a través de él definir un esquema programático a la luz, no sólo de los resultados de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, sino particularmente de las nuevas circunstancias internacionales que inciden en los trabajos de la FAO.

Reconociendo la fundamental importancia del Tema, el Grupo de Latinoamérica y del Caribe considera que el mismo debe ser sometido a una intensa discusión en las estructuras existentes previstas: los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, de Productos Básicos, de Agricultura, de Bosques, de Pesca, de Seguridad Alimentaria, el Consejo y la Conferencia, la cual debe ser realizada dentro del mandato constitucional de la Organización. Asimismo subrayamos que debe darse estricto cumplimiento al cronograma de consultas establecidas en la Versión 1.0 del documento. En tal sentido, deseamos destacar la importancia de que el proceso de discusión del documento involucre a todos los Estados Miembros e instamos a los países a participar y realizar

su seguimiento efectivo. Al respecto, consideramos la presente sesión del Consejo como el inicio del proceso de discusión global y participativa del Marco Estratégico.

En cuanto al contenido, quisiéramos aprovechar la ocasión para señalar algunos elementos importantes que estimamos deben ser considerados en el proceso de elaboración del Marco Estratégico. Su enfoque global deberá enriquecerse con una visión regional. Asimismo consideramos que elementos fundamentales como la seguridad alimentaria y el desarrollo agrícola y rural no deben diluirse en el documento con un tratamiento similar al otorgado a otros temas de menor trascendencia. Igualmente respaldamos la intensificación de la acción interdisciplinaria que debe resultar en un efectivo programa de mediano plazo, así como los acuerdos de cooperación con otros organismos afines del sistema multilateral.

Finalmente, el presupuesto de la Organización deberá responder estrictamente a las definiciones del Marco Estratégico sin que se pueda prejuzgar sobre el monto y la estructura del mismo.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

In the name of the Near East Group, I would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing this document. This document comprises a Medium- and a Long-Term Plan. Why therefore should we not have this important Strategic Framework for the fifteen years to come divided into three plans: a Short-Term one, a Medium-Term one and a Long-Term plan and distribute the various activities between them according to these three categories. These three kinds of Plans would therefore encompass the programmes, projects and studies in order to implement this important Strategy.

I would like to stress some of the important activities that the strategy Should comprise in the fifteen years.

First of all, the major challenge which FAO and its Member Nations -- not to mention the whole world -- must face is to reduce by half the number of those who suffer from undernourishment by the year 2015. An appropriate system will therefore have to be drawn up to this effect, including monitoring and evaluation and assessing each year the number of people who have enough food in every country. Follow-up should be reported every year to Council, so that we can be sure that we will reach our objective by the year 2015.

Secondly, there is the question of development of human resources. Development in general depends on the development of material and human resources. The development of human resources is far more important in our eyes than material development, because man is the key to all development activities.

Thirdly, we support sustainable agriculture that will lead to increasing production and food security, especially in developing countries.

Fourthly, we feel that increase agricultural production should be increased in terms of both quality and quantity.

Fifthly, Research should be linked to extension and training in order to achieve food security, especially in developing countries.

We must stress the importance of forestry in development. We must take care of fisheries resources, improve and enhance women's role in development and in the transfer of technology, not forgetting the repercussions of recent economic crises on the food security of developing countries. We must also draw up an institutional framework and infrastructure and provide technical assistance to developing countries to enable them to play their part, as well as to take an active part in international trade at every level.

I should also like to make some observations on the way to overcome the economic and financial problems of developing countries. It is important to consult international organizations, Specialized Agencies and Member Nations and hear their opinions on the Strategic Framework once revised and before it is submitted to the general Conference of the Organization next year. The Organization should also seek the opinion of those countries which did not receive the

questionnaire yet. We should make every effort to ensure that this document is concise and precise.

As noted before, these are the main activities and suggestions that should be included in the Strategic Framework for the next fifteen years.

Ioan PAVEL (Roumanie)

La délégation de la Roumanie apporte son soutien au processus de formulation du Cadre stratégique de la FAO Horizon 2015, et félicite le Secrétariat pour le travail fourni pour la préparation de la première version du document.

A notre avis, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que les ressources naturelles de la planète doivent être conservées, améliorées et utilisées pour le bien-être de toute l'humanité. Néanmoins, chaque Etat Membre doit préserver son droit souverain pour la conservation, l'amélioration et l'utilisation durable de ses propres ressources pour les générations à venir.

En ce qui concerne le domaine d'activité de la FAO, nous considérons que le rôle de l'Organisation pourrait augmenter avec l'appui des donateurs et des pays développés en coopération avec d'autres organisations internationales, ainsi que celui des institutions financières internationales et des banques, afin que le groupe défavorisé du milieu rural puisse être aidé. On entend par ces aides, non seulement celles fournies sous forme d'aide alimentaire, mais aussi d'appuis financiers sous forme de crédit pour la production et d'investissements, ainsi que le transfert de technologies vers les pays en développement et les pays à économie en transition.

Il serait souhaitable que la FAO puisse analyser la possibilité d'agir aussi dans le domaine suivant: appui aux associations professionnelles pour l'organisation de leurs activités, mise en place et développement du crédit rural appuyé par le gouvernement pour la création d'un système national d'assurance des récoltes et des biens des agriculteurs.

Enfin, étant donné que les références sur l'Europe centrale et de l'Est sont assez rares dans les documents de la FAO, je voudrais proposer que cette Région puisse bénéficier d'un traitement adéquat au Cadre stratégique de la FAO.

Pedro PINTO da SILVA (Portugal)

Portugal da su fuerte respaldo a las declaraciones hechas por el distinguido Representante de Austria, como representantes de la Unión Europea, de la cual somos miembros. Además como miembro del Consejo, Portugal desea hacer algunos comentarios sobre el texto de las estrategias de la FAO, Versión 1.0. (Continúa en Inglés.)

While we appreciate the efforts of the Secretariat in putting together Version 1.0 of the Strategic Framework for FAO, we find the present version an exceedingly complex and a somewhat, may I say, dispirited text. The word "Vision" appears frequently, but Vision -- even more Strategic Vision -- may not be the way to characterize this document. In "Looking towards 2015", the major trends identified, more often than not, represent the continuation of recent past, as if a mirror was positioned against the future. Instead, while the analysis of the recent past is of clear importance, we also need to locate and to identify phenomena that may only be starting to emerge now, but which can be significant in determining the shape of things to come.

Version 1.0 is basically a document of the Secretariat that, while it may represent, and it does, a considerable effort from FAO staff from all its Departments, was prepared with little external input from Member Nations. The questionnaire sent to Member Nations, and frequently referred to, must be seen largely as a rhetorical exercise that confirms points which, while important, are by now acquired.

I will touch only a few points of paragraphs 1 to 34. In "Major Trends" I would like to mention three points:

- Present trends in national and global polarization of wealth are likely to have consequences which should be taken into account in this document. At least two alternative economic-political scenarios should have been envisaged. These could be:

continued globalization and trade liberalisation; and reactions to globalization, regionalization restraints to financial flows, a world of not necessarily geo-political but also geo-economical, geo-financial or geo-cultural plaques.

- At least two demographic trends could have been considered: continuation of the present as it is done in the present version, and strong abatement of population growth rates.

With regard to new emerging consumption patterns and attitudes in developed countries, are we moving towards a post-consumer society? Are our consumption patterns going to change?

Let me now turn to "Global Perspectives for Food Security". The statement in paragraph 17 that, "...there will be only modest declines in the numbers of undernourished from the current level of over 800 million persons" is puzzling, even if it could be realistic. If this is what FAO Secretariat really thinks, and presumably thought at the time of the World Food Summit, then it must face up to the admission that one of the main goals of the Summit -- the reduction by one-half of the number of hungry persons by the year of 2015 -- was unrealistic.

I now turn to "Sustainable intensification as main source of production growth". Integrated Pest Management practices should be expected and encouraged. Export by developing countries of organic agricultural productions may also become a source for increased revenue through exports to developed countries. In paragraphs 26 to 28, it is properly stated that the problem is less food production than its access. However, higher food production associated with economic growth and with development may not lead to improved access to food. This is because economic growth, in particular in the last decade under global liberalization, increases -- as the FAO document recognizes -- inequalities in distribution. We must foster economic and social policies that protect the most vulnerable nations and societies during the economic transition and give them time to adapt to newly -created growth prospects. It must be noted that, from 2000 to 2015, regional and global economic, political and environmental changes are likely to come. These changes may imply sharp policy transitions at all levels. I note that nowhere in this document is the importance of democracy and good governance to the effective use of development aid referred to or that "aid can keep bad governments in business". I mention also that socially-conscious democratic policies pave the way for the synergistic interaction of market economy and genuine social concerns.

I turn now to the text starting with "FAO's response". In paragraph 31 mention is made of "a broad-based international consensus on development". Indeed, recent trends show that this may not be such a consensual view: development has a mixed record of success. It is not just a technical-economic process, as it involves as many facets as there are in human nature. Development failures can, in part, be attributed to the difficulty to see the "other" in a manner that could involve genuine role-reversal in the process of equal development. Development must be re-defined into a far more complex and multidisciplinary mould, where there will be space for the developer to be developed in the process.

My last few words go to "Corporate strategies and objectives". We find the texts that enunciate the corporate strategies and objectives exceedingly complex and even convoluted, making their analysis difficult. To understand them better, we have produced flow-chart diagrams that illustrate our point and, more importantly, facilitate the analysis of these complex, if correct, sentences. These will be furnished to the Secretariat and will be available to the membership.

Our comments represent the types of thoughts and concerns that can be brought to the attention of the Secretariat in the process of direct dialogue that will be required to build a forthright and lucid Strategic Vision for FAO.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

First of all I would like, on behalf of the Indonesian Delegation, to congratulate the Director-General of FAO and the Secretariat for the preparation of document CL 115/12 for discussion and decision at this Council session.

After having studied and observed the contents of this document, the Indonesian Delegation have some views to be shared with other delegations for further discussion or decision.

For example in Part 1, we agree with FAO's views on the trends in the external environment and the challenges facing countries and the international community in achieving the objectives of the World Food Summit, as well as the outlook for agriculture, forestry and fisheries developments.

In Part 2 on the five Corporate Strategies, the Indonesian Delegation is in full agreement with these. There are Short-Term, Medium-Term and Long-Term agriculture strategies in Indonesia. In the Short-Term programme, for example for 1999-2000 there are two main programmes, social, safety net and rescue programmes to overcome the monetary, economic and food crises in the country. For the Medium-Term strategy, there are four Special Programmes for increasing food and agricultural production, such as what we call Gema Pela-gung 2001. This is a Special Programme for increasing the production of rice, corn and soybean with the expected goal of achieving self-sufficiency by the year 2001.

The second Programme, Protekan 2003, is a Special Programme to increase fisheries production, especially for export, with an ultimate target of US\$10 billion export earnings to be derived from the fisheries sub-sector in the year 2003.

The third Programme, Gema Proteina, is a Special Programme to increase and improve the nutrition of the people through consumption of animal protein such as meat, eggs and milk.

The fourth Programme, Gema Horticulture, is a Special Programme to increase the production of horticulture, fruits, vegetables and flowers as a source of export earnings for the country.

Since the majority of the farmers and fishermen in Indonesia are small-scale and smallholders, the main goal of those Programmes is to increase the income of the small farmers and fishermen for the prosperity of their family.

For the Long-Term Strategy the Government of Indonesia plans to develop its agriculture based on the vision of Agricultural Development in the year 2020 and to create a resilient, modern and efficient agriculture.

Part 3 identifies the five major Strategic Issues of a cross-organizational nature, and indicates the steps underway or proposed to respond to them. It seems that the Government of Indonesia is in line with the national efforts and steps taken in its agricultural development. Regional agricultural development reform is taking place, especially in achieving food self-sufficiency, in continuously strengthening the food security of the country, in empowering the small farmers and fishermen, in increasing exports from agricultural products, in implementing the national programmes that have activities components dealing with production, in promoting agribusiness development, and in making agricultural inputs and infrastructures available at any time and any place.

Finally, the Indonesian Delegation welcomes the proposed draft of a Strategic Framework for FAO 2000-2015. The Government of Indonesia is ready at any time to have further discussions on the matter, and will actively participate with constructive contributions in the finalization of the said proposed draft for discussion and adoption by the FAO Conference in November 1999.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

Let me at the outset commend the Secretariat for the hard work it has put into producing this Version 1.0 of the Strategic Framework. It is abundantly clear that substantial consultation, analysis and soul-searching has gone into producing these 37 paragraphs.

Let me acknowledge that the process put into motion for the finalization of the document, as given in Annex 1, adequately reflects the spirit of the second substantive paragraph of Conference Resolution 6/97, in that it is in the framework of the existing structures, it is a participatory process, and involves not just the Secretariat but also the membership of FAO.

Let me also state that the document before us is a good first draft of a paper which is expected to guide the destiny of this Organization for the first fifteen years into the next millennium. The

document has evinced considerable interest. It has been carefully studied, anxiously discussed, and keenly debated. We feel that this is a sufficient achievement for a first draft.

We are looking anxiously at this document for effecting change, while remaining within the mandate of the Organization. For us, to serve this purpose, the document should essentially present a blueprint of how FAO would meaningfully, and substantially, contribute to the commitment made in the Rome Declaration - to reduce the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015, a commitment reaffirmed in the first preamble of paragraph of Conference Resolution 6/97.

We will continue to examine this document from this myopic, if you please, outlook.

As a general comment, we would like to draw your attention to the first substantive paragraph of Conference Resolution 6/97, which requires development of a Strategic Vision, including *inter alia*, a set of core Strategic Objectives, and an Implementation Programme. Whereas the document before us does include a set of core Strategic Objectives, the Implementation Programme is missing. We would request, and would like to see, that Version 2.0 of the document reflect the outlines of the implementation programme also.

Moving to the different parts of the document, we have the following views:

In Part 1, we agree with the opinion of the Programme Committee that the twelve media trends identified are generally acceptable. We, however, feel that some of the trends could be combined, so as to bring into sharper focus the key trends that are germane to FAO and its mandate. For instance, and this is just an example, there could be a possible combination of trends 1, 2 and 3 to read as Globalization, Trade Liberalization, Strengthening of Regional blocs, and the Changing Role of the State. Thus, poverty, risk of disasters, etc., would emerge in sharper focus, and so on.

We also endorsed the comments of the Joint Meeting contained in paragraph 11 of document CL 115/19. We feel that the section on Global Perspectives for Food Security is very germane to the chapter, and should be retained. Drafting, of course, could be improved by removing substantial explanatory and analytical remarks. We, therefore, agree with the Joint Meeting's proposals, contained in paragraph 22 of CL 115/19.

Coming to the draft Mission, Values and Vision Statement, provided in paragraphs 55, 56 and 57 of CL 115/INF/12, we feel that we have not had enough time to reflect on their appropriateness or otherwise, except that paragraph 5 and 7 seem to be mirror-images of the Corporate and Cross-Organizational Strategies. It was a relief to note that these were developed prior in analysis, and subsequently translated into Strategic and Cross-Organizational Strategies.

Be that as it may, we are generally in agreement with the Mission Statement, though we feel that there is room for further reprioritization and refinement.

In Part 2, we find ourselves in general agreement with the views of the Programme Committee contained in paragraphs 13, 14 and 18 of document CL 115/8, and of the Joint Meeting expressed in paragraphs 12 and 14 of document CL 115/19. We also share the view of those Members of the Programme Committee, who supported maintaining the proposed structure of five Corporate Strategies. We understand that the five strategies are not depicted in any order of priority in the document. We advocate a consideration towards prioritization and resequencing of the strategies.

We further feel that the exact role to be played by FAO in attaining Strategic Objectives should be clearly spelled out, in contrast with that of other actors. While bringing FAO's role into sharper focus, distinction may also be made showing whether the objective would be achieved through nominative interventions, or operational interventions.

We appreciate the forecast on Inter-Disciplinarity and Partnerships. We would, however, like to see concrete proposals on partnerships, rather than general statements. The proposals should concentrate on the role of each partner, and therefore provide accountability.

We understand that Part 3 has arisen out of an internal analysis. We appreciate the five critical, cross-organizational imperatives. We would, however, like to see a better linkage between Cross-

Organizational Strategies and the role of FAO, which we have proposed to be elaborated and brought into sharper focus in Part 2 of the document.

Before proceeding further, our preference would be to limit the subsequent Versions to presenting the needed further elaborations of the Strategic Framework proposals, leaving the explanatory material to be shown in the Annexes, with appropriate cross-referencing in the two documents.

Finally, the discussion, formulation and approval of the Strategic Framework would become academic, unless it is simultaneously accompanied by an equally serious discussion relating to resource availability to pursue the Strategic Mission ambition.

We do recognize the limitations of Member Nations in making long-term commitments. We nevertheless urge a simultaneous dialogue in this direction.

Finally, I once again compliment Mr Wade and Ms Killingworth, and the whole team, for the enormous task undertaken by them, and assure them of our continued support and input in the process up to the next Session of the Conference.

Kamal PANDE (India)

My delegation takes this opportunity to place on record our sincere appreciation for the role played by FAO in the worldwide effort aimed at banishing hunger from the world. We, in India, particularly remember the contribution made by the Organization in bringing about the Green Revolution in our country, a phenomenon which totally transformed the agricultural system in India.

We also wish to compliment the Secretariat for putting together the excellent document on the Strategic Framework of FAO, truly an effort that bears the stamp of class and authority, with which we associate the Organization. The depth of analysis, and the lucid presentation of this complex exercise, richly deserves to be commended.

The major trends in the external environment, which are likely to have direct implications for, or a bearing upon, the Organization's future work, have been correctly identified. However, the manner of linking these trends with the activities proposed by FAO, in its Corporate Strategies, could perhaps benefit from closer attention. Disparities continue to exist between the rich and the poor, both locally and nationally. Mere economic growth has generally not led to reduction in food insecurity among the poorer segments of societies. Likewise, increasing disparities in access to resources, education and technology are widening the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots".

While it is accepted that technological development may occur in all Regions, but will not be equally accessible to all countries, specific strategies outlined in the corporate plan of bridging this critical gap are, I am afraid, rather nebulous and have not travelled far from the fringes of the problem. Agricultural Diversification and Off-Farm Employment should be promoted to enhance economic security, poverty alleviation and overall food security and nutritional adequacy.

The increase in the world's cereal production, over the last twenty-five years, is largely attributable to the increase in production and productivity in the developing countries. The contribution of livestock products, fisheries and horticultural products to the food basket has steadily been increasing, as production and productivity of these components have increased at higher rates than those of cereals in several developing countries during the last ten years. Scope exists in these countries for further increases, if we consider unrealized potential. Technical cooperation and exchange of technology needs to be strengthened between countries to harness this latent capacity.

From the point of view of food security, most developing countries, while maintaining steady growth under irrigated, congenial settings, are shifting their emphasis to rainfed areas. The poorest in the world live in these areas, and more often than not, these farmers are not only highly risk-prone, but are also too poor to access or adopt any advanced technologies. Our major task is

to develop better varieties of seeds, and appropriate technologies, to help these resource-poor farmers, who remain untouched by the benefits of scientific progress and technological advances.

The developing countries are looking to FAO to assist them in technology assessment, diffusion and adoption. The agricultural sector in countries, such as ours, is dominated by resource-poor, small farmers. Additional food production in all these countries will have to come from small landholdings. Such farmers would need to be helped with appropriate technologies, better inputs and marketing facilities if poverty is to be alleviated and food security achieved.

Against this backdrop, the decreasing flow of official direct assistance to agriculture, coupled with the decline in food aid, can hardly fail to cause us concern. The recent effort of the UN to link the efforts of different Agencies is a welcome sign. The developing countries will, however, continue to expect FAO to play a leading role in the agricultural sector, in promoting synergy among the international organizations working in this field, and in functioning as an advocate to raise funds that support efforts to develop the agricultural sector.

As regards contributions to disaster-prevention programmes, we find that the major emphasis is on forecasting and provision of assistance, as well as to relief, agricultural supplies and rehabilitation. While emergency relief of such a nature is of paramount importance in emergency situations, in the long term, capacity-building in their prevention and by better management practices that promote sustainable developmental schemes will better assuage countries against havoc wrought by disasters.

This inevitably brings us to the crucial linkages between development and disaster reduction. A long-term approach to reducing the impact of disasters, and its differential vulnerability, needs to be worked on. This should result in the formulation of a strategy and a programme of action, which promotes environmental restoration and sustainable development, consistent with poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor. Therefore, it is important when finalizing Corporate Strategies that a balance be struck between the emphasis on sustainable development schemes that reduce the possibilities of the occurrence of disasters, and emergency relief and contingency planning.

The Agreement on Agriculture and the WTO is a major event, that will shift the agricultural policies of nations, and also control the destinies of the resource-poor farmers in developing countries.

My delegation feels confident that FAO will assume the role of an advocate, on behalf of the developing countries, especially to counter any measures outside the gamut of purely trade-related concerns. We expect FAO to assume a pro-active role in enhancing the capabilities of the developing countries in responding to these challenges, and in facilitating the provision to them of level playing fields.

FAO has a crucial and constructive role to play in the field of conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources, and technology sharing, in fora such as IPPC and Codex.

My delegation is therefore of the view that this role should figure prominently in the list of FAO's Corporate Strategies for the next 15 years.

LIANG QU (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, my delegation would like to applaud the conscientious efforts deployed by FAO in working out this Strategic Framework document FAO 2000-2015. We note that this Strategic Framework has been proposed for us after in-depth analysis on the positive socio-economic and technological trends in the world of today, and taking fully into consideration the comments and observations made by Member Nations and sister organizations. We know very well that the Strategic Framework, which is of utmost importance for the implementation and execution of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit in 1996, and this Strategic Framework should enable FAO to play its role as the lead agency in achieving and attaining the objectives set by the Summit itself.

The Chinese Delegation has very closely studied the structure and the tone of this Strategic Framework and would like to share the following observations with our colleagues, and I will refer to the three points of this document.

Part 1: the major trends, which must be taken into consideration in the years to come. First of all, the changes are in the climate and its effect on agriculture and food security. We all know that phenomena such as *El Nino* and hurricanes have caused major changes to normal weather conditions, and have caused serious damage to the situation in most countries, and especially the developing countries. We feel it is most important to consider the extent to which food security has really worsened.

Secondly, as everyone knows, the economic crisis in Asia not only has serious consequences on the economic development and food production in many Asian countries, but also has a negative impact on the world economy. This is a reason why we should recall that the consequences of regional economic crises have a worldwide effect, and hence deserve our undivided attention.

Thirdly, the extension work spinning around and diffusing the outcome of agricultural research is very important for developing countries, and also for food security. Therefore, it is important that the developing countries be able to have access to this new technology and new information. This is something which is most important for international organizations and economic research.

We also have to consider the liberalization and trade of foodstuffs and increasing interdependence of commodity markets and financial markets. We have to understand ways in which developing countries can be victims of a greater influence affecting the manner in which their agriculture develops, and the extent to which liberalization on commodity trade takes place.

Now let us take a look at the common strategies. We are of the opinion that the first objectives pursued by FAO and its Member Nations should be putting into practice what the World Food Summit said, that is, to eradicate and uproot rural poverty and to reduce food insecurity to a minimum.

This falls within the five strategies of the Strategic Framework, hence we should highlight the importance of those objectives, that is, eradicating poverty and reducing hunger and malnutrition. In addition, when defining an appropriate, suitable and opportune strategy relative thereto, that is making it possible to achieve those objectives, FAO should make sure that it is able to play its core role in the world.

Another point is taking into consideration the importance of human rights and the right which all people have to ensure their necessary nutritional input. Hence it is necessary for FAO and its Member Nations to promote the cooperation in development aid, and this is also with regard to assistance between developing countries. It is necessary to encourage and promote assistance to developing countries and to food-deficit countries, to enable them to deploy efforts and pursue their food security objectives, because obviously without this assistance, it would not be possible for them to obtain the results.

With regard to the application of the common strategy, it is necessary to ensure a sustained increase in the supply and availability of food. To this end, it is necessary to insist on the importance of the results achieved by the world of scientific research, realizing that FAO should come up with objective strategies that would tend to support, sustain and bolster the efforts of developing countries for the application of those research results. FAO should also, help them to put the results of scientific research into practise.

FAO could also help the developing countries and food-deficit countries to develop a sustainable agricultural basis and increase, thereby, the availability of foodstuffs to their needy population. We do believe that FAO could also assist in improving the sustainable utilization of energy resource developing countries. There, we feel, that FAO has already done quite a bit, but we do believe that FAO should further strengthen its efforts.

Thirdly, the Chinese Government highly appreciates the unique role played by FAO in tackling organizationsl matters for assistance to the world for agriculture. Everyone in the world is well

aware of the contributions made by FAO to developing countries in helping them to attain the objectives of "Food for All".

With regard to the strategies that affect global issues involving the Organization, we have the following opinions. First of all, concerning the whole question of a better utilization of the Organization's competency and skill, I think that we should make sure that what prevails is FAO's competence in technical assistance. It is necessary to increase the priority given to the specialized competencies of FAO in assistance to developing countries.

With regard to expanding the area of partnership and alliances, FAO should, first and foremost, strengthen cooperation with the organizations of the large UN family. We heard, with utmost satisfaction, that FAO has already obtained quite a few results in the internal management. We trust and hope that those efforts will be continued to increase the effectiveness and efficacy of the Organization, while streamlining the administrative machine.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the opinion of my delegation that the strategies of FAO for the years 2000-2015 are so important for the achievement of the objectives set forth in the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which took place in 1996. China would like to contribute to these efforts, and is prepared to join hands with all Member Nations, so that these common objectives may be achieved.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretariat for the formulation of this Strategic Framework, Version 1.0 which will be improved until the Conference approves the version to be brought forward next year. Especially, I thank you for the brief explanation given by Ms Killingsworth. Our delegation thinks that the structure of this framework, Version 1.0, is well organized. We hope that the second version will be better organized than Version 1.0.

I would like to comment on the Mission and the Vision Statements which are expressed in CL 115/INF/22. There are five elements in the Mission Statement, but we thought that the concepts of eradicating food insecurity and the rural poverty should include the other four elements, so there should be a rearrangement of four elements if it is possible.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the Corporate Strategies. There are five Corporate Strategies which are composed of the "Challenges", "Objectives" and "Partnerships". We understand that the current strategies and new strategies are expressed in each of the twelve Objectives. However; we cannot clarify the differences between the current ones and the new ones. We propose to clarify the two strategies.

And then, I would like to comment on strategy C1, entitled "Provide advice and assistance to the Member Nations in making strategic choices to improve the efficiency of production and post-production systems in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors and meet the needs and changing requirements of growing and increasingly urbanized populations". We would like to add the concept of marketing to this objective because, when we think of the organizations, the packing and the transportation of the agricultural product should be considered.

In addition to that, I would like to comment on paragraph 67, along with this strategy. I would like to suggest that in paragraph 67, "production, post-production and marketing" could be added between the words "systems" and "management".

Thirdly, I would like to make several comments on the Strategy to address close organizational issues. Paragraph 113 is very important to further strengthen the cooperation with IFIs. We would like to propose to increase joint projects with IFIs, such as the World Bank, ADB, etc.

I would like to address your attention to the status of the private sector. To play the honest broker role in increasing private sector investments in agriculture, we think FAO projects could commit some profits to the private sector. In this regard, when FAO selects the target area project, there should be a balance of selection of the marginal and the high potential areas.

Next, to improve the management process, human resource management and system support to the management are proposed. Here, we would like to add another Strategy, that is, Restructuring the Role of Departments, Divisions and Services and the role of Headquarters, FAORs and the Regional offices in fifteen years.

We are very interested in paragraph 132 c), and believe that to meet the expectations of the donors, analyses of their expectations should be continued.

In paragraph 127, it says "What is not clear is the future trend for resources". Even though FAO has excellent Strategies, it may be very difficult to implement them without enough resources. We think there should be detailed and concrete consultations about the budget for the Strategic Framework between FAO and the major donors. This Strategic Framework should be looked at in the light of the Programme of Work and Budget.

Finally, I would like to comment on the partnerships expressed in each objective. The role of FAO should be clearly defined in these partnerships. For example, the central roles, major roles, minor roles also should be defined in this sentence.

To both the partnerships and alliance I would like to support strongly the Italian ideas, the areas for agricultural developments, which is the basis for the joint structure among FAO, WFP and IFAD.

G. TOULMIN (United Kingdom)

I should start by adding my support to the statement made by the distinguished delegate of Austria on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. I would also like to thank Mr Wade and Ms Killingsworth for their presentations, which I found very helpfully clear.

I take this opportunity to set out our Government's view on the principal points arising from Version 1.0 of the FAO Strategic Framework.

I should first say that this British Government is determined on an holistic approach to international development. We believe it is essential for all actors to work together if we are to make progress on poverty elimination. The UN System has a central role which we regard as important and which needs to be supported. In particular, the UN provides an impartial source of data analysis and advice, a neutral space for discussion and standard-setting and a universally-legitimate mechanism for support, coordination and monitoring of follow-up. The UN Summits and Conferences of the 1990s are good examples of what can be done. They were the origin of the international targets for poverty elimination to which, for example, Egypt has referred.

To be clear, the British Government starts with a positive agenda for the UN System. We want to increase the effectiveness of the system so that it can play a leading role in implementing international strategies for poverty eradication, and that includes the Specialized Agencies.

There are many good stories to tell about FAO which revolve around its normative functions. FAO derives its authority and influence from its excellence in implementing these functions in relation to food and agriculture. It uniquely holds a global mandate for this. There is widespread recognition among Member Governments that it is an area in which FAO excels.

Let me illustrate with some examples. On fisheries, the negotiation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was a particularly clear demonstration of FAO's ability to secure support, participation and approval of all Member Nations. FAO was able to sway governments to accept best practice guidelines for virtually every aspect of fisheries sector management, establishing standards for sustainable, equitable and safe fisheries.

On forestry, FAO leads work of the global forestry community on common classification systems, standards and terminology. It produces the most reliable statistics on forest products and resources, which act as a baseline for estimates of change over time.

On statistics, FAO is equally well qualified to fulfil the role as a focal point for receiving, analyzing and disseminating statistical data on world food and agriculture.

Through the World Agricultural Information Centre, FAO manages the much used Global Information and Early Warning System. This database provides the baseline for a wide range of activities, supported by Governments and donors, to improve household food security.

In regard to legally-binding instruments, FAO's independence from individual Governments and from the private sector has placed it in a unique position to negotiate such instruments, of which the Prior Informed Consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides is an outstanding example.

We believe FAO's field activities should build on its comparative advantages in this normative area. There is room for debate about precisely what that means for FAO, and we would like to see that debate carried forward in the context of the Strategic Framework. But it is self-evident that FAO should not be seeking to compete in other areas where other Organizations can work more effectively, at lower cost and with stronger management capacity.

We particularly welcome the way the Secretariat has engaged with the membership in the process of developing this Framework. However, on the evidence to date, we would stress the need to produce a well-defined and succinct Framework which sets out a distinct vision for the future - clearly identifying and describing FAO's comparative advantages and strengths.

The current draft provides for a comprehensive set of Strategies and Activities, but does not yet provide a basis for making choices among them. Furthermore, although it makes the likelihood of future declining real resources, it does not devote enough attention to the Organization's strategic response to these financial constraints. This is not just a matter for the Programme of Work and Budget. The issue has, and will have, a profound effect on the size of the Organization and the balance of its activities.

I also note with interest what was said in the presentation about FAO's internal consultative processes, notably the assessment of strengths and weaknesses, and I think it would be very interesting for Members to be given a chance to share the findings of those processes in more detail.

We would like to see more efforts devoted to the management issues identified in Part 3 of the draft. That part sets out five Strategies for addressing cross-organizational issues. I think these Strategies are important, but it is no criticism to say they represent aspirations common to many Organizations. We find them a welcome recognition of the principles of best practice in public bodies, and we think they are set out with admirable clarity and candour. It is important this discussion continues to have a prominent place in the document. We do not want to see these issues in any way classified as of less importance than the programme Strategies discussed in Part 2.

Part 3 outlines a managerial culture and way of doing business, which has to be effective if FAO is to succeed in its programme objectives, that is, FAO cannot achieve the later without first having the former. So, it matters that FAO face up to hard choices about where it can excel and where it should leave a subject to others. It matters that FAO should have a matrix which exploits and enhances its interdisciplinary cutting edge.

As the Secretariat have recognized, and as others have already said, FAO should operate increasingly through alliances with other agencies and donors. It should accelerate its programme for improving management systems and processes and, I emphasize, resources are crucial. In this regard, I would like to stress the importance of engagement in the current UN Reform Process.

FAO should aim to define an appropriate role which does not overlap with other Agencies. Thus, FAO can capture the benefit of close cooperation with others in a coordinated approach to the achievement of global development objectives.

So I hope the next draft of the Strategic Framework, Version 2.0, will be strengthened by a systematic and elaborated presentation of strategic management options available. It also needs to set out the criteria by which choices should be made among those options.

Lastly, I should say that we will be looking to share with other Members and with the Secretariat a brief paper highlighting some of the issues that we have just set out. We would not claim to have all the answers, but we do have some suggestions that we would like to propose. Also, we agree with Ecuador that it is important that all of these issues need to be shared as widely as possible to help ensure the best possible second draft.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

This is an important issue for the United States. We support the development of a Strategic Vision and the idea of results-based allocation of resources. We congratulate FAO for engaging in a process aimed at giving the Organization a vision for the future. While we had hoped to be further along by now, it is essential that this Council provide clear and concise guidance on what is needed to move the process forward in a meaningful way. I think from the high quality of comment provided here today, such as the earlier statement of the distinguished delegate from Portugal and the remarks we have just heard from my colleague from the United Kingdom, FAO is getting that good guidance.

We have a number of more detailed comments regarding the document that we would be pleased to share with the Secretariat, but let me focus on just a few of our main reactions.

First, we believe that FAO must develop a strategic plan that can integrate the main tenets of UN Secretary General Annan's Reform into the FAO. Among those key aspects of the Secretary General's programme are UN System coordination in integration of programmes, country level programme and administrative harmonization, results-based evaluation and budgeting, and more modern and flexible resource management.

Second, we should take the cross-cutting issues outlined in Part 3 and highlight their importance to developing FAO into a flexible, responsive and well-managed Organization.

Third, we believe that the next draft of the Strategic Plan should be formulated in such a way that it enables management to set priorities that it must set. This does not mean that Members will no longer be in charge of setting programme priorities or establishing budgetary guidelines. Rather it means that FAO management must have a useful tool to aid in its decision-making.

Finally, the next draft should be constructed in such a way that it logically leads to the formulation of a Medium-Term Plan and the development of a biennial Programme of Work and Budget based on a results-based approach.

The draft under review has a number of very positive aspects. It recognizes the importance of the private sector; it envisions more market-oriented global economies; it emphasizes the need for FAO to do more partnering in the future. The report of the Programme Committee echoed some of these same themes. We applaud each of these facets of the draft but, of course, there are some shortcomings.

The current draft, it appears, dwells excessively on the *status quo*. It is not sufficiently future-oriented. It does not describe how FAO will respond to changing Member needs, given the seeming rigidity of its organizational structure. A Mission Statement is essential for a Framework document, but we do not want to devote all of our attention to it. Subsequent revisions should also embrace the suggestions of the Programme Committee regarding clarifying of global trends, simplifying objectives and identifying substantive aspects which deserve greater prominence in the Plan.

As the United States has regularly stated, we accord high priority to a number of FAO's normative functions, including science-based standard-setting under Codex Alimentarius and the International Plant Protection Convention, work on genetic resources, nutrition, follow-up to the World Food Summit, activities involving commodities and trade, and giving a higher profile and providing adequate, regular budget resources to work in forestry and fisheries.

We are counting on the Council's various Technical Committees to scrutinize the references to sectorial matters. However, we support the attention already given to the increased importance of

food safety, environmental concerns, development of science-based food standards and technological developments, such as biotechnology.

Finally, the United States is most anxious to see accelerated progress on some of the fundamental changes embodied in the Strategic Framework that Council will agree to this week. We hope to work with the Secretariat and other Members in an open and transparent process to develop a document that can gain consensus at next year's Conference.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Through you, Mr Chairman, our gratitude to Mr Wade and Ms Killingsworth for the presentation that they gave and the introduction that was given.

Canada supports the Strategic Planning Process as a key step in refining and focusing FAO's work for the key challenges of the next two decades. We certainly commend FAO for having produced such a draft and we think that FAO is one of, if not the first of the major UN Agencies and bodies to actually undertake such a Strategic Planning Process, so we congratulate the Organization for that.

What we are looking for in a Strategic Planning Process, I think, was aptly summed up in a statement by my colleague from Pakistan when he said what we are looking for is how to effect change while remaining within the mandate of FAO. I think what we are looking for is something that will guide us in how to effect that change.

We support the work of the Programme and Finance Committees, which made a very good first examination of the document and we welcome the production of document CL 115/INF/22, which has been produced partially as a response to the comments of the Programme and Finance Committees. At the same time, naturally we do have a few additional comments we would like to make.

We firmly believe that a Strategic Framework requires a Mission Statement which acts as a focus or a common goal. All of the subsequent Objectives, Strategies and Sub-Strategies should contribute towards achieving this Mission. In Canada's view, a Mission Statement should lead or should guide the process of determining an organization's objectives and strategies. We have read the proposed Mission Statement contained in document CL 115/INF/22, and we are somewhat disappointed that this proposed Mission Statement appears to be a re-statement of the objectives and strategies which are outlined in sections A through E of Part 2. As such, it seems to us that this Mission Statement follows the process, rather than guides the process.

In terms of the suggestion of the Secretariat to comment on the Vision Statement, Canada feels generally that it is probably too early for the Organization and the membership to develop a Vision Statement because such a statement should probably appear near the end of the process, after the Objectives and Strategies have been agreed to. Then you look at a Vision Statement that tells you what kind of organization you want to see to carry this out.

We were intrigued by the production of a set of values, and we have to admit that it is perhaps within the values that we have seen one of the first, if not the first, major references to equity and gender. While we are talking about a Vision Statement, it would seem to me that, if we are talking about the kind of organization we want FAO to be, a Vision Statement has to include a reference to gender, and we would like to see some reference such as we wish FAO to be an organization which is committed to the full participation of women in all aspects of development and food security, and to the reduction of the burden currently placed on women in food production.

We can generally accept the initial overview of trends and challenges presented in Part 1 of the Strategic Framework. Unless significant changes are requested by outside agencies or the individuals to which Version 1.0 has been submitted, Canada feels that sufficient attention has been given to Part 1 and we suggest that the Secretariat should place the emphasis of its resources on further elaboration of Part 2, which deals with Corporate Strategies and Objectives.

Concerning Part 2, many valuable elements are contained in the existing Corporate Strategies in the current Version 1.0. However, Canada feels that they need to be more coherent and combined in different ways in order to be consistent both among themselves and consistent with the Organization's mission. For example, Corporate Strategy E combines data gathering, monitoring and analysis along with a sub-objective which calls for the promotion of a central place for food security on the international agenda. The link between these two elements is hard to find, and we wonder why the food security component of this was not combined with Corporate Strategy A, which deals with the eradication of food insecurity. We also wonder why long-term strategic objectives such as the Eradication of Food Insecurity are combined with short-term objectives such as Dealing with Emergencies. We have read the Secretariat's explanation and we have listened to the elaboration today for having two Corporate Strategies under C and D. However, we still believe that concerns about sustainability and conservation should be fully integrated into the objective of production, supply and availability of food and related products.

We fully support the analysis which we find in Part 3, which represents the challenges -- I think as the UK said -- facing any multidisciplinary knowledge-based organization. We noted Ms Killingsworth's classification of these elements as Strategies, and our suggestion for how to maintain and deal with this Part would be that perhaps we may wish to move all of Part 3 into current Part 2, under a Corporate Strategy which could perhaps be entitled "A well-managed, effective Organization". The sub-strategies would then become the current elements that we see under Part 3.

We appreciate the identification of partnerships. However, throughout the document, it is unclear who is taking the lead and who is supporting the initiatives, the Sub-Strategies that we are talking about. Future drafts must clarify this point, and the Strategies and Sub-Strategies must clarify the partnerships involved and the respective roles of each partner. The Partnership Section also needs in future to identify where National Governments, civil society and the private sector come in, as they too are key players in the achievement of the objectives identified.

Finally, we would like to see a stronger reference to the role of the market and the regulatory environment and the role of the private sector throughout the Framework. Section B2, for example, would benefit from reference to sound economic principles in the promotion and adoption of national and international institutional mechanisms.

The entire justification for this Strategic Framework is to facilitate the Organization's planning and priority-setting. A result of this exercise would be a more coherent, transparent planning cycle, which should also result in a much simplified document flow in incorporating the elements that we currently see in the two-year Programme of Work and Budget, the six-year Medium-Term Plan, the Programme Implementation Report and the Programme Evaluation Report.

We would remind delegates that one of the elements that started the process of the strategic planning was the Council's dissatisfaction with the Medium-Term Plan that we were presented with in June 1997, so we should keep that in mind as well.

Marek GRELA (Poland)

Poland welcomes the document on Strategic Framework for FAO as the first step towards elaboration of the medium- and longer-term guidance of the Organization's activities. We consider the document as relevant, comprehensive and taking into account many views already presented by a number of Member Nations.

At this stage of discussion, let me make some comments on the document.

In our view, a proper assessment of the external environment in the years to come is of crucial importance for defining FAO's strategic action. We do agree on the relevance of the twelve major trends identified in the draft of a proposed Strategic Framework. There are some issues, however, which in our opinion should be identified or presented in a more explicit way.

First, it goes without saying that a new, more adequate mechanism for international cooperation should be put in place to avoid the serious adverse effects of capital and financial flows. Recent

worldwide problems in financial markets have triggered discussion and action to reform mechanisms and relevant institutions and reduce disruptions that may undermine economic growth of many countries. The success of FAO's strategies rests largely on international, financial and economic stability, and efficiency of new international economic coordination mechanisms.

Second, the role of Regional and Sub-Regional groups may increase in the next 10 or 15 years. The trading system is now moving forward on two tracks: regional and multilateral. Regionalism may allow for more rapid liberalization due, among other things, to the small number of countries involved. An enhanced role of regional and sub-regional groups should be accompanied by more regionally-oriented FAO activities.

My third point is that in the next few years, some of the present countries in transition will make further market-oriented reforms and become integrated within large regional groupings. They will, however, continue to face, in the foreseeable future, structural adjustments and -- no less important -- institutional problems, including those relating to the agricultural and rural sectors. On the other hand, some of the transition countries may still remain outside the mainstream of major economic and social reforms, thus facing serious agricultural production problems and difficulties in meeting food demand and/or in generating adequate income level, for large segments of the population.

In view of the above, we would propose that the Strategic Framework for FAO should reiterate the readiness and commitment of the Organization to give due attention and support to countries in transition, corresponding to their advancement in reforming and strengthening market and their private sectors.

Let me now point out some issues related to the implementation of the much-discussed Strategic Framework. My country gives full support to the proposed process of structured consultation to take place until September 1999. We must all be aware that this will be an interactive process but, at the same time, the involvement and inputs of FAO's technical divisions and decentralized regional and sub-regional offices will be very important. One should draw attention to one of the new phenomena, the changes in the role and functions of the State and its implications for the role and functions of organizations such as FAO. FAO is an organization which brings together Governments. It will need to develop its liaison with Non-Governmental Organizations.

I have already mentioned the growing differentiation between the economies in transition in the Central and Eastern Europe Sub-Region, the implication for FAO, its strategies and projects, and its growing differentiation of programmes and projects. We see this as a particularly important responsibility and task of the Regional and Sub-Regional offices.

More specifically in the Sub-Region, the Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe is already involved in a number of activities on nutritional standards, consumption patterns and environmental issues. As the Sub-Region emerges from the food-deficit situation, these issues will become of importance. This will also be due to the regional integration initiatives. The role of FAO as a natural broker in this area deserves to be stressed and continued.

The document under discussion refers to the changing nature and composition of financing for agricultural development. We believe that Polish agriculture has already experienced the bulk of these changes, and we are willing to share the related experience with other countries in transition.

Assistance is increasingly channelled by private non-profit organizations. The other pillar is structural lending from multilateral financial agencies. Most important, however, will be foreign direct investment. FAO technical assistance will need to be tailored to these sources of financial assistance and, in this context, I would like to repeat our high note of appreciation for the activities of the Investment Centre in cooperation with the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The policy concept of sustainable intensification as the main source of agricultural production growth, mentioned in the Strategy document, is a well-accepted canon of agricultural policy by now. We look forward and hope that this will be reflected in the final version of the document,

that is, FAO's continuing research and formulation of policy guidelines for such sustainable growth. In this very context, the forthcoming FAO and Netherlands Conference on the Multifunctional Role of Agriculture next year appears to be an especially well-targeted effort.

FAO will also have an important role to play in disseminating information on constraints and costs of sustainable agricultural production. In our view, this task should be reflected in the final Strategy document.

Allow me, in conclusion, to add some comments on the discussion of FAO goals and Corporate Strategies in the document. The concept of FAO as a provider of services to Member Nations is a clearcut and attractive one, but we feel some emphasis should be put on enhancing cooperation and inputs of all sorts by Member Nations. Agricultural development is an interactive process, and we believe FAO should obtain more active inputs from Member Nations in order to provide better targeted services.

We support the components of the Corporate Strategy to contribute to the eradication of food insecurity and rural poverty. They are well based on FAO's many years of experience. Such components as income generation and equitable access to resources, regardless of gender, are well-recognized. The final Strategy document should give adequate importance to supporting sustainable conservation and utilization of agricultural genetic resources. We realize how controversial the related policy and technical issues are, but FAO's normative and operational activities in this field, we feel, cannot be undertaken by any other Body.

Regarding priorities in the area of fisheries, my delegation supports them as proposed in the document under consideration. Poland notices with satisfaction that FAO Fisheries, through its timely and well-focused activities, is influencing the cause of world fisheries. Undoubtedly, FAO Fisheries is playing an important role on a global level.

Lastly, FAO's role in making available its global information resources and databases, and in continuing the regular assessment of the State of Global Food and Agriculture, deserves to be stressed. No other institution has such authority in this field. Few other international institutions compete with FAO in this field, and FAO's comparative advantage is clear.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on this critical Agenda Item. I would also like to say thank you for the presentation. It was empowering in that it gives some life to the document.

Underlying this discussion is the reality that we are in the process of transforming the Food and Agriculture Organization into an organization that is efficient, effective, inclusive and responsive to the diverse challenges facing the global agriculture sector. Consequently, in our discussions on this Framework, I am of the view that we should recognize the dynamics associated with organizational change but avoid confusing strategic positioning in the long-term with a Medium-Term Plan of Programme and Work and the associated instruments for implementation.

It is important, therefore, that we commend the work done on this first draft as really being a sound basis for planning our work in FAO for the beginning of the new millennium. South Africa finds it easy to identify with the observations made in Part I of the report on the common trends and the external environment. Needless to say, the recent experience in my country on guiding a process of redefining the role of the state simultaneously with the repositioning of the country globally, and also meeting basic needs of portions of our population, is reflective of the challenges facing FAO. We, therefore, accept that these observations generally capture the global issues affecting most, if not all, developing countries on the African continent. We, also agree with the proposal that these be captured as an important annex to the core Strategy document.

The agriculture sector in South Africa embodies a diverse set of farming and agri-business entities, and at the moment is facing the challenge of managing a comprehensive response to the dynamics of a rapidly globalizing world. We find that while policy directives in this regard are often quite explicit, implementation is a complex process. From our experience, we find that once vision and linked objectives are clear, as we now have in the section of Cooperative Strategies and

Objectives, it becomes imperative that the cross-cutting strategies described in Part 3 become part and parcel of the Strategic Implementation Process. It would seem to me that this is a challenge facing us now, as FAO, namely that the change is often easier said than is done. If we do want to give meaning to the well-thought plan through proposed Cooperative Strategies and Objectives, it is now time for testing how to make things happen.

In pursuing the core objectives we are now setting ourselves, we should ensure that there is capacity within the Organization to respond to the realities of Member Nations. This means that the dynamism that transcends traditional bureaucratic rigidity and recognizes the significance of client viewpoints and responses on the ground. Within this context, and notwithstanding the need for FAO to be positioned to respond to emergencies in agriculture, we believe that now is the time to confirm a long-term partnership with the Africa Region to deal with the underlying causes of weak and vulnerable agricultural production. While we agree with some of the views that caution against having a broad set of areas of activity, we also believe that as a responsible mother of global agriculture, FAO should continue to act where it observes gaps in service provision for agriculture.

The day when we are able to capture the true spirit of cooperation and partnerships, resulting in a rapid process of reducing the numbers of undernourished people and vulnerable groups living in resource-limited areas, will be exciting.

We are of the view that South Africa's interface with FAO at a country level has improved dramatically since the appointment of the country Representatives, as we are able to work on the field with Government agencies, the Non-Governmental Organizations in our country and FAO to match technical information, expertise and knowledge with immediate needs on the ground. We believe that this will be a critical success factor for the future of FAO. Taking the view that Part 3 really gives effect to Part 2, we propose that in the next phase of developing the Strategic Framework, attention be paid to sharpening the Cooperative Objectives in order to have clarity on how to determine priorities and actions necessary to continue to improve the effectiveness of the FAO delivery system. For example, in returning to my much-belaboured earlier interventions regarding information, we need to better understand and remove the constraints that limit effective use of the existing information base and expertise in countries that are most in need. We know that most of the valuable information contained within FAO is not really hitting the ground where it should, and in the way that it should.

Recognizing that this document is work in progress, we would like to suggest to the Secretariat that in developing version 2.0, they reflect a recognition of the significance of the role of young people in our long-term strategies for food security. South Africa has made this point in earlier discussions, and will continue to actively participate in the deliberations of this Strategy to bring this point to a better understanding.

South Africa generally supports the proposed Strategic Areas identified for focus towards the year 2015. We believe that FAO is well-positioned to lead us into implementation of these Objectives, noting that they do indeed hang together, and believe that partnerships are essentially there to complement the capacities of FAO in meeting the demands of its own mandate, and as such, we believe that we should not overshadow the main challenges facing agriculture as opposed to FAO.

By way of conclusion, I wish to commend the patience of the process thus far, in that it is indeed inclusive and real. Let us keep up the quality of the process by allowing the various stages of developing capacities for ultimate implementation to happen, including the process of leveraging internal resources. At that time it will be more appropriate, we believe, to focus on the need for extra financial resources and the details of the work plans and programmes.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

The Thai Delegation would like to commend the Secretariat for the prepared draft Strategic Framework document. To us, the proposal is fruitful and substantial. However, the Strategic Framework should have clearer or more specific actions to reflect the Statement of Mission and Vision, as indicated in the document CL 115/INF/22.

We generally support the five major Corporate Strategies and the Strategies to address Cross-Organizational Issues, as contained in the document. My delegation would like to share our views on the strategy for promoting, developing and reinforcing policies and regulatory frameworks for food and agriculture which, in Thailand, has received more attention due to the current economic financial turmoil. As I mentioned yesterday, the expansion of the crisis has had an impact on the overall growth of the national economy and the agriculture sector. Further impacts on agricultural production can be expected due to future climatic changes.

Economic crisis and future climate changes are the two problems for food accessibility and the stabilization of production. Therefore, we have formulated critical policy measures and adjusted the Ministry of Agriculture Cooperative Action Plan for implementation during the current economic climate.

In Thailand, we are concentrating on three main aspects which we consider to be important in the enhancement of agricultural production and eradication of world poverty. There needs primarily to be a balance between the need for increased quality of production to reach the levels necessary for export, and the basic requirements for self-sufficiency.

One of the two tiers needed for this balance is the need to increase production quality for the export market. There are a number of target areas on which to focus: the use of new and progressive technologies to achieve high quality standards; the need to increase awareness of the trade-related environment and reduce trade restrictions, and the need to improve the development infrastructure for access to market economies.

The second agenda for balance is the progression towards self-sufficiency by the reduction of rural poverty. There are many factors which can assist in this goal, incorporating indigenous knowledge into the network, thereby linking all actors involved in agricultural development; the improvement of the quality of life; conservation of natural resources and the environment; the strengthening of community cooperatives through consolidation of production; post-harvest and marketing processes; and attention to education, social, religious and cultural welfare. There is also a need for the transfer and incorporation of indigenous knowledge to the regional partners involved in similar developmental issues and the encouragement of the South-South cooperation, which, will focus on societies operating in similar, cultural, social, climatic and economic circumstances. It is important to encourage the development of integrated agriculture, as we have seen the results of the collapse of one market without the availability of a secondary source of income, a situation that can lead to economic disaster in certain rural environments.

The third issue is that of the inclusion of participatory methods and approaches. By this we not only mean the involvement of people in the process of further development, but also of their responsibility to the system. There needs to equal inputs from them in terms of their increased participation and interest. Education of the rural population is important, not only in school age children but also for all active members of the community, to ensure that there is a progressive and continuous learning curve within the rural population.

Allow me to touch upon the approaches to solving existing problems. Firstly, to implement the policy effectively, it is necessary to reach a balance between the two objectives, increase the quality of production, global trade and the need for domestic food self-sufficiency. If there is emphasis pressed on one tier or the other, then there will be a loss factor for involvement. The cooperation among relevant agencies such as Governments, the private sector, NGOs and farmers should lead to a more participatory approach. Secondly, developing an effective Early Warning System for natural disasters and further enhancing emergency preparedness measures will aid in the efficient, effective and quick response to natural and manmade disasters. Finally, the conservation and management of natural resources of land, water, sea, soil, forests and genetics would assist in the path towards sustainable agricultural development, and thus in the eradication of world food insecurity.

CHAIRMAN

Before we go on, it is obvious that we will have to go on exceeding the allotted time for our discussions today. We will have to finish the discussion on this Item and there are actually three more Items for today, if you look at the the Timetable and the Order of the Day. It is essential for us to at least finish with Item 6 which directly follows the current discussion. If it meets with the consent of the Council, we are ready to go on and finish all that we have to finish today, namely Item 9 and Item 10. I have checked with the Secretariat and there is no problem at all with regard to interpreters and other facilities and we are able to continue, if we want. Again, I would like to have your consent to at least finish with Item 6, which is Negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

Australia was certainly looking at the Order of the Day and was expecting this sort of suggestion. We think that in the interest of progress that we should in fact aim to finish what we had proposed today. But unlike last night, we would like to suggest that it is not advantageous to move straight into another session. We should try to have a break of at least an hour because it has been two very long intense days that we have been here. The snores of some of my colleagues at various stages during the day have alerted me to the fact that we are all very tired. To give ourselves justice to doing another session which could well be for another three hours, could I suggest that we have a break at 5.30 p.m. when this session is due to finish, I think, and take half-an-hour or preferably an hour to at least have a chance to refresh ourselves and then give full justice to everybody who has prepared carefully for what is the continuation of this important Item and the other ones that follow. At the end of that I would hope that we would then be able to start tomorrow on time and still not too far behind schedule.

CHAIRMAN

I put before you the very sympathetic proposal by the delegation of Australia.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Canada supports the proposal by Australia.

CHAIRMAN

Is there any objection? If not, then we will have a break at 5.30 p.m.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

This hour interruption will mean one hour more of work in my interpretation. Is it possible to do this because I think we have to resolve some of the Items on the Agenda, otherwise the our entire work will be delayed. So am I correct in my interpretation of the standard request that the hour that we suspend be recuperated afterwards or will it be postponed until tomorrow?

CHAIRMAN

The fact is that we are all rather tired and so the proposal of the Australian Delegation is very good, that we refresh ourselves for half-an-hour, to compromise between Australia and Italy. We complete the additional work, as the break will only be for half-an-hour.

Raúl ALEGRETT (Venezuela)

Quisiera sugerir que no limitáramos esta parte de la sesión a una hora establecida, sino a la finalización del Tema que estamos tratando, que creo podría llegarse quizás a 10 ó 15 minutos más de las cinco y media y, en cuanto a la pausa, pienso que no debería ser más de media hora porque en definitiva lo que vamos a alargar es la hora de salida de la sesión de la tarde de hoy.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to inform the delegations that I do not think it is possible to finish this Agenda Item in the next quarter of an hour. I think it will take at least three-quarters of an hour to really finish this Agenda Item. If instead of 5.30 p.m. we take the break after we finish this Agenda Item, I think we can do that, but then we should continue our work to at least finish with Item 6. If possible, we should finish the entire programme that we have set for today. If there is no objection, I think that is the concluding agreement that we have from the Council, so we will go on and finish this current Agenda Item under discussion, and then take a break of half-an-hour.

Mme Hariba YAHIA-CHERIF (Algérie)

Ma délégation voudrait, comme les autres délégations, féliciter le Secrétariat pour le document important qu'il a soumis à notre examen, et selon les dires de Madame Killingsworth, cela n'était pas une mince affaire. Je remercie également Monsieur Wade pour sa présentation visuelle.

Pour revenir au document, le Cadre stratégique 2000-2015, je dirais que dans le document du Secrétariat, qui prend en charge dans sa première partie les principales tendances, l'analyse est théoriquement bien menée. Mais à propos de tendances, le document n'apporte pas d'éléments nouveaux par rapport à 1996. De manière générale, les thèmes abordés sont trop vastes et les cibles à atteindre de manière progressive en vue d'atteindre la sécurité alimentaire, ou bien de s'en approcher, ne sont pas clairement indiqués. En un mot, le Cadre stratégique aurait gagné à être précis et concis, tout en ciblant à la fois les priorités et les actions à mener dans le court, moyen et long termes.

Ma délégation aurait souhaité voir contenus dans ce Cadre stratégique les paramètres suivants: quels sont par exemple les principaux axes de réaction de la FAO vis-à-vis des engagements du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation; l'élaboration de priorités dans le secteur de développement par rapport au Programme de travail de la FAO et par rapport surtout à son budget propre et aux ressources extra-budgétaires prévisionnelles. En somme, nous souhaiterions un Cadre stratégique réaliste, et surtout réalisable, où un équilibre entre les activités de programme et celles de normalisation serait trouvé. Dans ce Cadre stratégique, la FAO devrait nous faire savoir notamment comment elle s'y prendra à moyen et long termes dans ses programmes planifiés pour intensifier son assistance aux pays en développement et en concert avec les plans nationaux des Gouvernements et en tenant dûment compte des avis et recommandations des différents comités techniques de l'Organisation pour aider les agriculteurs et les agricultrices à rétablir la capacité productive des ménages touchés par des situations d'urgence et par l'insécurité alimentaire structurelle. Ma délégation formule des vœux pour que ces préoccupations soient prises en considération plus tard dans les autres versions.

Dans la seconde partie du Cadre stratégique intitulée: Stratégie objective de l'Organisation; ce volet, au sens de ma délégation, constitue l'essentiel de l'exercice de la planification stratégique sur lequel se fonderont tous les efforts ultérieurs d'analyse et d'affinement progressif et ce, grâce, comme on l'a déjà dit, aux contributions des Etats Membres et des partenaires de la FAO. Dans ce domaine, un certain nombre d'aspects fondamentaux devraient être mis en exergue dans les versions futures du Cadre stratégique. Outre le rôle des femmes dans le développement et le transfert de technologies, il s'agira encore des aspects plus vitaux, comme l'innocuité des produits alimentaires et les normes alimentaires, l'accroissement durable de la production alimentaire et le renforcement des activités de recherche et de vulgarisation dans les pays en développement et également la nécessité d'accorder une place plus significative à la foresterie et à l'utilisation des terres arides et semi-arides; la reconnaissance, comme vient de le dire la collègue de l'Afrique du Sud, du rôle des jeunes, et la protection des plantes et la lutte contre les ravageurs; enfin, veiller à la mise en œuvre de la Convention internationale sur la lutte contre la sécheresse et la désertification. En outre, il y a un domaine qui n'a pas, à notre sens, été pris en compte, mais qui régresse, dans le rapport du Comité des programmes au paragraphe 40, c'est la formation de ressources humaines.

En effet, la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie exigera un important volet de formation, notamment pour la mise en place de capacités d'étude, d'analyse et de suivi, la mise en place ou la modernisation des structures de recherche et de vulgarisation et le développement de l'irrigation. L'expérience de la FAO en ce domaine la rend particulièrement apte à appuyer les gouvernements dans la mise en œuvre de cette Stratégie 2000-2015.

Dans la partie 3, Stratégies pour les questions inter-organisations, ma délégation exprime globalement son appréciation sur les Stratégies identifiées pour traiter des questions inter-organisations. Certains aspects méritent toutefois d'être évoqués, notamment l'importance pour la FAO de maintenir le niveau d'excellence dans ses domaines de compétence et d'agir comme chef de file, la nécessité également de renforcer les partenariats au sein du système des Nations Unies, avec la société civile et les ONG, ainsi que le souci constant de l'efficacité et de bonne gouvernance pour améliorer les méthodes de gestion et l'importance à accorder à l'évaluation des activités opérationnelles et des enseignements tirés. Pour ce faire, et sans prétendre avoir les yeux plus grands que le ventre, la FAO devra recevoir les ressources nécessaires, budgétaires et extra-budgétaires, pour l'accomplissement de sa mission, et gagner ainsi le pari qui est celui d'aider à construire un monde dans lequel tous pourront vivre avec dignité, confiants en la sécurité alimentaire.

Dato' ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

The Malaysian Delegation compliments the Secretariat for preparing this comprehensive report on the FAO Strategy Framework for the year 2000-2015 which includes FAO's medium and long-term strategies in achieving world food security. In general, my delegation supports the draft Strategy Framework, Version 1.0, as contained in document CL 115/12. We also welcome the process of presenting the document to other FAO Technical Committees and Commissions for their comments.

My delegation would like to share some important elements of the external environment. In preparing the Strategy Framework, we would like to suggest that FAO look into the impact of the current economic crisis on Member Nations in the East and South-east Asia Regions and incorporate into the Framework strategies and mechanisms for coping with it.

The currency devaluation has impacted strongly on agricultural production in the short-term with serious economic ramifications on agricultural growth, of food prices, and on imports and standards of living of the rural poor. These require specific policy responses to counter the adverse effects of the economy downturn.

Programmes to uphold the social safety net for the poor and the near poor and other vulnerable groups will have to be considered while long-term efforts to improve the agricultural sector performance are undertaken. Immediate measures will need to be implemented. Support programmes to this effect should constitute the following: Strengthening the agro-economic foundation to support food and commodity production through the provision of agriculture infrastructure; strengthening credit and extension services to the agricultural sector; and providing direct support to disadvantaged groups and those in marginal areas involved in essential agricultural production and intensifying research and development efforts to address technological constraints and to increase productivity, as well as to ensure sustainable use of natural resources.

Member Nations affected by the economic turmoil are experiencing reduced budgetary allocations for programmes and projects. To mitigate the adverse social impact of the economic crisis, on the poor and vulnerable groups, their welfare needs to be protected and their access to food and essential social services maintained. Countries must be able to have adequate implementation capacity in order to have a positive impact on target beneficiaries. FAO, must therefore give due support to programmes that have been identified to assist these groups effectively.

The Malaysian Delegation also wishes to make the following specific observations and comments regarding the Report. FAO has rightly observed the steady progress in research and technological development and continued inequality in access to their benefits as represented in paragraph 10 on page 7. The rapid technological advances in the areas of bioengineering, especially the production

of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are going to change the economics of food production. This field is being dominated by big corporate entities in developed countries. The planting materials produced are protected by Intellectual Property Rights and are not likely to be available at low cost to farmers in developing countries.

The continuing trend of globalization and regionalization further restricts domestic policy options. The technological advances, together with generous subsidies, make the industrialized countries more efficient food producers with growing comparative advantages. With globalization and trade liberalization, the agricultural products from the developed economies will be competing with the developing countries. Many countries may be forced to adopt a policy of saucing their food in open international markets rather than to increasing their local food production capacities. This, in our view, is not a prudent policy as food in the international market, in terms of prices and supply, is not stable and countries depending on imported food will be seriously affected when prices increase. National policy options to assist the farmers in food production are becoming more and more restricted by international regulations.

Persistence of poverty, mounting inequality and a widening of the gap between the affluent and the poor are still great concerns in developing countries. Small farmers, who are the main producers of food crops, are getting unfairly-low prices for their produce when compared to retail prices. The low prices make farmers relatively poor and add disincentive to rural people to be involved in food crop production, especially when alternative work opportunities exist. This may lead to rural/urban migration, the impact of which is well documented, such as abandonment of agricultural land and urban congestion and poverty.

Therefore, FAO, through its Corporate Strategy C, could: promote capacity-building among developing countries in the field of biotechnology so that those countries which are rich in germplasm can work together with their Western counterparts to develop better planting materials; the planting materials developed should be made available to all farmers and producers at reasonable prices and the cost of the planting materials should be maintained only as a small component of the total cost of production; the farmers should receive fair prices for their produce and not be exploited by middlemen; governments should be assisted in studying market systems for farm produce with the aim of identifying and overcoming market inefficiencies, so that both farmers and consumers obtain fair prices.

A Corporate Strategy A.3 concerning Early Warning Systems assistance in disaster-related emergencies is, in our view, appropriate to this Asia Region in the light of the haze and trans-boundary pollution problems which were caused by large-scale burning of natural vegetation. The ability to react quickly to potential hot spots in preventing fires, as well as in providing assistance in controlling fires, would significantly reduce the loss of valuable forests and genetic resources.

Finally, as a result of the economic downturn, the capabilities of developing nations in Asia in the implementation of sustainable management of natural resources, in particular forests, according to global standards and requirements, have been much affected. FAO needs to take into consideration this scenario, and develop appropriate strategies to effectively address this worrying trend.

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland)

Firstly, I would like to associate Ireland fully with the statement made by Austria on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Ireland was one of the first countries to ask for a strategic review of the Organization, and we are grateful for what has now been produced. We wish to be positive in our response, as it is a first draft, which we believe forms a useful basis for further work.

At the Hundred and Twelfth Council, we set out five steps which we felt should be followed in developing the strategic process in FAO. I would like to very briefly examine the document before us in terms of the requirements we set out at that time.

Firstly, we said that there should be a clear analysis of the environment in which the Organization must operate and of the opportunities and threats in that environment. We see the section on long-term trends in Part 1 of the Strategy document as a very useful beginning in this respect. The statement made on behalf of the European Community has already indicated some improvements that could be made to this section.

The second step that we called for was an honest assessment of the Organization's strengths and weaknesses. This is more difficult to find in the current draft, although important elements of it are in Part 3, in particular. We would like to see this aspect of the document strengthened. For example, we would prefer to see a much more determined statement of intent to improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy within the Organization.

The third step which we suggested at the Hundred and Twelfth Council was that there should be a statement of FAO's broad objective or Mission. This is clearly missing from Part I of the main document before us. We welcome the start made on developing a Mission Statement and Vision Statement for the Organization in the supplementary document CL 115/INF/22, and we also welcome the indication from the Secretariat in their presentation that this will be developed further in Version 2.0 of the Strategy Framework. We would suggest that we should look to relevant conclusions of the World Food Summit and other recent international conferences, Copenhagen, Peking and Rio, in particular, in developing the Mission and Vision Statements of the Organization. I think it was the US delegate who criticized the document for being insufficiently future-oriented, and it is precisely because the conclusions of these Conferences are future-oriented, that we suggest they would be a suitable source of inspiration for a Mission Statement.

The fourth step we suggested at the Hundred and Twelfth Council was the development of a clear set of Strategic Objectives and Priorities with appropriate targets and performance indicators.

As a final step we called for a clear work planning mechanism to ensure that the actual work of the Organization is in line with the strategy.

We expect to see some of these elements in future Medium-Term Plans and Programmes of Work and Budget. However, in this document we would expect to see a clear statement of objective criteria for establishing priorities at the level of actions and outputs. These could then be implemented in the Programme of Work and Budget in particular. This is a vital ingredient and a key link between this stage and subsequent stages of the strategic process. As suggested in the European Community statement, we would like to see the material in paragraph 102 developed further in this regard.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Mr Wade, Ms Killingsworth and the others involved for the work they have done so far. We look forward to the continuation of the effort to clearly define FAO's role and functions in the Twenty-first Century, and to provide a clear mechanism for linking this strategic focus with the actual work of staff members.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría la presentación de este documento que constituye una buena base de partida para ir consiguiendo consensos sobre lo que constituirá el punto de referencia de la actividad futura de la Organización. Queremos ante todo endosar lo señalado por la Representación de Ecuador a nombre del GRULAC. Mi delegación desea hacer algunas observaciones adicionales a este importante documento.

Con relación a la Primera parte, si bien coincidimos sobre las tendencias planteadas, estimamos que algunas de éstas podrían reordenarse, teniendo como referencia los objetivos de la Organización a este respecto. Estimamos necesario enfatizar particularmente los desafíos que se plantean al desarrollo.

Sobre la Segunda parte del texto, que constituye la parte central de la Estrategia, estimamos que ésta debe enfatizar ante todo el mandato de la Organización, con particular referencia a los acuerdos alcanzados en la Cumbre Mundial. De hecho este ejercicio responde a los resultados que

subscribieron los Países en la Cumbre. Creemos igualmente que el documento debe observar un equilibrio entre las tres actividades básicas de la Organización. Esto es informativo, normativo y de cooperación técnica.

El compromiso de la FAO con la erradicación de la pobreza debe constituir un pilar de la Estrategia. Entre algunas áreas particulares que estimamos deben ser reforzadas, se encuentra el importante papel que la mujer desempeña en el logro y alcance de la meta de los acuerdos de la Cumbre. Igualmente, nos gustaría ver reflejados lo que estimamos se transformará en uno de los problemas más acuciantes para los países en desarrollo en el futuro, el problema del agua. Sobre estos puntos mi delegación entregará a la Secretaría algunas propuestas concretas de redacción.

Finalmente, deseamos reiterar que la propuesta presentada sobre el cometido de la Organización se ajuste al mandato de la FAO.

Raúl ALEGRETT (Venezuela)

Voy a tratar de hacer un resumen de mi exposición en favor del tiempo. Quisiera comenzar por señalar que si bien el documento es una contribución muy importante y que reúne muchos elementos de interés, debería quizás ordenarse y hacerse más conciso.

Yo pienso que una estrategia en los momentos actuales y en el futuro previsible debe fundamentalmente contestar a cuatro preguntas: ¿Cómo lograr que los países en desarrollo fortalezcan su producción interna? ¿Cómo hacer que la intensificación del comercio y la globalización contribuyan a fortalecer la seguridad alimentaria? ¿Cómo garantizar el acceso de todos a una alimentación adecuada? y finalmente ¿Qué instrumentos de cooperación internacional necesitamos y cómo podemos hacer para que la FAO juegue un rol de liderazgo tomando en cuenta desde luego el mandato de la Organización?

Yo pienso que el documento en sus aspectos esenciales abunda en demasiados elementos y argumentos que diluyen lo esencial de la propuesta y que, como lo hemos escuchado de muchos delegados, oscurecen la finalidad, los objetivos, el propósito y las estrategias. Debemos cuidar que la estrategia no se confunda y en algunos momentos no sobrepase el lindero de las medidas tácticas, de los detalles. Tenemos 114 Consejos, oyendo hablar del apoyo a la extensión, del control sanitario, de la investigación, todo esto es muy importante y lo ratificamos, pero tenemos que ir a los aspectos de fondo y observamos que el documento apenas en la parte de perspectivas en los términos de normas hace una pequeña mención a la importancia de las mismas pero realmente hace poca referencia al fondo de los problemas como nosotros los visualizamos.

Pensamos además que se podría reducir mucho en el aspecto de las tendencias. Yo creo que si las tendencias en su exposición no son suficientemente contundentes y claras por sí mismas y necesitan mucha explicación, en realidad es porque no están suficientemente fundamentadas. Yo creo que dichas tendencias, que en general compartimos, podrían eventualmente formar parte de un anexo.

Creo que este documento tiene que ser mucho más consistente, mucho más claro y preciso, mucho más esencial y fundamental y no confundir objetivos fundamentales o esenciales con objetivos instrumentales. Considero que todos estos son elementos que nos van a ayudar en la reflexión y en la discusión, pero yo llamaría la atención, como lo hace por lo demás el documento del GRULAC que endosamos plenamente, a que no quitemos importancia a los aspectos substanciales con aspectos que son importantes, pero que han sido ampliamente discutidos durante muchos años, que sabemos que se requieren pero que no son sino instrumentos que tienen que cumplirse en el marco de unas políticas, de unas normas muy claras y muy comprometidas.

Así es que yo pediría en ese sentido que el documento próximo, además de que esté sujeto a una amplia discusión y participación de todos los Miembros, incluya esta visión más centrada, más fundamental y más actualizada de los problemas de nuestro tiempo, ya que es un documento fundamental para la Organización y para la agricultura y la alimentación de nuestros países.

Yo quisiera terminar mi exposición haciendo una solicitud. Yo quisiera hacer una propuesta al Consejo para que si en un tiempo determinado, veinte minutos o media hora, no hemos concluido

con este tema, pospongamos la discusión del siguiente Tema para el día de mañana. Si pudiéramos nosotros concluir a las 6 de la tarde o a la 6:10, yo creo que podríamos darnos una media hora, de lo contrario creo que un Tema de la importancia del que debemos abordar no va a tener la asistencia necesaria.

CHAIRMAN

We have agreed that we will finish this Agenda Item before we take a break, so I will go on and invite Uganda to take the floor.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Uganda wishes to comment generally on the Strategic Framework which the Secretariat has presented to us. I do this under the following items.

With regard to the concerted methodology; Uganda wishes to endorse the consultative method that the Secretariat has used to develop consensus over issues that affect Member Nations. This system -- one vote for one nation -- is vital because then each Government, whether developed, developing, large or small, is listened to and its views recorded.

Concerning regularly presented views and offices, Uganda supported the restructuring of FAO and the reform that brought into being the Regional Offices. This system of decentralization allows the stakeholders to be more readily attended to, and they can easily offer their own feedback regarding policies or technologies that are extended to them. Consultation with the Regional Offices offers the Secretariat the realities that exist in the Member Nations and, therefore, progress towards the World Food Summit goals can be precisely determined.

On the subject of development of strategies and identification of barriers; while the goals or the Commitments of the World Food Summit were set, the strategies to achieve them are still being developed. Uganda calls on FAO to support Member Nations to develop appropriate and implemental strategies relevant to each country. These strategies should be homegrown, involving the concerned people.

We commend FAO for the Special Programme for Food Security, which has proved its flexibility to suit individual Member Nations according to the most important priority of that country.

Water will remain the most important single requirement for agriculture. To us in Africa and the developing world, this must be our focus as the climate changes. Let the campaign for a water sources for each small-scale farmer in Africa and the developing world be developed as a major strategy, if we are to realize the goal of reducing by half the number of undernourished people by the year 2015. Uganda has chosen this strategy, and has started to sensitize farmers.

TCP resources are scarce and they need to be used appropriately. We, in Uganda -- and I suppose the developing world -- support the TCPs. They stimulate and initiate problem-solving and development. We call upon FAO to review the way this money is allocated so that the largest portion is spent on the issue to be studied or solved, rather than on travel and allowances for expatriots.

Regarding the involvement of politicians, we believe that there was great insight by the Director-General and the FAO Committee organizing the World Food Summit. The grove of political might were invited and they became party to the Commitments and the Plan of Action. Today many Member Nations find it easy to request support for the Plan of Action, when their leaders still remember their own statements here in Rome. This approach must be kept burning, and here we thank the Director-General of FAO who never fails to call on Heads of States whenever he is on his working trips.

Uganda notes, with appreciation, the involvement of parliamentarians in the follow-up activities of the World Food Summit. We have been informed of a meeting to be held soon here in Rome by parliamentarians from all over the world. These politicians approve the budgets of Member Nations, approve the government policies and sanction aid and all borrowing of governments. We need to keep them as close as possible as partners.

Last year at the Conference, we had an uphill task to approve the Budget. We saw an increased mandate of FAO, due to the World Food Summit Commitments, and at least quite a number of countries wanted the budget reduced. While we all called for effective use of funds, Member States, especially in the developed world, with strong economies should offer more support so that FAO can have an adequate Budget to enable it to fulfil the mandate that we collectively determine at the Council meetings.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

For Version 2.0 of the Strategic Framework, Australia thinks the clear challenge is to operationalize the document which at the moment contains many observations, many descriptions and which is not clearly focused. Without clearly identifying the actions and strategies on which Members and Technical Committees can focus, we will have a document which is going to fail to lead us to what many of us want for Version 3.0 and ultimately Version 4.0. A number of my colleagues have picked this up.

Going to the various aspects which we could look at to try and make this a reality for Version 2.0, I would certainly agree with South Africa and Venezuela that we have now set up, in the first part of the document, a number of trends which generally cover a broad range of issues and which will certainly affect the Organization. However, in terms of focusing on what is needed for the Strategic Framework, what is going to lead to the Organization being able to move in the right directions, we feel these could certainly move into some sort of an annex.

That brings us then to focus on Part 2, which is really the Objectives and the Strategies. In this regard, I would look at firstly a number of the questions that were asked of the Council by the Joint Committees, in document CL 115/19, particularly paragraph 20 where there were various approaches put up. I would suggest that an approach would be to have six key headings, lifted basically as they are from the document, but with some slight changes.

Firstly, we would have "Contributing to the eradication to food insecurity and rural poverty". I would suggest, in fact, that given the discussions we have had over the last day, a focus on emergencies and FAO's role in those is something that is so significant that it could well behave us to identify this as a separate area for consideration.

'B' would be promoting developing and reinforcing policies in regulatory frameworks for food and agriculture, as it currently exists. 'C', I would suggest, should in fact be combined with 'D'. It is interesting that in the draft document, sustainability appears in both 'C' and 'D', and this to me is the crucial linking element, which is certainly discussed in CL 115/INF/22. Where the Secretariat decides to perhaps keep them separate, I think there are very strong arguments for us to underpin that production needs to be sustainable, and this is a crucial element in all of the objectives in relation to production, conservation, etc.

We would then have; "Making available a global information data base", etc. I would then suggest we pick up the "food, agriculture, natural resource emergencies" as a clear and distinct objective.

I would also suggest picking up the points made by countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom, that Part 3 is very important to the carrying out of the Organization's challenges over the next fifteen years. As a result, I would suggest it should come in as the final objective and would be something along the lines of "Ensuring world-class management", etc.

So we would therefore have six objectives. The various strategies, A1, etc., I think flow quite neatly from these as a start for the focus of discussion. However, under that I think we then need to use the model we have had put to us in Part 3 already, where we have clearly identified Strategies. I would like to see the Part 3 model used in Version 2.0 in all parts, so that there is a very clear indication of Strategies and that these are laid out more clearly than in various paragraphs at the moment. They do need, I think, a better focus to allow the Technical Committees, etc., to zero in what should be a basis for pulling together a document which will lead us to an effective Organization fifteen years from now. So cut down as much as possible on the descriptions, and focus on Strategies and Actions.

The element of partnerships, I think, needs to be certainly clarified, and the role of FAO and its relationships with other partners is an element which should very clearly be in the next Version 2.0.

The Mission Vision Statement and Values, I think was an interesting first attempt by the Secretariat. I would suggest that for Version 2.0, we focus in on the idea of the Mission at this stage in our work-in-progress. However, like others, I think the Mission we have there is an excuse for what has already gone before rather than a significant future-oriented effort. I certainly hope that Version 2.0 can improve on that to give an element of fifteen years from now rather than a repetition largely of what we already have in the document.

I think, however, that we are moving successfully. I hope that many of the points that have been made today, which pick up actions rather than descriptions, can be included in Version 2.0. This will make a much better basis for discussion about a document which will move us to 2015.

Etsuo KITAHARA (Japan)

We appreciate the efforts made by the Secretariat in preparing the first draft of the Strategic Framework, which we believe will serve as a basis for setting a long-term guideline for FAO activities.

I would like to make some comments on several points. First of all, with regard to the Mission Statement, we share the idea of adding the Mission Statement to the Strategic Framework. In preparing a Mission Statement, we think that the Statement should be concisely defined in line with the mandate of FAO as a whole. In this regard, the Preamble and Article I of the FAO Constitution, the results of the World Food Summit and other recent International Conferences should collectively form a basis for formulating a draft Mission Statement.

Secondly, I would like to touch upon the issue of resource availability relating to the Strategic Framework. We think that the Strategic Framework is intended to set out the future orientation of FAO activities. If so, this document should be a presentation of prioritization of programmes of FAO with full recognition of the limited availability of resources for FAO and the desirability of collaboration with other international organizations. In this context, it is disappointing to us that we are unable to have an opportunity to review the responses from other international organizations on the issue of the draft Strategic Framework.

I have to point out that the first draft of the Strategic Framework includes several paragraphs, such as paragraph 127, which we think are unrealistic or optimistic. My delegation expects that the first draft of the Strategic Framework should be appropriately revised, taking into account possible resource constraints.

Finally, I fully support the statement made by the delegate of Poland on the issue of multifunctional agriculture. We also share the view that the future development of multifunctional agriculture should be incorporated in later versions of the draft Strategic Framework because multifunctionality of agriculture could serve as a framework for policy analysis. As a matter of fact, a further discussion will be made under the title of "Multifunctionality: A Framework for Policy Analysis" in early December in OECD, based on a broad agreement among all of the OECD members, on the occasion of the OECD Agricultural Ministerial Meeting last May on the need for a conceptual analysis of the scope and the policy implications of multifunctionality of agriculture.

I also support the statements made by the delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran yesterday and the delegates of Indonesia and Malaysia this afternoon, who emphasized the importance of promoting domestic production to the maximum extent possible, because I do not think the task of stable food supplies is to be left to specific countries. Our common issue of attaining food security for all is the matter all the countries are expected to address.

Mallam Issah SEIDU (Ghana)

I wish to congratulate the Secretariat for putting together this huge volume of responses on various aspects for this discussion. We also wish to congratulate Mr Wade and Ms Killingsworth for their detailed presentations.

My delegation broadly concurs with the views expressed by the Joint Session of the Programme and Finance Committees in document CL 115/19. As we look through the document CL 115/19, we continue to reflect on its opening statement which said that it contained the first draft of a proposed Strategic Framework to guide the work of FAO in the medium and long-term. We underline the word "guide". In referring further to the Preamble of the Constitution of FAO in the same document, it said "it requires the Organization to take all necessary and appropriate action to implement the purpose of raising the level of nutrition and standard of living and bettering the condition of rural populations". As it is not evident, the areas requiring urgent improvement in nutrition and living condition are the group of Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries.

It is, therefore, the view of my delegation that improvement of the Organization's image will depend on the extent to which its store of knowledge is directed to solving the problem of feeding the growing number of malnourished people in this part of the world.

FAO's normative work should, therefore, be focused more on testing and demonstrating means of alleviating rural poverty and improving food security. It is only after a creditable demonstration of success has been achieved that we believe the required investment funds can be mobilized from both domestic and international sources to support this effort.

In this context, my delegation urges that the Strategic Framework should be tailored in a way to demonstrate the key components of the Special Programme for Food Security and its expanded stage. The Strategy Framework should, therefore, emphasize the eradication of food insecurity, developing and reinforcing policies and regulating the framework for sustainable development of our natural resources. We propose emphasis and simplicity of these objectives because it will enable FAO to communicate them better to the principal beneficiaries.

In brief, my delegation would like to see a Strategic Framework that is short and to the point. We initially thought this could be achieved by combining some of the Corporate Strategies, but in reviewing the rationale for grouping and sequencing of the strategies in document CL 115/22 and from the explanation given by Ms Killingsworth, my delegation can agree with the present structure but we recommend a drastic shuffling of the contents of the Objectives.

Marcel Eugene Ibinga MAGWANGU (Gabon)

Il se fait tard. Je voulais tout simplement me limiter à dire ceci: le Gabon soutient, naturellement, l'effort qui a été fait par le Secrétariat. Il estime toutefois que le document qui est soumis à notre examen manque de réalisme pour ce qui concerne la Stratégie à mener en matière d'amélioration de la production agricole, de la lutte contre l'insécurité alimentaire.

Pour coller aux résultats, aux conclusions et recommandations du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, nous estimons que le document doit être beaucoup plus hardi sur la méthodologie, sur les mécanismes de coopération, pour permettre à chaque pays, aux groupes de pays, de développer leurs propres capacités à lutter contre l'insécurité alimentaire. Sur ce sujet, je remettrai une déclaration écrite au Secrétariat.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I will be very short because I have nothing to add to what the Austrian President of the European Union has just said.

I would like only to underline three points. Firstly we agree, of course, on the importance of normative activities but we consider field activities as complementary to normative ones, the two mutually reinforcing each other.

Secondly, I would like to see forestry placed higher on the agenda of the Secretariat document as a core area for the Organization as Protection of natural resources in forestry and fisheries is one of the main objectives of the Organization.

Thirdly, I think that a Strategic Framework of FAO should be produced in close connection with the Rome-based Agencies analysis and in conjunction with the on-going UN Reform effort. I refer to my intervention of yesterday on the Alliance for Agricultural Development and thank the delegation of the Republic of Korea-- I am sorry he is not here -- for the support it gave to me.

D.F.R. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

I was happy to know that there was really no need for introduction by the Chairman of the Joint Meeting, as well as the Programme Committee, and I felt our debate has been very well reflected in your very rich and mature reactions and debate at the Council.

What I wanted to mention first and, on behalf of the Members of both Committees, is our satisfaction the impact produced by the document. At least we noticed.

Secondly, I want to thank the Secretariat for reacting immediately to the requests we made for additional information. The additional information has been provided. We note that there were shortcomings, particularly with regard to the reaction of external partners. This was beyond the control of the Organization. Certainly, this concern will be reflected in the next version.

There is only one small point at the end. Only one delegation referred to a question which we raised in the Programme Committee. This was regarding the schedule of reviews by the Technical Committees of the Council, not only COFO, COFI and so on, but also the CFS. Ecuador, speaking on behalf of the Latin American Group, supported the idea that the CFS should be involved.

I have here the reaction of the Secretariat of the CFS, including the Chairman, who was approached on this matter. He was quite reluctant to become involved because he said "for the next meeting in 1999 we have a full agenda, please do not put us also on the stake of reviewing the Strategy".

So I leave this with you. It is a final decision of the Council, because we recommend that the Council should decide if CFS is involved or not.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

En nombre de la Delegación de Chile quisiera hacer algunas reflexiones sobre tan importante documento que nos ha entregado la Secretaría que constituye sin duda un trabajo que va a guiar las labores de la Organización por más de una década. Nos han sorprendido algunos conceptos, como ventajas comparativas, gestión por objetivos, gestión basada en el cliente, planificación estratégica de la empresa, *benchmark*, fortalezas estratégicas de la Organización, debilidades ante la competencia, amenazas prevalecientes, etc. Son elementos que los he escuchado en una visión más bien gerencial en empresas privadas y se lo digo con conocimiento de causa. Éstos surgen, naturalmente, por una necesidad de la empresa privada para fortalecer su posición en un mercado competitivo. Dicho eso, nos preguntamos hasta qué punto un análisis de los términos expresados en el documento pueden ser aplicados en toda su extensión a la labor de la Organización.

Comprendemos que existen dos marcos conceptuales que deben guiar la Organización, su Texto Constitutivo y el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre. Pero permítame, señor Presidente, si se definen los enfoques estratégicos de la Organización y se aprueban de este modo en la próxima Conferencia, ¿qué posibilidades tienen los pequeños países que sus demandas de apoyo de la FAO puedan ser escuchadas si están fuera o en un nivel menor de prioridad definido en los marcos estratégicos del año 2000-2015? ¿Qué pasará con el proceso posterior a la definición de un plan estratégico 2000-2015? ¿será un proceso continuo de revisión del documento? Si el mundo exterior está en rápida evolución como así lo define el documento significa que, por lo tanto, deberá ser un documento flexible y de revisión permanente en el tiempo y, como creemos entender, esto es definir un Marco Estratégico del 2000 al 2015 sin revisiones posteriores. ¿Qué

pasará si al final los requerimientos presupuestarios del Marco Estratégico 2000-2015 son superiores al actual presupuesto de la Organización?

Creemos que el Marco Estratégico debe tener dos grandes aspectos: uno, como la Organización mejora su capacidad de respuesta a los desafíos de la Cumbre Mundial y otro, la mejor gestión de la Organización y que no necesariamente se vincula con una redifinición de la Misión de la FAO, puesto que aunque no se haya deseado el trabajo realizado expuesto en estos documentos, sí el Marco Estratégico abre un debate sobre las metas convenidas por los Estados Miembros.

Hemos escuchado una serie de conceptos que aquí se analizan y nos llama a reflexión que se esté hablando de nuevos conceptos que aún no existen acuerdos más allá de los obtenidos en los documentos aprobados por los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno en la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. Creemos que se debe elaborar un documento sencillo, claro, con acciones definidas de cómo la Organización enfrentará los desafíos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación y, por otra parte, un Marco Estratégico de la gestión administrativa y presupuestaria y que no necesariamente están definitivamente ligadas. Estimamos que este esfuerzo de reflexión es de gran utilidad para mejor comprender los variados desafíos que tiene la Organización ante sí y también nos permite subrayar la necesidad de incrementar la solidaridad internacional que tenemos todos los Estados Miembros en los ámbitos de competencia específica de la FAO.

Permítame terminar, señor Presidente, con una pequeña reflexión. Cuando un automóvil está detenido por falta de combustible aun cuando usted rediseñe el automóvil, aun cuando disminuya su tamaño, le cambie el tamaño de las llantas, éste no podrá caminar porque no tiene combustible.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador de Perú)

Agradezco a los señores Representantes que han participado en el debate por el nivel enriquecedor aportado al mismo y porque me han permitido ir reduciendo mi discurso a límites de lo imaginable.

En primer término, déjeme que exprese la constancia de nuestro apoyo a la declaración efectuada por el señor Representante del Ecuador, Presidente del GRULAC, en cuyo contexto hacemos la presente intervención. Nuestro saludo al Señor Presidente del Comité del Programa, que tuvo a bien hacer un resumen en su momento a la Secretaría. Me consta el trabajo sustantivo que han estado haciendo ellos a lo largo de este año. A ella hemos entregado ya un documento escrito, una contribución inicial con vista a la Versión 2.0 y a ustedes Señores Representantes que realmente han mostrado su interés en este momento del debate y aprendiendo bastante con la calidad y el nivel de sus intervenciones.

Mi delegación desea señalar que todo este proceso que conduce a la aprobación del Marco Estratégico debe mantenerse participativo, tanto a nivel de los Estados Miembros y de la FAO como a nivel de las mismas delegaciones y de la Secretaría a través de los distintos órganos pertinentes. Aquí, en respuesta a la pregunta del señor Presidente del Comité de Programa, insistimos que también el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria debe estar involucrado en este proceso. La razón es la competencia del Comité en el tema de la Cumbre.

Otro elemento que tiene un alcance preciso y vale la pena mencionarlo aquí, es que mi delegación desaconseja firmemente que se realicen consultas informales al margen de la FAO; este tipo de ejercicio a juicio de mi delegación, afecta la credibilidad del organismo. Esto no va en beneficio de la Organización. Insistimos, todo debate debe efectuarse en el seno de las estructuras existentes, como bien lo precisa la Resolución 6/97 de la Conferencia, y a esto debemos atenernos.

Con relación al contenido del documento y a algunas declaraciones que buscan reducir el texto, mi delegación no está ni en favor ni en contra, pero sí quiere señalar también que cualquier ejercicio que se tratara de hacer en esa dirección, no deberá incidir negativamente ni en el contenido ni en el alcance del mismo, cuyo trasfondo deberá tener siempre a la vista la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y sus Acuerdos.

Respecto a los tres puntos del Marco Estratégico, brevemente los mencionaremos ya que la Secretaría los conoce y en algunas ocasiones hemos intervenido citándolos. En la Parte 1, simplemente, decimos que debe mostrarse el sistema mundial como un todo orgánico, donde se inserten de manera natural las tendencias globales, el rol de la FAO, su Visión y su Misión, teniéndose en cuenta los objetivos del organismo. Para esto simplemente retomamos además del documento central, el que acaba de preparar la Secretaría: el CL 115/INF/22. En ese sentido no estamos de acuerdo con delegaciones que tratan de reducir o eliminar o de poner como anexo esta primera parte.

En la Parte 2, las Cinco Estrategias tienen un alcance operacional y creemos que guardan una coherencia interna, la cual no la demostraré ahora puesto que ya he hablado de ello en detalle en el pasado. Considero que no debe reducirse su número. Al mismo tiempo como ya hemos indicado en otras ocasiones en lo que se refiere a la Estrategia Operacional 3, se deben incluir los términos referidos a la producción o a la productividad. En relación a la Parte 3, cuando se habla de garantizar la excelencia, mi delegación entiende por ello la especialización de la FAO en áreas específicas donde tiene un rol determinante. A ese respecto, se deben favorecer los programas de cooperación técnica relacionados especialmente con el desarrollo rural y con la transferencia tecnológica, sin olvidar al Programa Especial para Seguridad Alimentaria (PESA).

Voy a hacer referencia breve, puesto que algunas delegaciones lo han ya tocado: la disponibilidad y la asignación de recursos aunque no sea un tema directo de este debate. Simplemente voy a basarme en la reflexión hecha en su momento por Argelia. Nosotros dejamos claro nuestro punto de vista en el sentido que los debates no deberán adelantar opiniones sobre la orientación del Marco Estratégico, que pueda tender a confinarlo a él como a la Organización a un presupuesto que no cubra las necesidades del normal desenvolvimiento de la FAO y de sus Programas. En otras palabras, debemos superar la situación presente del repetido decrecimiento real que experimenta el presupuesto regular desde ya hace varios bienios.

Todo este ejercicio deberá asegurarnos en el futuro la vigencia de la FAO en el sistema multilateral a partir de su rol en lo que concierne a la seguridad alimentaria y al cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Cumbre.

Finalmente una pregunta para la Secretaría que suplico me la resuelva en su momento y es en referencia a su documento CL 115/INF/22, Visión, punto siete ¿Cómo se concilia el primer acápite "Centro de Excelencia" con la vertiente o proyecto TCP toda vez que se trata de un área cuyos proyectos deben resultar, a mi juicio, en un impacto en el desarrollo socio-económico del país beneficiario, por lo menos en lo que ya dije en su momento Programas de Desarrollo Rural y Transferencia Tecnológica?

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

I apologize for taking the floor again, but a hoary issue has been raised and I feel I must add a balance to the discussion.

This relates to the question of multifunctionality, and Australia would certainly be alarmed by suggestions that FAO embrace the elements of this in its Strategic Framework if, as we understand the term particularly when it is linked to the OECD, the use of multifunctionality is a justification for high levels of subsidization. We note that this is in the interests of neither developed nor developing countries and therefore, on that basis, it would certainly not be advisable for our Strategic Framework to take into, and possibly support, those sorts of policies which damage developing countries' agricultural interests by denying them access to markets for agricultural exports and by also distorting agricultural trade.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

On the same subject, I was also particularly concerned to hear comments about the multifunctionality of agriculture, particularly used in the same expression as those who are seeking to, and I quote from the delegate of Japan, "promote domestic production to the

maximum extent possible", which, as the delegate of Australia just mentioned, implies cutting all developed and developing country suppliers out of markets.

Under this Agenda Item, we are discussing a Strategic Framework for FAO. People are now trying to introduce multifunctionality and even suggest that multifunctionality should become "a framework for policy development". Japan mentioned the OECD study on multifunctionality. That document tries to describe multifunctionality, and it includes aspects such as cultural heritage and social concerns.

Here we are trying to focus FAO on its key activities. That is the one thing that we have heard consistently this afternoon, not to expand FAO's examination into areas such as cultural heritage. Let us stick, in this discussion, to aspects of FAO's key mandate as spelt out in the documents that a number of people have referred to. Let us let organizations that have a broader economic mandate discuss things such as the production of public goods and external effects of agricultural production on landscape.

Etsuo KITAHARA (Japan)

I do not have any intention of prolonging this argument but I also feel I need to strike a balance in the amount of discussions.

First of all, I would like to draw the attention of all of you to a simple fact. Multifunctionality of agriculture is clearly stated in Commitment 3 of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which all of us agreed to.

Secondly, OECD is not the only forum to discuss this issue. As everybody knows, FAO and the Netherlands will jointly host an International Conference next year on the issue of Multifunctional Agriculture and Land.

Thirdly, I do not share the simple summary made by the delegate of Canada. He stated that multifunctionality of agriculture is a notion based on cultural heritage. That is not correct. I do not want to go into detail on this matter, and I hope that I will have a chance to come back to this issue tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN

I think that your comments have to be taken into due consideration by the Secretariat.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for Philippines)

Thank you for allowing the Philippine delegation to present its views.

It is late and it is apparent that there is an emerging food insecurity among participants of this meeting.

We would concentrate on one particular issue that we feel will significantly affect the successful realization of the goals addressed by the Strategic Framework. We do have general and other specific comments and suggestions, but these will be forwarded in a specific document that will be submitted to the Secretariat tomorrow.

Prior to that, let me inform you that since we were not recognized nor allowed to present the Philippine Statement on the World Food and Agricultural Situation yesterday. For lack of time, I am not going to present it this time. The delegation is submitting such statement for the Council's kind consideration.

Let me then proceed and direct your attention to recent developments in the world trade order which, we submit, have significant bearing on the success or failure of developing countries' food security and poverty alleviation programmes. Trade liberalization, from our point of view, offers both vast opportunities for benefits, as well as serious threats to the food and agricultural sectors of developing countries like the Philippines. We specifically refer to the necessity of obtaining balance in the nature of the emerging world trade order that also takes into consideration the concerns and sensitivities of developing countries. By this, we mean a reasonable balance

between market access and fewer tariff reductions on the one hand, and the elimination of export subsidies and non-tariff barriers on the other.

CHAIRMAN

Delegate from the Philippines, I am sorry to interrupt.

I think we should limit ourselves, contain ourselves, to the current Agenda Item, and yesterday we also gave the Philippines the opportunity to speak as an Observer.

Please limit yourself to comments on the current Agenda Item.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for Philippines)

The major developing countries are now deep in their preparations for the inevitable next round of WTO negotiations. Whichever is the case, whether this is a comprehensive round or confined to the built-in Agenda on Agriculture and Services, this delegation submits that developing countries are at a disadvantage, given the logistical and technical requirements of preparations and actual negotiations. If, due to these constraints, the optimal balance we desire for the next Round is not achieved, we have adequate reason to expect negative consequences for the food and agriculture sectors in the developing economies which will, in turn, negatively impact on their food security and poverty alleviation programmes.

We therefore submit that FAO seriously considers intensifying current efforts of assisting the developing economies to make the necessary preparations for this next Round for technical and reasonably adequate logistical support programmes. We believe that adequately prepared parties to this forthcoming Round will result in an Agreement that estimates optimal balance in facing conducive to the furtherance of world food security so succinctly presented in today's session.

This delegation would like to take this opportunity to thank FAO for its active role and significant contribution to the countries' food security programmes and we commend everybody, including the Chairman, for the uncommon resilience and endurance.

Per Harald GRUE (Observer for Norway)

Norway associates itself with the statement given by Austria on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Speaking on behalf of the Nordic group, Norway would like to welcome the current debate on the Strategic Framework of FAO. The Nordic Countries want to give their support to this process towards formulating a Strategy based on thorough analysis and directions given by the membership.

We believe that FAO has an extremely important but difficult task to fulfil responding to the global development described in the Strategy paper. Therefore, FAO has to maintain and strengthen its position as a key agenda setter in food and agricultural matters on the international level. FAO must be prepared to take a leading role in issues related not only to agriculture but also to forestry and fisheries, making sure that all relevant issues are, indeed, being debated and integrated at all levels in a global policy setting.

This means that FAO has to maintain and develop its status as a Centre of Excellence. The best possible way to do this is for FAO to do excellent normative work. This will serve as a much more effective marketing strategy, than huge mass media events. The relation between FAO's normative and operative activities has been much debated. It is a clear position of the Nordic Countries that operative activities should serve as support to normative activities. This is the best way to utilize the unique position that FAO holds.

FAO has a broad mandate, and the questions related to food security do indeed extend into a variety of activities and possible areas for action. In order to use the scarce resources that are directed to development in general, and agriculture in particular, it is essential that all actors including FAO, cooperate extensively and divide the work so that all actors concentrate on their essential strong points.

It is, therefore, paramount that FAO can demonstrate a competitive edge in the activities given priority in the Strategy. To identify the essential strong points, the results of the internal analysis must be applied systematically, just as an extensive partnership analysis must be developed and applied.

As a member of the UN family, FAO should participate actively in reform of the United Nations System and, particularly, relate actively to the Strategy process.

Turning to the development of the Strategic Framework, it is the opinion of the Nordic Countries that the priorities should be clarified and selected on the basis of relevant criteria. In the Strategy paper, FAO refers to five criteria. These criteria are related to FAO's mandate and capacity, transboundary implications, potential for international agreement, clear and growing demand for action and a demonstrated competitive edge. These criteria are highly relevant. Thus, they should be applied systematically in order to select the right priorities for the Strategy.

FAO has issued two working papers describing the normative work and the field activities for the Organization, namely, the New Approach for the FAO Field Programme, and secondly, FAO's Normative Activities. We find that the deliberations of these papers are valuable and should be better reflected in the Strategic Framework. It is suggested that the Organization should mobilize donations from private individuals. The Nordic Countries would like to emphasize that FAO is an Intergovernmental Organization, working on a mandate given by its Members. It is of utmost importance that Member Governments maintain their responsibility in providing adequate funding for the approved Programme. A strong dependency on private contributions could seriously jeopardize the independence of the Organization.

The Nordic Countries would also like to see the forestry and fisheries sectors, as well as women's role in agriculture better reflected in the Strategy paper. The recommendations reached at this stage should be incorporated into the Programme of Work and Budget for the year 2000 and 2001 that will be presented at the next session of the Council.

We also look forward to the upcoming discussions in the Technical Committees and the CFS, expecting an extensive dialogue and involvement of the Member Nations in the rest of the Strategy process.

Finally, we would like to welcome the Strategic Framework once again. We look forward to participating in the discussions in the coming year, and we hope that the process will secure that FAO keeps its rightful place as the central Organization in fields of food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries while, at the same time, achieving the maximum results from the limited funds made available.

Lothar CAVIEZEL (Observateur de la Suisse)

La Suisse soutient la déclaration de l'Union européenne. J'essayerai d'être aussi bref que possible. Je ne reviens pas sur tout ce qui a été dit jusqu'à maintenant; je voudrais me concentrer sur quelques points qui, à mon avis, ne figurent pas d'une façon suffisamment claire, et que je voudrais faire ressortir.

Nous sommes d'avis que le Cadre stratégique devrait être précédé d'un chapeau – la Vision et la Mission – qui devrait, entre autres, faire ressortir des thèmes transversaux tels que la lutte contre la pauvreté, la promotion du statut de la femme, la protection de l'environnement et, en particulier, la participation de l'ensemble des acteurs aux activités de sécurité alimentaire. Il nous semble que, dans ce document, la participation des bénéficiaires sur le terrain, dans le projet, n'est pas suffisamment mentionnée. A notre avis, il manque une Sixième stratégie qui devrait viser à renforcer la situation des petits agriculteurs en tant qu'entrepreneurs au niveau des activités agricoles. Ceci pourrait avoir des répercussions sur la manière d'envisager aussi bien la Stratégie B que la Stratégie C.

A notre avis, il n'est pas suffisant d'intégrer davantage les autres acteurs de la société civile dans les projets. Il faut également que la FAO apprenne à déléguer certaines activités réalisées sous forme de projets ou réseaux, et qu'elle se concentre sur les domaines dans lesquels elle a

réellement un rôle incontesté, tels que les forums intergouvernementaux, les cadres politiques internationaux, et la gestion et l'analyse de certaines bases de données au niveau global.

Un domaine dans lequel ceci est particulièrement pertinent est la conservation des ressources naturelles. La FAO doit intégrer les nouvelles connaissances et les objectifs liés à la conservation des ressources naturelles dans ses propres projets, mais il faut que, dans ce domaine, d'autres institutions soient chefs de file, à l'exception du cadre politique, pour la conservation de l'agrobiodiversité, où la FAO offre un forum adéquat.

Mon dernier point concerne le fait qu'il n'est pas prévu de discuter le cadre stratégique au Comité de la sécurité alimentaire. Nous aimerions qu'une discussion puisse avoir lieu lors de la session de mai-juin 1999, pour faire le lien avec le Plan d'action.

B.M. TAAL (UNEP)

Since it is my first time in taking the floor, I would like to congratulate the Secretariat for their attempt to elaborate the Strategic Framework for medium and long-term.

Representing UNEP, the voice of the United Nations System in environmental issues, we are very much mindful of environmental ramifications in our quest to increase food security. However, I am glad that UNEP is identified as one of the partners in paragraph 78 for Information, Dissemination, and Joint Work in Awareness Building and Identification of Solutions.

In section C, Broadening Partnerships and Alliances, UNEP welcomes the role of an enhanced UN System to effectively address multi-sectoral problems and to help translate commitments, particularly environmental-related conventions.

I support the suggestion from Pakistan, India, and Canada among others, on partnerships. Partners should be identified per issue, on roles defined according to comparative advantages. I hope, in refining the draft of Version 2.0, that partners, particularly in the United Nations family, will have the opportunity to review, comment and provide inputs to its finalization. The UN partnership in sectoral issues is already in place, particularly in the forestry sector through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests. This model, I think, could be replicated in other sectors on multi-sectoral programmes, in order to avoid duplication and overlap.

Mrs Bettina CORKE (Observer for the International Alliance of Women)

We thank FAO most sincerely and its Member Nations for this opportunity to comment on this work in progress.

The following comments address Part 3, Strategies to Address Cross-Organizational Issues. IAW's membership consists not only of organizations dedicated to the improvement of the social and economic role and status of women in farming and agri-business but also trade, technical and professional organizations, such as those interested in making the essential linkages between agriculture and nutrition, rural development, water and sanitation, sustainable development, trade and commerce, cooperatives, credit, housing, trade unions, workers' rights and the elimination of poverty. We agree that single issues, research and academic projects can benefit from interdisciplinary approaches, but FAO's long and medium-term plans need pluralistic approaches, as well as pluralistic policy commitments.

The emphasis, as laid out in this document citing the strengthening of bilateralism clients, special interest, single issues, technical concerns of agri-business and FAO relationships, is inadequate. Throughout the document, there is an underlying assumption that this special donor, client interest in FAO will create a capacity-building formulation leading to, and I quote "...development of sound national policies, legislation and institutional mechanisms in food and agriculture". Pluralistic policies, methodologies and approaches must also find their place in this Framework.

In the section on global goals of Members, the second goal in paragraph 32, page 12, is stated in this way "....a related goal based on the formulations of the Constitution, the Quebec Declaration, the World Food Summit Plan of Action and other agreed texts, was that of ensuring the continued and sustainable contribution of agriculture and rural development to economic and social progress

to an expanding world economy and to well-being of all". This goal cannot be sustained on a long-term basis if it is seen solely from the points of view of the donor, market place diversity or the single issue funder. One glaring example of this is the issue of FAO's interdisciplinary gender programmes. They are very useful as a data collection tool but, here again, in this Framework, gender takes the centre stage on behalf of peasant women and subsistence growers of food, rather than sound social and economic advancement programmes for women.

Finally, from our cross-organizational experiences in the field, IAW treats agriculture in the global sense as having two components, farming and agri-business. We know that farming, as opposed to agri-business, is dependent upon the small producer, farmer, peasant, subsistence grower of food. Therefore, we believe that farming and agri-business should be targeted separately in this Strategic Framework. Agri-business as practised in the transnational, speculative global way cannot embrace the same medium or long-term goals as that of farming.

By clearly separating policies, organizations and funding for farming from policies, organizations and funding for agri-business in the Strategic Framework for FAO document, FAO will be able to implement farming and agri-business, policies, organization programmes and funding as requested by their Member Nations in a more transparent and open way, both for farming and for agri-business. This separation, rather than making the implementation of the FAO Constitution and goal two under paragraph 32 more difficult, will, we believe, in fact, facilitate interaction and collaboration between national Governments, Agencies, International Agencies, and their bilateral, multi-lateral civil society, NGO counterparts.

Thank you, once again for on behalf of my Organization for the opportunity to comment on this most crucial and timely document.

Ms Joanna KOCH (Observer for the Associated Country Women of the World)

The Associated Country Women of the World has held a consultative status with FAO since 1947. On behalf of its membership of over 9 million rural women, we urge that the document refer to the important role of education and training, at all levels, in the different fields pertaining to food, nutrition and agriculture, including home economics and extensions which are specifically mentioned in the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

We are also concerned to note that the document contains no mention of the role of women in food security, both in the rural and urban environments and urges, that this be addressed.

Finally, we recommend that consideration be given to the problem of refugees and emergency situations, as well as the problem of international debt.

Ms Francesca RONCHI PROJA (Observer for the International Federation of Home Economics)

This is the first time FAO has asked NGOs to comment on a document of such importance from the policy point of view. My own Federation has responded to this request. We have provided comments in writing to FAO, which I hope will be shared with the delegates and used in preparing the Version 2.0 of this document.

I am also, however, speaking on behalf of the *ad hoc* Group of International NGOs who have represented those residing in Rome. This Group, as you know, comprises 30 important NGOs, and several of the comments that my Federation has officially made to FAO are shared by my colleagues. I will not go into detail on the text, but I would like to underline a few points which are mentioned.

Incidentally, I would like to mention that we regret that, since the *ad hoc* Group is in Rome and meets frequently in FAO Headquarters, we have not been involved in the briefing sessions for the Strategy. This would have helped myself and my colleagues in having a better understanding of the document.

One more consideration which I would like to make is that the Conference has requested the Director-General to develop, not only a strategy, but also an Implementation Programme. We,

frankly, have not found any reference or trace of suggestion of the implementation in the document. I think somebody else has mentioned this today.

In our comments, we have suggested some instruments for implementation of the strategy such as, for example, the establishment of working groups, committees, particularly between FAO and NGOs, on specific subjects or on technical subjects depending on the interest of individual NGOs.

I would like to mention the subject of education and training which my colleague from ACWW has spoken about. We find no reference to the important role of education and training, nor the fields related to food and agriculture, including home economics, agriculture and home economic extensions. We think that FAO has a role in this respect. No mention is made of the role of women in food security, which is clearly stated in all the commitments on the World Food Summit. We are afraid that, with the adoption of the concept of gender equality, we tend to ignore the need to give support to the weaker partner which is the women. I give in my paper - I am not going to insist on this - I am giving you the justifications for having a separate paragraph on the role of women in food security, and not having the issue concealed under a variety of other issues. We consider it should be a separate one.

On the issue of partnerships with NGOs, we would like to suggest that since FAO is emphasizing NGO cooperation, there should be some instrument for implementing such a partnership. This can probably be done by establishing some committees, linking with the NGOs I have already mentioned. In our statement, we have made a commitment suggesting the establishment of other committees, such as for example, on the Education for Family Life and Household Food Security, an Advisory Committee on Women and Families, along the lines of the existing European one for Women in Development.

There are some other suggestions, but the last one which I would like to emphasize is the important role international NGOs have in working with FAO and any UN agency. This is important because NGOs can reach millions of people in developed and developing countries, and can influence the nature of UN agencies policies to the public in general. Therefore, I think we should be careful about the utilization of international NGOs for this purpose, and we are ready to cooperate with FAO in this respect.

Ms Elena LODI-FE (Observer for the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts)

The WAGGGS, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, has 10 million members in 136 countries, and is the largest world association for girls and young women. It would like to raise two points with regard to document CL 115/12.

First, WAGGGS is well aware of the challenges facing FAO in achieving the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, especially the goals and objectives of Commitment One, Two and Seven, fully supported by WAGGGS.

Although WAGGGS is not an agricultural organization, it is closely involved in many issues related to rural life, in particular to rural women, such as food, nutrition, water, environment and health. WAGGGS is conscious of its enormous potential in the field of information dissemination and awareness building, and in education projects regarding the above issues.

A very successful collaboration has been established with the Food and Nutrition Division of FAO. Food and nutrition education and improvement projects are, at present, being implemented in over 26 countries at a national or regional level by the Girl Guides and Girl Scouts national associations.

These are six-year projects and coexist with the FAO – WAGGGS Nutrition Medal Award scheme. This year, the Medal Award presented on World Food Day, was assigned to the Girl Guides of Guatemala, Kenya and New Zealand. Other countries are also working towards the Medal, as Brazil, Great Britain, Austria. We trust WAGGGS will do its share, by 2015, in the common fight against hunger and malnutrition.

WAGGGS has actively cooperated with the FAO SDR Division, and would welcome stronger links with this Division and the SDRE Service, as it is aware of the paramount importance of human resources and the priority of education and training in rural areas.

Passing to the second point of this comment, and in the light of the positive spirit of document CL 115/12 paragraphs 108-115 "Strategies to address cross-organizational issues - Broadening Partnerships and Alliances", WAGGGS would welcome and invite FAO to broaden its cooperation with WAGGGS, as well as with other youth organizations. WAGGGS would particularly like to ensure that there will be greater commitment to gender equality, in the final version of this document. WAGGGS feels there is not sufficient emphasis on women's full and equal participation in all policies, as prospected at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Referring to Chapter 1 "Looking towards 2015", it is with great amazement and regret that WAGGGS notices that there is no mention of youth in all the 137 paragraphs of the document. The youth of today will be the leaders in 2015, and they will question the UN strategies, and its fight against hunger and malnutrition. WAGGGS is among many organizations which believe that youth should be involved in all decision-making endeavours. However, on subsequently reading today document CL 115/19, the report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, September 1998, we are extremely happy to see that the omission of the word "youth" in document CL 115/12 has been rectified by paragraph 14 of document CL 115/19. We trust that this recognition of the important role of young people will have the constructive attention and active support of all Departments in FAO.

As for "Broadening Partnerships and Alliances", WAGGGS wishes to draw the attention of the FAO Governing Bodies to the need of defining the modalities of FAO-NGO cooperation and relationships, in order to achieve, without delay, and with the help of civil society, INGOs and the private sector, the goals set down by the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

CHAIRMAN

We have concluded our debate on this Item. I now give the floor to the Secretariat.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I should like to respond to only one issue that has come up today, and then ask my colleagues Ms Killingsworth and Mr Wade, to respond to some of the questions that were raised.

In this session on the Strategic Framework, but also in the sessions this morning and yesterday, we have heard many comments about the importance of partnerships. I should like to reassure the members of the Council that we, in the Secretariat, are listening.

The climate for partnership in this Organization is a warm and sunny one. In fact, I believe it is better now than it has ever been before. We believe in partnership. I wish to dispel any doubt that you may have about this. We must believe in partnership. You have told us to. But perhaps, even more importantly, we cannot attain the goals of food security, sustainable resource management, and the World Food Summit by working alone. It is good business to build alliances with others who can help us, others who have financial and technical resources which can complement ours.

We are not seeking to compete with our colleague organizations in the UN System. Rather, we are trying to build more collaboration with them on programmes, projects and activities where such partnership is appropriate and cost-effective. And, yes, we are trying to do this in a way that respects each Organization's respective mandate and comparative advantages and that minimizes or avoids overlap and duplication of effort. I must tell you that a great deal of progress has been made on this - substantive, concrete and real progress.

My colleague, Mr Taal from UNEP, has given us one example from forestry, but there are many others, such as with the World Bank and with the Rome-based Food Agencies. In particular, I should like to reassure you that the relationship among FAO, WFP and IFAD is a strong one. We meet regularly at all levels, including the level of the Director-General and the Executive Heads,

at the level of the Deputies and at various staff levels, and we are cooperating significantly on substantive work and in good spirit.

We are also building more fruitful partnerships with NGOs, the private sector and various elements of civil society. And we are trying to enhance the open and trusting dialogue that must exist between the Secretariat and you, the Organization's Member Nations.

In sharing this perspective with you, I hope that I do not appear defensive. I am agreeing with you. We believe in partnership. We are listening, and we have been for a long time. But partnership does not happen naturally, and once you reach a comfortable state of partnership, you cannot let it run on automatic pilot. Partnerships require commitment, initiative and constant attention and vigilance. We must be constantly trying to improve them, to make them stronger, more effective, and better; otherwise they will naturally weaken.

That is why we have given so much attention to partnerships in this Strategic Framework. There is a special Section on it, and each of the Strategies also has a section that deals with partnerships. Although we believe we are doing a good job on partnerships, as we go through the final stages of developing the Strategic Framework, we are very much looking forward to your constructive and very specific suggestions on how we can do still better. Thank you.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

I would like to thank Members for the enormous range of comments, suggestions, compliments, critiques - a very wide range of comments which will be very helpful for us. I do not think it is appropriate to try and address all the comments, since we are really here to listen and absorb these suggestions and take them into account in Version 2.0, to the extent that it is possible, of course.

I would like to address one or two issues where either I think there may have been some misunderstanding, or we have not been clear enough. I think it was Egypt, at the beginning of this afternoon, who made the comment concerning the need for a long-term, medium-term and short-term view, and this come out in other interventions.

I think we have to recall that the Strategic Framework is part of a programme package which consists of the Strategic Framework for a 10 to 15 year period. A Medium-Term Plan, and I emphasize the word "Plan", for a six-year period, and then Programme of Work and Budget for a 2-year period. They are followed by two *post-facto* reporting mechanisms currently called the Programme Implementation Report and the Programme Evaluation Report.

If you look at what is behind that total package then I think many of the suggestions that came from the floor are, in fact, planned to be accommodated. I take for example the US suggestions that we need a tool for decision-making and that we want to move towards results-based budgeting. Well, certainly, we see this as leading towards a tool for decision-making because the next step is to develop the medium-term objectives and the Medium-Term Plan that will contribute to the Strategic Objectives. So in that decision-making process, we see this as being the overlaying guidance by the Governing Bodies to us in that planning process.

With regard to results-based budgeting, as you know, part of the new programme model is to create technical projects or continuing programme activities which describe precisely what it is we plan to do in the form of the activities which are going to be carried out to implement strategies. Each of these projects will have time-bound objectives with indicators of success, which will allow proper evaluation of whether the projects have been successful or not. I think that is where you see results-based budgeting coming in. If projects and programmes are not successful, they will not attract resources. If they prove themselves to be successful, of course, they will.

I think that leads, perhaps, to the UK comment which was echoed by a number of delegates concerning prioritization of strategies. I have a little difficulty here. I wonder whether Members are talking about taking the Corporate Strategies, A, B, C, D and E, and placing them in some sort of ranking or priority order, or even the twelve strategic objectives. If that is the case, then I have a problem. On the other hand, we saw the major exercise of setting priorities - and, let us face it,

when we talk about setting priorities, we are talking about doing it within an environment where there are not sufficient resources to cover all the activities you would want to carry out - we see that happening in the medium-term planning process. As you develop your technical projects, you will find that there are more projects and demands for resources than there are resources available, so you have to make choices. That is where the criteria come in, and that is where comparative advantage comes in. We need, as Norway points out, a set of criteria, perhaps further definition of paragraph 102 which will allow the decision-making process to take into account the criteria you consider to be important in determining priorities. Some criteria already exist, as you know, based on the Council's decisions in the past, but they may need to be developed further. I remind you that one of the criteria is comparative advantage itself, and that too can be defined further. Ms Killingsworth may wish to go into that a bit further.

That led to quite a lot of comments about resources, the level of resources and the allocation of resources. I very much welcomed the comment of South Africa which, basically, came down to the fact that we are not at that stage yet. We are at the stage of defining the Strategic Objectives of the Organization. We will get to the stage of defining resources when we start to get into the planning process under the new programme model.

There is a mention in the original Resolution 6/97 of an Implementation Plan. In all honesty, I do not know what the intention precisely was at the time that it was proposed but a Plan, if we use the word "Plan" literally, recognizes the idea of defining inputs, defining activities, defining events, or milestones and outputs. That to us sounds very much like the Medium-Term Plan and precisely what we are proposing under the new programme model. So, is it realistic to have a Plan of that sort in the Strategic Framework? I do not think that could have been the intent. Of course, we expect in the strategies to give you a Plan of what are the major elements of activities are going to be to achieve the Strategic Objectives. In that sense, I hope we satisfy the intent of the Resolution. I believe, finally, that was reinforced by Ireland's comments on the steps that it had defined and the fact that certainly much of that will appear in the subsequent exercises of establishing a Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

Commenting on Version 2.0, we really will have to look at all of your comments and try and address them the best way we can. There were, of course, contradictions in the request for more information versus conciseness and we will have to resolve that. There were regular requests concerning the issues of partnership. We actually have a 4 000 word document on partnership which does precisely what you asked. It is rather too long to include in this document and we excluded it intentionally because it is rather detailed. We see the partnerships being very clearly defined at the technical project level but, on the other hand, clearly you do want more information and we will try to address that.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (Special Adviser to the Director-General for World Food Summit Follow-up (SAD))

That was not my objective in asking to go last. I thought I would have very few questions left. But I think I do, in fact. As Mr Wade has just pointed out, looking at Version 2.0, which we have to start putting together very quickly now, we are obviously going to be facing a rather difficult job of reconciling your evident desire for a document which is concise, sharp, focused, simple and easy to grasp and digest and, at the same time, more detailed to make sure that you agree with what underlies the general thrusts. This, of course, was the Secretariat's problem even in presenting Version 1.0.

There were a number of requests made for more information, or comments that more stress should be placed on certain topics, and I know that had we been able to provide the information on the different departmental strategies that have gone in as contributions to the more general descriptions you have, you would have found in most cases what you were looking for. In Part 3, under Partnerships and Alliances, there is a specific reference, for instance, to greater cooperation at the country level with other UN Organizations within the framework of the new mechanisms which are emerging from the Reform Process of the United Nations.

I would like to just reassure you in general terms that we have taken note, and that we will make sure, even if we cannot give all the details in the next version, that your comments are taken into account and that the Framework which we do manage to submit to you, can and will accommodate those concerns in subsequent development which, as Mr Wade has mentioned, will be through the Medium-Term Plan and eventually the Programme and Budget processes.

The other problem I think we are facing is that we have somehow, within the constraints of this short, sharp, concise document, to show you what is in fact new and different in the proposals, particularly in the proposals for the Corporate Strategies in Part 2. I believe there is a great deal of innovative thinking behind the proposals. We will have to find a way of making you aware of that so that it is more clear, not only what is intended, but how the approaches proposed will be different from those in the past, to the extent that they must address new challenges and new manifestations of problems.

There were various comments suggesting that Part 3 required attention and perhaps further development, some suggestions that the issues in Part 3 should be merged with those in Part 2, and others recognizing that, although we are dealing with equally important issues, they are issues of a different nature. The Corporate Strategies are addressing the substance of FAO's services to Member Nations. The Strategies listed in Part 3 are in fact, as I believe the delegate of South Africa described very well, Strategies about how we are going to make things happen. So I would simply suggest that we keep in mind that we must not mix apples and oranges too much. We will try and find a way of presenting that clearly. We would like to see the flowchart diagramme of the delegate of Portugal. That might also help us to give you something that you will find more intelligible and easy to analyze.

Mr Wade suggested that I would deal with the question of comparative advantage. We had, in some of our early analyses, identified a series of what we called 'general strengths' of the Organization. I would mention, for instance, its authority and status as a global intergovernmental organization, its broad networking capacity with Members and other partners, its decentralized capacities, its capacity to respond to emergencies and unforeseen needs of Member Nations, and its professional multidisciplinary staff. We also identified an unparalleled information source and institutional memory, our capacity for fast communication, our responsible financial and administrative management.

That is something of a checklist of strengths. In some cases, those strengths also have more or less corresponding weaknesses. But the main point is that they become comparative advantages when they can be appropriately applied to problems, when the problems are the kind of problems that require these kinds of strengths from this kind of organization. And in that sense, we can only say that we used those considerations as a part of the method with which we defined the five Corporate Strategies. We have not focused those five Corporate Strategies on issues where we felt FAO would normally be a junior partner or would have a minor role.

So in general terms, and I do not want to be misunderstood on this, I think Mr Harcharik has been very clear about our basic approach to partnerships. We have tried to find an organizing principle which focused on the areas in which FAO should concentrate its efforts in response to Member Nations' needs. The result is therefore, by definition we would hope, a series of areas in which FAO does have some comparative advantage to bring to bear on the problems.

It also provides a better way, we felt, of defining a Framework which can then be further developed in the medium-term planning and programme and budget process. On partnerships, at the more detailed level they will very much differ from activity to activity, even within these general areas of service to Members. And again, only at the very detailed level, will we be able to say that in this particular activity FAO plans to take a lead role, but in this other one FAO would only be a minor partner or perhaps an equal partner of another organization, and that the other organization or organizations would be the following. So, at a general level, we hope that we have already used the criterion of comparative advantage to define a Framework which could meet with your satisfaction. In any case, we will now go on working on it.

My final point would be just one of caution against equating the Strategic Framework with the structure of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Plan of Action, as many have pointed out this afternoon, is a broad canvas, a broad blueprint, for the entire community of nations and the entire international community of organizations. What we have tried to do here is identify those areas, those objectives and those activities in the Plan of Action to which FAO should make a major contribution and, from that particular mix or spectrum of activities, to construct another kind of Framework which is one for the Organization itself, keeping in mind that FAO is, of course, not attempting nor expected to address all aspects of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit.

CHAIRMAN

We have reached the conclusion of this Agenda Item. At this point we agreed that we would have half-an-hour's break. We will have half-an-hour's break before we move on. Point of Order?

Point of order

Point d'ordre

Punto de Orden

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Quisiera pedir la complacencia y la comprensión de la mesa para tratar el Tema a discusión mañana de mañana. Considerando que los intérpretes se van a las 8:30 p.m. y que nosotros tenemos una pausa de media hora, nos quedará muy poco tiempo para discutir este asunto para nosotros de vital importancia; ya que Brasil tiene el peso de la responsabilidad de detener la mayor parte de los recursos genéticos del planeta.

CHAIRMAN

I have information here that the interpreters will be here until 11 p.m.

Thomas NDIVE MOKAKE (Cameroon)

I just want to say that I support very strongly the intervention by the delegate of Brazil. This particular Agenda Item is of great importance to us in the developing countries. Most of us have, over the years until now, conserved a level of biodiversity at the expense of making fast deals, as is the case with the developed countries that have multinational exclusive cooperations and, of course, claim patent rights.

This Item is very important to us. I think, at this point, we are very tired and most people are not here. I think it is a good thing to discuss this issue tomorrow morning. We will all be quite awake because for us much interest is at stake.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Como lo señaló el Embajador de Brasil quien hablaba en nombre del GRULAC, si bien no habría problema por la parte interpretativa, yo considero que el Consejo sí merece un descanso. Se ha trabajado duramente en los tres Temas pasados, yo creo que el Tema de recursos fitogenéticos no sea menos importante. Mi país también presta mucha atención a este Tema. Ya hay algunos países que están ausentes y posiblemente otros se ausentarán. Yo apelo a la sensibilidad de la Presidencia y de la Secretaría para que se deje este Tema para mañana.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

When Australia first made the proposal that we break after this Session for half-an-hour, I supported that under the assumption that we would probably finish midway through the interpretation time, and that there would be time for a full debate on any individual Item. If we break now for half-an-hour, I do not think we are going to have that.

I recognize that the Secretariat has been kind enough to make available another session of interpretation. I would strongly recommend that we not make use of that. It is normal practice, Mr Chairman, to advise Members of Council if we are going to go into a late evening Session

well in advance, sometime mid-afternoon, so that alternative arrangements can be made. It is quite unfair to Members of Council to now suggest an extra session.

I would suggest that we proceed with our Agenda. If there is a wish to take up the Plant Genetic Resources tomorrow morning, we can accommodate that, and will move on to the next Item of the Agenda. But I would strongly recommend not going beyond the extent of the current interpretation time.

CHAIRMAN

So the alternative proposal would be to not go on to Negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, Item 6. That will be postponed until tomorrow, but we will go on, without the break, to discuss Item 9 and Item 10. Both Items will be on the Programme Implementation Report and Reports of the Joint Meetings of the Programme Committee.

There seems to be a misunderstanding. I do not think we have to break in order to go on to Items 9 and 10, and after that we can all go home.

While we are staying here, I propose that we go on to Item 9, the Programme Implementation Report for 1996-97.

9. Programme Implementation Report 1996-97 (C 99/8; C 99/8-Corr.1; CL 115/8 paras 28 to 52; CL 115/10 paras 4 to 8; CL 115/INF/23)

9. Rapport sur l'exécution du programme 1996-97 (C 99/8; C 99/8-Corr.1; CL 115/8 par. 28 à 52; CL 115/10 par. 4 à 8; CL 115/INF/23)

9. Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa, 1996-97 (C 99/8; C 99/8-Corr.1; CL 115/8 párrs. 28 a 52; CL 115/10 párrs. 4 a 8; CL 115/INF/23)

Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vice-Chairman of the Council, took the Chair.

Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vice-Président du Conseil, assume la présidence.

Ocupa la presidencia Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vicepresidente del Consejo

D.F.R. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

If the audience is ready to listen, then I am certainly ready to give you a few words on the discussion we had in the Programme Committee on the Implementation Report.

We have made a number of observations which I will now report on. The first thing which we have to remember is that the present scope and format of reporting on programme implementation will change considerably in future when the revised programme budget policies will be in place. Certainly the next biennium still has to be reported this way, but then it becomes part of the different budget planning and reporting process. The final form still has to be defined in future discussions of the Programme and Finance Committees.

It is important to note that in our deliberations we received from the Secretariat an audio-visual presentation of the details of implementation. Therefore the total report could be more concise, but the details which are in the Programme of Work and Budget preceding this Programme Implementation Report, can be found in the Internet at all its stages -- if they have been implemented, if they have postponed, changed, replaced by other information. I think it is a valuable tool, and I think the Programme Committee accepted the view that in future, more and more detailed information on programme planning and implementation will probably be obtained through these means of Internet presentation.

The Committee considered the record of implementation of FAO programmes in this 1996-97 biennium as noteworthy, given the particularly difficult context of the last biennium the Organization had to go through. You remember the late adoption in the January meeting of the Programme of Work and Budget of a reduced level the Conference then decided to support.

The Committee, in addition, stressed the need to continue reducing support costs when we looked at the Field Programme and learned that, for 1998-99, a substantial reduction in the percentage of support costs to delivery was forecast.

In relation to field projects, a number of observations were made on the need to develop appropriate cost-effective evaluation methodologies for the increasing number of smaller-size and short-duration projects, as well as the need for more comprehensive ex-post assessment of projects impact after completion of FAO involvement.

The Committee also welcomed the initiatives to evaluate thematic clusters of TCP projects which had not been evaluated before, the first of which will be included in the next Programme Evaluation Report.

These were the major points of our observations and many more are to be found in our Report. That is all I wanted to refer to.

CHAIRMAN

I now open the floor to reactions to that interesting introduction by Professor Bommer.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

Thank you to the Chairman of the Programme Committee for that report. I think it highlighted very well the Programme Committee's discussions.

I particularly wanted to emphasize paragraph 29 in CL 115/8 and two aspects in that paragraph. The first, as mentioned by Dr Bommer, is that the scope and format of the Programme Implementation Report should change, or even would change, considerably as a result of the full-scale implementation of the revised programme budget process. I think this is a very important point and one that I would reinforce that Members and the Secretariat need to think about, very carefully, as we move down the path of the Strategic Framework and the subsequent application of the other planning documents associated with bringing that Framework to effect within the Organization.

The other point I would like to reinforce is the idea that the Organization needs to become far more fixated upon outcomes and impact, rather than simply outputs. I think this is absolutely crucial to support the Organization as it moves forward. A number of interventions, under the last Item, mentioned results-based budgeting and other actions along a similar vein. This is very clearly spelled out in paragraph 29, and I think it needs to be reinforced at the Council meeting.

Ms Claude LEMIEUX (Canada)

Canada would like to thank FAO for the latest, and possibly last, version of the Programme Implementation Report, in its current format. We would like first to commend the Secretariat for a very good report which documents many important achievements of FAO over the past biennial.

At the same time, the Programme Implementation Report highlights some important management issues and also prompts us to think ahead of the new version of the report, which we follow from a strategic planning exercise and will be implemented in the next biennium.

I would like to first turn to the section of the report which deals with the cost of the field programme support. Table 2.7 indicates that the technical and administrative support provided by FAO to UNDP, to the different Trust Funds, TCP and a Special Programme for Food Security projects amount to US\$147.8 million for the period 1996-97. Only 36.3 percent of this amount was reimbursed to FAO, leaving a shortfall of US\$94.1 million. This US\$94.1 million is thus, in fact, a subsidy from the regular budget to field projects which are funded by bilateral donors and other international organizations. This amount represents a subsidy which is equal to about 14 percent of FAO's regular budget for the biennium. This subsidy exceeds the budget of most Departments in FAO. It exceeds the budget of the Forestry and the Fishery programmes. It exceeds the annual budget devoted to the Technical Cooperation Programme. It exceeds the annual budget of the country offices.

We recognize that FAO has made some efforts to recover a portion of those support costs from donors. We feel, however, that the percent of reimbursement of 36.3 percent is much too low, and that it distorts the multilateral nature of FAO's core work.

What are the implications of such a subsidy? In the first place, it is not included as part of the budget process, and we could argue that it contributes to a lack of transparency. Second, it can lead to a transfer of resources in real terms from those smaller or marginalized countries which have difficulty attracting donors bilaterally, to those countries that attract large amounts of extra-budgetary assistance. Some might argue that this is not fair, and that it skews the multilateral approach.

Finally, subsidized technical assistance from multilateral organizations might be seen to compete unfairly with local, Non-Governmental Organizations and the private sector who provide similar services at higher costs, as they have to factor in administrative and technical costs, in addition to direct delivery costs.

The traditional argument in favour of the subsidy has been that the normative programmes benefit from the opportunity to try out ideas in the field. We support the concept of staff development, as FAO relies on the expertise of its employees, to carry out its mandate. However, we wonder if the same objective may not be reached through more cost-efficient mechanisms.

We argue that the best way of dealing with the subsidy issue is to move towards a Full Cost Recovery Policy. This has been done in other UN-funded programmes, such as UNICEF, where a detailed analysis of the overhead, administrative and technical costs associated with extra-budgetary activities was done, and led to the implementation of cost recovery for all extra-budgetary activities.

Moving towards a Full Cost Recovery Policy need not result in a decrease in extra-budgetary funding. It can actually promote strength in financial management and ensure competitiveness by ensuring the efficiency in effectiveness of all of FAO's operations. This would help alleviate the perception that FAO is competing unfairly.

All this being said, we would like to reiterate the conclusions of the Hundred and Tenth and Hundred and Thirteenth Councils, that those subsidies must be reduced. The report of the External Auditor confirms these concerns. Canada would favour the introduction of a comprehensive Cost Recovery Policy, which would lead to a phased reduction of those subsidies over the next two or three biennia.

We would propose that the Secretariat prepares, for discussion at Council in June, a report that would include a full accounting of the subsidies from the core budget to extra-budgetary activities, an objective analysis of the training value of the field activities for staff involved in normative activities, and options for a Cost Recovery Policy for the Organization.

Turning to a separate subject, Evaluation, we would like to reiterate that it is a key function that allows FAO to document successes and draw lessons of experience. Evaluations inform managers and Members so that, together, they can improve FAO's performance. We are pleased to note that since the last biennium, overall design and implementation has improved.

However, we note that there are many areas needed to improved still and we would like to hear FAO's plan to address the issues in a systematic way.

Finally, I would like to comment on the future design of the Programme Implementation Report after the results-based planning system being implemented. We would like to concur with the Finance Committee's report that the Programme Implementation Report and the Evaluation Reports should be combined into what we could call a Performance Assessment Report. Such a Performance Assessment Report would include a summary of results achieved during the biennium against anticipated results. It should also address what was not accomplished or what had to be reduced or delayed and for what reason. Annexes from Internal and External Auditors would form useful additions to such a report so that all the information in the qualitative aspects of programme implementation could be found in one single report.

We would see this new Performance Assessment Report focusing also on cross-cutting issues and lessons of experience, including corrective actions to be undertaken by FAO. On such cross-cutting issues, gender mainstreaming is not included in the Programme Implementation Report.

As requested by the Twenty-eighth Session of the Conference in 1995, we would like to know how successful has FAO been at increasing the proportion of female staff, and how gender concerns were taken into account in project and programme design and implementation. We know that a few Divisions have effectively reported to the membership on their success in implementing gender mainstreaming. Perhaps mainstreaming has been successful elsewhere. It is not possible to judge from the report. We would like to remind staff that they must make extra efforts to include this aspect in the reports which they produce on their various activities.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie)

Permettez-moi de remercier M. Bommer pour la présentation de ce point de l'ordre du jour, ainsi que pour le travail fourni par les membres du Comité du programme et du Comité financier en ce qui concerne cette question. L'examen de ce document nous a permis de relever les efforts méritoires de la Direction générale de la FAO en vue de faire des économies et des ajustements, ainsi qu'un souci de privilégier les programmes économiques et techniques sur fond de crise financière que traverse l'Organisation suite aux réductions de son budget.

Nous tenons ici à faire part de notre approbation en ce qui concerne la démarche adoptée à ce sujet. Malgré la clarté du document soumis à l'examen, qui contient un éventail d'informations sur les programmes et activités réalisés ou engagés au cours du dernier biennium, il y a lieu de relever que l'analyse, les commentaires et résultats immédiats, ainsi que les difficultés rencontrées lors de l'exécution de ces activités sont absents. Et nous sommes d'accord avec ce qu'a déclaré

M. Bommer, qui résume les travaux du Comité du programme et du Comité financier en ce qui concerne le fusionnement de documents regroupant à la fois l'évaluation et l'exécution. Donc un document qui fasse un constat immédiat et succinct sur l'exécution disant que les activités soient réalisées ou engagées.

Permettez-moi de passer à certaines critiques du document qui pourraient être prises en compte lors de l'élaboration des prochains documents. Nous déplorons l'écart qui subsiste entre les activités normatives et les activités opérationnelles. A titre d'exemple, la publication prend une part importante au niveau de tous les programmes, et ce au détriment de certaines activités telles que les services directs au pays et la formation.

Si les motivations de cette démarche sont d'ordre financier, il me semble que les décisions prises par l'instance suprême de l'Organisation insiste sur, au moins, le respect de l'équilibre entre ces deux formes d'activité. Nous espérons que le programme actuel et futur respecte cet équilibre.

Nous avons relevé également que le document contient, dans certains cas, des informations brutes et sans âme. A titre d'exemple aussi, le paragraphe 118 de la page 41, version française, fait référence à l'assistance technique fournie aux pays pour évaluer et caractériser les ressources zoogénétiques sans pour autant préciser les pays ni les régions.

Nous déplorons aussi la situation de vacances de postes qui perdure et qui se répercute négativement sur l'exécution du Programme. Les paragraphes 167, 178 et 236 mettent en exergue les retombées de cette situation.

Enfin, nous encourageons la FAO à poursuivre sa collaboration avec les organisations internationales pour mener à bien les Programmes et atteindre les résultats escomptés. Aussi, nous l'encourageons à poursuivre la politique de décentralisation par l'ouverture de représentations nationales dans les pays et le renforcement des bureaux sous-régionaux.

SHI LIN (China) (Original language Chinese)

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing a very good document, namely, the Programme Implementation Report. This Report has provided us with a very good basis for a serious discussion today.

Now I would like to offer some of our comments on the Report itself and the Programme Implementation. First, we have noted that there are some changes in the Report format. It has

omitted some traditional parts, making it more concise. We hope such changes are conducive to further simplify our documentation and cut costs, so that we can focus more on substantive work.

At the same time, a new measure has made it possible to find on the Internet the entire list of outputs and the status of their implementation, so that those people who want to have more detailed information can satisfy their need from the Internet. This is also a very good supplement to the Report itself.

Secondly, there was a major decrease in FAO's financial resources in 1996-97 compared to the previous biennium. This posed as difficulties to the implementation of our programmes. However, despite these difficulties FAO still successfully conducted a series of major global activities. Particularly worth mentioning, was the World Food Summit held in November 1996 in Rome, which was the first time in FAO's history that a Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action were adopted. At the Summit, Heads of States gathered in Rome to pledge that by the year 2015, we were going to decrease the world's malnourished population by half.

Further on, in June 1996, the International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources was held in Leipzig, Germany and in October 1997 the Eleventh World Forestry Conference was held in Antalya, Turkey. On the occasion of the World Food Day 1997, FAO launched the "Telefood" activities, bringing new meaning to World Food Day. All of these activities have played a very positive role in pushing forward, and enhancing international awareness of the importance of food and agriculture.

Thirdly, we have also noted the situation, as mentioned in paragraphs 32, 283 and 284, that field activities are increasingly composed of small projects and short-term projects. This will proportionally require more technical and administrative support than larger projects. However, we also have noticed that due to our efforts, FAO has successfully maintained a ratio of support costs to delivery compared with the previous biennium. In the 1996-97 biennium, delivery dropped by over 27 percent against the 1992-93 biennium, and we should commend FAO for its efforts in this field. However, we also hope that as more and more smaller projects are implemented, FAO can continue to find new ways to cut costs and reduce support costs.

Fourthly, through assessment and analysis of tripartite project evaluation mentioned in paragraph 45 and Table 2.13, we have seen that project design is the first area requiring improvement. We think that the success of a project depends very much on many factors, both subjective and objective ones. The objective factors are difficult to be changed in a short time, but subjective constraints can be overcome through our efforts. Therefore, we believe we can make efforts to reduce such constraints in order to improve project designs.

Fifthly, Chapter 3 of the PWB covers developed services to Member Nations, including Major Programme 3.2, Support to Investment. Paragraph 280 in the Report mentioned that share of, at least, developed countries external financing has essentially remained steady while there has been a steady decline in the number of projects. We hope that more positive attitudes can be adopted to improve the situation, in order to cut the world's malnourished population by the half by the year 2015. We should increase the number of investment projects, and total amount of investment, in least developed countries so that we can help these countries out of poverty as soon as possible.

Finally, we are happy to notice that more and more people have access to the FAO Website on the Internet. However, we regret that documents and information on the Internet are available in four FAO working languages, and not Chinese. We hope that, someday, we can happily see documents and information in Chinese when we visit the FAO Website on the Internet. We do hope that this day will come soon.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

First, Mr Chairman, my good wishes on your election and I would like, on behalf of my delegation, to thank the Secretariat for its efforts to provide us with a comprehensive and, I think, mostly transparent account of the work done in the past biennium.

On the whole, Germany shares the judgement by the Programme Committee as reflected in document CL 115/8. This refers in particular to support cost reimbursement, the strong involvement of FAO with projects of a policy-advisory character and project evaluation.

On support cost reimbursement, I may be short because this has already been highlighted by Canada, among others. We do stress the need for the Secretariat to further reduce the gap between effective costs and actual reimbursement and to devise -- and here I quote from the report of the External Auditor -- "a comprehensive but much simplified framework for support cost arrangements". The current system is indeed quite difficult to grasp for someone not familiar with the financial operations of our Organization.

My delegation notes with interest a strong involvement of FAO with projects of a policy-advisory character. It is this kind of work, in addition to the normative and information functions, where the Organization can make the strongest contribution to the development of Member Nations in need of such services. We are, however, aware that often the demand exceeds the actual capacity of FAO, but we think that enlarged partnerships and the recruitment of qualified national staff will help bridge that gap. The Programme Implementation Report also indicates this.

Regarding project evaluation, having read that part of the report I would like to say that, although some of the indicators might suggest an improvement regarding the effect and impact of projects and programmes, it is difficult for an outsider to compare the results of evaluation between 1994-95 and 1996-97 because the evaluation elements are not entirely the same in the various tables. In addition, five instead of formerly three ratings are used for the assessment. The improved ratings for the evaluation aspects, the sustainability of effects and impact, should be most welcome provided this result has a fairly objective basis.

My delegation shares the concern as expressed in para 43 of the Programme Implementation Report. It was also highlighted by the Programme Committee regarding the negative factors of poor project results, that is, among others, inadequate design and planning and also lack of support by host authorities.

Following this, I would like to comment on several other aspects of the report.

In para 37 of the report, reference is made to the now concerted Programme Against African Trypanosomiasis and the successful application of the Sterile Insect Technique for tsetse fly control in Zanzibar. In view of the vast area in Sub-Saharan Africa where sleeping sickness affects both humans and cattle, and noting the enormous animal losses, about three million head annually, it would be interesting to know how the experts from the Secretariat see the prospects of better control by taking advantage of the SIT, of conventional methods of tsetse fly control and of possible breeding advances for Trypano-tolerance. I understand that possibly the experts are not at hand and Germany, of course, would also be satisfied with a small answer in writing at a later date. We are aware that this work, particularly regarding breeding for Trypano-tolerance, will still take some time.

By the way, one research institute in Germany is involved in a programme to investigate the molecular basis of Trypano-tolerance with a view to using these findings in the genetic improvement of cattle in Africa, using local breeds with congenital Trypano-tolerance. The programme is run by the International Livestock Research Centre in Nairobi, with the participation of researchers from Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands and Japan. We think this is also a good example of enlarged partnership in research efforts, that is to say, FAO with research institutions in developed and developing countries.

My delegation notes with interest the reference, in para 265 of the report to the national agricultural development strategies prepared with FAO policy assistance for national implementation of the Plan of Action of the Summit. In the interests of more coherence of development cooperation, be it bilateral or multilateral, or by NGOs, these documents should be known to the various players involved. Could the Secretariat tell us whether this type of information would be accessible on the Internet through FAO's Website or through the WAICENT?

In para 311, the report mentions the growing share of national consultants and TCDC, or TCCT, experts employed for projects of the Technical Cooperation Programme, TCP, the reason also being the high cost of international consultants. We do hope that this trend will also satisfy the expectations in regard to quality and, in this relation, I would like to ask two details. How has the share of permanently employed staff in relation temporary staff for TCP projects developed over the last time? Could we have data regarding the amount of funds spent over the past biennia for consultancy work under TCP?

Finally, my delegation welcomes the increased share of resources spent for TCP projects in the European Region. This evidently responds to the needs of Central and East European countries in transition for well-focused assistance in certain areas.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

Commenting on this Agenda Item, first, allow me to express my deep appreciation to the Secretariat for its efforts to provide this comprehensive and informative document.

Seeing the report before us, I believe that the most significant feature of FAO's Programme Implementation for the period of 1996-97 is the World Food Summit, in November 1996. The Summit and the Rome Declaration and the Summit Plan of Action provided us with a well-defined concept of food security, and a well-balanced approach to the attainment of world food security.

Next, I highly commend FAO for making the best of "Telefood" with a view to finding new funding resources needed for implementing small-scale practical projects to improve food security, mainly in developing countries. In addition, in my view, "Telefood" was more than successful in raising public awareness of the food security problems and enhancing the perception of FAO's activities.

Concerning the Global Information and Early Warning System, I would like to mention that my Government obtains a lot of valuable information from FAO on the world food situation and its near-term outlook, particularly the Special Reports and the reports provided by FAO, the WFP crop and food supply assessment missions have the important role of giving reliable and timely information to the donors.

Our country considers this role to be one of the key elements of FAO's normative functions. I am convinced that continued development of up-to-date tools to analyze the food situation and outlook at both regional and global levels will maintain FAO as a Centre of Excellence.

Finally, I am pleased to be informed that several Regional Offices and two Sub-Regional Offices became fully operational. Regarding decentralization, however, it seems necessary for the Regional Offices to be given more substantial authority and responsibility in FAO's Field Programme Operations.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

We are delighted to see Dr Bommer with us this evening.

Our overall reaction to the document is positive, but we do have a number of observations to make and a few questions to ask.

We appreciate having more quantitative measures and having some of the data placed on FAO's Website. Para 13 highlights the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animals Genetic Resources as though the Strategy has been approved. Can the Secretariat confirm that this is the case?

The document regrets that extra-budgetary resources have sharply declined from 1992-93 to 1996-97. The United States has a different view on this matter. Since we place a higher value on normative activities, our concern is when a decrease in extra-budgetary funding adversely impacts on delivery of the Regular Programme. We would agree with the Programme Committee's

conclusion that FAO should "reverse this trend by attracting additional extra-budgetary resources from a broad range of sources".

We were mainly concerned that the Regular Programme does not sufficiently recover the support costs of servicing field projects, as described in paragraphs 34 to 36. However, far more strenuous efforts should be made to recover fully from donors all of the costs of servicing these projects. We acknowledge that there is some benefit to the Organization's normative activities but the US\$94 million shortfall is simply too high. We would like to know what steps are being taken to narrow this gap. The Finance Committee also expressed its concern about this matter.

We are pleased to see that the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices are playing a more active role in delivering FAO programmes, although their role in helping to deliver the Regular Programme is unclear to us. Paragraph 51 of the Programme Committee also highlights the "multiple contributions of the FAO Representatives ...". Despite these assertions, we do not believe that close to 10 percent of the FAO budget should be spent on FAORs. There remains considerable doubt and uncertainty in our minds about the role of FAORs, and we would like to see their mission described more fully. To aid in our future assessments, could the Secretariat kindly furnish Council Members with a listing of the grade levels associated with each of its country officers?

Table 2.4 shows the extent to which Regular Programme funding is supplemented by extra-budgetary resources. In some areas, for example crops, forestry and agricultural production and support systems, the extra-budgetary component is much larger than the Regular Programme component. While this clearly reflects what Member Governments have chosen to do, we are not convinced that it is a healthy development to have this kind of imbalance.

The section on project evaluations notes substantial improvements in FAO's ability to design and implement field projects, while the number of so-called "poor" projects has been substantially reduced. Further improvements can still be made, especially with respect to project design and sustainability. We are pleased with the Evaluation Unit's forthright appraisal in paragraphs 43 to 45 on areas that require greater attention in the future.

Finally, we strongly concur with the Finance Committee's suggestion that the Programme Implementation Report be combined with the Programme Evaluation Report in future biennia. With the insertion of the Strategic Framework into our biennial work and FAO's increasing ability to put data and information on its Website, instead of issuing hard copy, we believe that it might be useful to combine these reports, commencing with the next biennium. There is already some overlap in the type of information that is provided, and this would be both a cost-saving measure and ease the burden of Members who have to digest the material to prepare for meetings such as these.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Mi delegación desea aprovechar el presente debate para referirse a las actividades de la FAO en el sector pesquero, en tal sentido queremos relacionar esta intervención con el párrafo 44 del documento 8.

A finales de octubre la FAO organizó una Consulta sobre Capacidad Pesquera Global en la que lamentablemente se presentaron diversas circunstancias que nos gustaría no se repitiesen en esta Organización. En su momento, México, al igual que otros Países de diferentes regiones, presentó una protesta que ahora, por instrucciones de mi Gobierno, quiere reiterar en este foro de carácter político. Por una parte, la Secretaría emitió dos comunicados de prensa sobre el manejo de capacidad pesquera y la pesca del tiburón, en los cuales se publicó una información que aún no había sido discutida en la Consulta y que prejuzgaba los resultados de la misma. Por otra parte, tres días antes de iniciarse la Consulta se presentó una versión revisada de la propuesta del Plan de Acción sobre capacidad pesquera, la cual contenía algunas importantes modificaciones que no estaban contempladas en la versión previa, la cual debería haber servido de base a las discusiones del tema. Además, los países hispanohablantes se vieron discriminados en cuanto a la oportuna recepción de los documentos de trabajo de la Consulta en la versión española, ya que éstos fueron

distribuidos sólo una semana antes del inicio del evento. Creemos también que, ante la importancia de los temas abordados en la Consulta se hubiera requerido mayor tiempo para su discusión.

Quiero señalar que toda esta serie de confusiones, malentendidos y dificultades tuvo su efecto en la Asamblea General al discutirse recientemente en el marco de la Segunda Comisión, un Proyecto de resolución sobre este tema. Finalmente, el Gobierno de México, desea dejar constancia de su apoyo al desarrollo de una pesca responsable así como al ordenamiento de las pesquerías del tiburón y a la adecuación del tamaño de las flotas a las posibilidades de aprovechamiento de los recursos, ello de conformidad con las mejores evidencias científicas.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

We are indeed happy to see you chairing this session. On behalf of the Near East Group, we should like to express to FAO our thanks and appreciation for their assistance and technical follow-up of the Desert Locust problem in our Region. You know how important it is to combat the Desert Locust for the countries of the Region. If we do not combat it, the Desert Locust ravages everything, and we find that the Secretariat has made tremendous efforts in this regard. Control of the Desert Locust is extremely important, and we have a unit competent in that. We should appoint a Secretary for the Desert Locust Control Commission because a Body of this importance in this Organization must have a Secretary to assist it and help it improve its activities and its work in a sustainable manner.

On the basis of the afore-mentioned, and on behalf of the Near East Group, we call upon the Council to reinstate the post of Secretary of the Desert Locust Control Commission in the Region.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Uganda welcomes this report of the Programme of Implementation. My delegation wishes to particularly focus on paragraph 111 that talks about the programme of tsetse fly, especially in Africa, and with particular reference to Uganda as one of the areas where there is an epidemic proportion of these tsetse flies.

I note with appreciation that there is support mentioned under a Programme against African Trypanosomiasis that is going to put into action the control of tsetse fly. The tsetse fly in Uganda and in many African states has completely limited animal production and made it unprofitable, resulting in partial losses of meat and milk, and sometimes resulting in the death of animals. I would like to call upon the Food and Agriculture Organization to pay special attention to this Programme and to assist Member Nations' access through its own intervention, programmes and assistance that can help in the control of tsetse fly menace. I do not have to mention either that, since the tsetse fly also affects human beings, for agricultural production is greatly reduced by the sleeping sickness that affects human beings.

The northern part of Uganda is affected by sleeping sickness, originating in southern Sudan. With refugee migrations due to insecurities in that area, the problem has filtered down in Uganda. We have agreed as a country to create a programme of animal pest health units, to spray animals with acaricides and pyrethroids, which are effective against tsetse fly, so that we can reduce the incidence of epidemics. However, our national effort needs to be supplemented by support from international organizations.

My delegation, generally speaking, supports the TCP programmes and we have voiced ourselves on this many times. We have already stated that the distribution of money within the TCP requires re-examination, so that there is more focus of the money into the problem that is being tackled under the Technical Cooperation Programme.

Under the Fisheries Programme, we thank the Food and Agriculture Organization for its support to Uganda, and East Africa in general, through the setting-up of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization which today has its headquarters in Uganda. Uganda is one of the East African countries that exports fish to many countries abroad, especially the European Union, and we would like to call upon FAO to assist us in this programme especially on the issue of quality

control capacity-building. We have already approached the Food and Agriculture Organization on this, and we hope that assistance will be forthcoming so that we can have a market that is satisfied with our standards and through which we can derive an income. Fish is our second biggest foreign exchange earner after coffee, so it is an important sector that we would like to develop. Still on the same subject, we intend to approach the TCP Division on the issue of aquaculture development. Our lakes, including Lake Victoria, are continually suffering from pollution of fish resources. We would like to expand our aquaculture in order to provide for domestic consumption and for the export levels that we have attained so far.

Turning to the issue of animal genetic resources, I would like to express my concern, as the United States has expressed concern, that animal genetic resources for the second time last year was rather marginalized. I have already voiced my concerns this year. I also note that we are going to discuss crop plant genetic resources in detail, but the focus on animal genetic resources still lags behind. We in Africa would like to exploit indigenous livestock, improve its production levels and go into progeny testing, but I think the support to animal genetic resources has been a kind of sideline. I would like to appeal that FAO take up this issue seriously, so that we can promote this sector as we have promoted the plant sector.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Con relación a la propuesta que hace un momento acaba de realizar el distinguido delegado de Egipto, el Tema fue discutido en nuestro Grupo Regional. El Grupo Regional por entero apoya la propuesta del delegado de Egipto.

I. Nyoman ARDHA (Indonesia)

Our delegation would also like to be brief because of the late hour. First of all, we would like to praise FAO management that within the zero-growth budget available, it can still produce an outstanding programme that has been implemented in the field, as well as here in Headquarters. We appreciate very much the progress made in the decentralization process and in efforts to support sustainable development and food security.

Our delegation particularly gives thanks for putting special programmes on food security into operation promptly as a follow-up to the World Food Summit, which have become operational in 29 countries. However, we hope that this Programme will be expanded further in 1998 and 1999, including in Indonesia, of course.

In this regard, we also support the Director-General's initiative to incorporate the South-South cooperation dimension into this programme.

Our delegation noted also the positive trends and closer cooperation among Rome-based agricultural international institutions in supporting field programmes of FAO. Furthermore, our delegation also supported the proposal by Egypt to coordinate Desert Locust activities in the next Programme.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Seré muy breve, sólomente para suscribir la declaración efectuada por México respecto al problema que se presentó en la última reunión de Pesca. Creo también para Chile, como un país eminentemente pesquero, que ese tipo de situaciones no deben volver a ocurrir pues lo deja en incapacidad para poder presentar nuestras posiciones ante un tema de tanta trascendencia para la seguridad alimentaria de mi país.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

There are two points that I want to mention, it is not an objection.

The first is with regard to Mexico's comment about the fishery issue. Mexico was a very active participant in the consultation process, their comments were well- addressed, and the Code of Conduct on the Fishing Capacity Management, Incidental Catch of Sea Birds and Sharks was well-addressed. Several recommendations were made during the course of the consultation

process. I am sorry but I did not refer to it in great detail, but Mexico was one of the leading participants in the consultation process and its interest and the issues it raised was always very professional. We hope that further progress in the development of recommendations will continue with the full participation of Mexico which has demonstrated skill and interest in that field. So our proposal is to listen to them, since their interest was not covered in the report. I did not check to see if the report covered all the interests presented, but Mexico was found as one of the most active participants in the fishing Consultation and their views should have been covered.

Another point which I would like to make is the request or proposal of Egypt to the Council as to the reinstatement location of the Desert Location Commission's Secretary. In principle, I do not object to their proposal as it is very valid. I question however, whether the Council has a legal right to make a determination regarding the location or the interest of Egypt because all the countries here are not Members of the Near East Desert Locust Commission. It is only the Members of the Commission who decide where and who is the Secretary or where that post will be. Of course, without a Secretary, that Commission will not function properly.

With my limited knowledge of the background on this issue, I will brief the House. The Commission has been established for a long time with 30 Members from the Near East Region including Egypt and Sudan from Africa, and most of the Near East countries. It operated from Jeddah as the Headquarters of the Secretariat of the Desert Locust Commission. In 1991, the Conference decided to close the office of the Commission in Jeddah because of financial constraints in meeting the costs of the Secretariat. So the Commission has been functioning without a Secretariat since 1991, and has transferred its main functions to Rome or Cairo. Then it was decided to go to the Plant Protection Department in Cairo, which functions without a Secretariat from the Plant Protection Department. So having understood this, there is a need to establish the office of the Secretariat provided there are sufficient monies from Member Nations to cover the this expense.

From the legal aspect, or working procedure, I need advice if we have the right to decide on their behalf. In principle, however, I support the proposal that an office of the Secretary should be established if it is the preference or the proposal of the Member Nations of the Commission. I gave this clarification to the Council, as they may not have the background. That is why I need to intervene at this point. I need advice on whether we have the right to decide, or the authority rests with the or is it the Member Nations.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to this Council.

I would like to support the proposal made by the delegate of Egypt with respect to the Secretariat of the Commission to fight locusts. Of course the office was closed a few years ago. Nonetheless, the damage that this predator causes now requires a review of the situation. I am not a member of the Council, perhaps I do not have the right to speak out on this, but I would like to launch an appeal to the Members as I am a representative of the Group of 77. I spoke with several Members who are in that Group, and I was able to see that there was broad support for the Egyptian proposal. With all due respect for the delegation of Eritrea, I do not think there is any impediment that would prevent us from adopting the Egyptian proposal.

Secondly, I would like to come back to the matter raised by the delegate of Uganda, the tsetse fly. I support what he said, and I think we should devote more attention to this problem. I think research studies, and efforts deployed to come up with an adequate vaccine to fight this predator are extremely important, especially for some African regions where meat production is crucial.

CHAIRMAN

Are there any NGOs or other observers asking for the floor? If that is the case, before passing the floor to the Secretariat, I would like to briefly say that I am tempted to do two things: to try to expose the Italian position on many of the points that have just been raised, and to make a summary.

Even if I was in favour of a night session, I will not take up too much of your time. It is, however, a pity that such important issues have to be discussed at such a late hour of the evening. But I see you quite ready to go on as much as necessary because there are a lot of elements that have been raised tonight which are of vital importance to the certain countries. They are just as important to delegations concerned about the better functioning of the Organization. Also the External Auditor's comments and reports would require much longer discussions among ourselves than we have the time for. But I am sure that Mr Tony Wade will answer all the issues so thoroughly that there will be no need for any supplementary questions and discussion.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Thanks Mr Chairman for your confidence. I wish I had the same confidence.

I think the first really very important point was brought up by Canada originally, but also by other Members, which concerned the extent of Field Programme support. Here there are a couple of points that need to be made and in a way an apology, because of the way we are presenting this information.

I am referring Table 2.6 which is preceding paragraph 33 and Table 2.7 which follows paragraph 33. The distinguished delegate for Canada mentioned that there was a support cost of a US\$147 million, as shown at the sub-total in Table 2.6, as being the total support cost against which we were receiving a reimbursement. Then you see the Table below for this, a reimbursement which only amounts to 36.3 percent, leaving us with US\$94 million which is not reimbursed. Now we need to understand what this entails.

The first aspect we have to take into account is what is in the US\$147 million. In the first place, and if you look at the upper table, Table 2.6, you will find that the first amount is technical support services of US\$51.4 million. I should say that it is generally recognized that this is the principle opportunity for synergy between the Regular Programme and the Field Programme. This is the point of contact where technical staff are actually in the reality of the Field. It is also where they turn theory into practice.

While efforts are being made to increase the cost-recovery of technical support services, the intention is not to inhibit the flow of such services. In fact, if you go back to the other areas of the Evaluation Report on the Field Programme, you will find there have been consistent recommendations that technical support services need, if anything, to be strengthened not reduced, because they are important not only for the success of projects but they are particularly important because of the contribution that such interchanges make to our normative work.

For the moment, if I exclude that US\$51 million, because it is a rather special amount, you will see that the deficit of US\$94 million would decline to approximately US\$44 million, if I take into account the related reimbursements.

There are two aspects which I would like to bring to your attention about that US\$44 million. I am sorry if I am losing you a little bit, but I want the data in the verbatim so you can have a look at it afterwards. In the total figure of US\$147.8 million, there is a figure of US\$90.7 million for administrative and operational support. That figure again appears in Table 2.6 in the final column. That includes all costs. That is based on the full cost-recovery approach and includes, for example, a portion of my salary because I have people in my office who work on the budgets of field projects. I am sometimes required to provide advice. I am required to manage that process.

However, I will hopefully be employed regardless of whether there is a Field Programme or not. The point I am making is that my salary is actually funded from the Regular Programme, but under full cost accounting you assign a proportion of that cost quite correctly for this particular service to the field project. But, to turn the question round, is it appropriate to ask donors, UNDP and Trust Fund, to pay for a proportion of my salary when you, as Member Nations, have already agreed to pay for my entire salary?

The point I am making here is that the figures are potentially misleading, if we are saying that all of that should be recovered because, frankly, I do not think it should all be recovered. What we

should be looking at is covering the incremental cost of the institution's support to the field. Now that is rather a complicated figure to get at. We have asked the consultant who works on these cost-measurement studies to assist us in splitting the cost between that which is incremental and that which is not. He has asked for more time but a preliminary result gives a conservative figure of 72 percent. In other words, of that US\$90.7 million, about US\$65 million would be incremental. That would reduce that so-called deficit of US\$44 million to which I referred to about US\$28 million. We have brought down the figure of US\$94 million deficit to about US\$28 million, which is a real gap between receipts and incremental costs.

The distinguished delegate of Canada, and also delegates from other countries, recognized that there is a direct advantage to the Regular Programme, not only from synergy, but from direct support from donors for normative work. Here, I am not talking about a field officer gaining from the fact that he has been involved with a IPM project in the field and then improves his normative guidelines at Headquarters. I am not talking about that. I am talking about the fact that a large number of donors are paying for the Global IPM Facility in Headquarters. In other words, part of all of this cost, part of all of this Field Programme delivery, is money coming into FAO to support normative activities.

Now there is a definitional problem here. It is difficult to give you an accurate measure of what that would be, but we went through an exercise relying on one concept which is applied internally. Technical assistance projects are assigned to our operational division, that is TCO, or to its branches in the regional offices. "Normative projects" are assigned to the Technical Divisions at Headquarters to operate. I took out a list of all of those normative projects; that is, all of those projects operated by the Technical Divisions at Headquarters. I found a total figure of US\$47 million in allotments for 1998 alone. If I add on APOs, that is Associate Professional Officers, employed by Technical Divisions, it is a further US\$10 million. So I am talking something like a total of at least US\$50 million, because within my figures there are some partially normative and not fully normative activities - I do not want to exaggerate - that is US\$50 million in one year, US\$100 million equivalent for a biennium, against my estimate of US\$28 million for the gap.

The point I am really making is we have a problem in providing you with good information, and I accept the request that we do something about that. In fact, we are already organizing something along those lines.

I do not think, however, the figures which tell you that there is a massive subsidy from the Regular Programme to the Field Programme, are indicative of the real situation. I think, in fact, we will be able to demonstrate that the flow of the subsidy is, if anything, in the opposite direction. I appreciate that we need to do more on this to give you solid facts and figures in the form of a Report, and certainly we will respond to that, but I would like to put your minds at rest to a certain degree that the problem is certainly nothing like as severe as you might imagine.

Some comments were made about the evaluation of projects and our plans to address the various issues there. Of course, you can see that we are constantly making efforts to improve. The aspects that we have tried to address, recently, include training of staff in the formulation of projects. We have training courses for staff to improve the formulation process and we have also persuaded the Technical Units to allocate a little bit more money to the project formulation process so that this is done more thoroughly.

I now wish to turn to Algeria's comments, one in particular, and the concern about the impact of vacant posts on our programmes. Yes, of course, you are quite correct. That is a serious source of under-delivery in the Programme. In 1996-97, it was largely attributable to the sudden decline in the Budget and to the fact that it was not fully funded. For example, the Budget was not fully funded for the cost of separations and termination indemnities which became necessary.

I would like to thank the delegate of China for noticing the other side of that support-cost equation. In particular, that we had managed consistently to bring down support costs almost in proportion to delivery. In fact, if you look at 1996-97 separately, there is a greater sign of

improvement. We have made enormous efforts to try and reduce these costs and if the Regular Programme PWB for 1998-99 is implemented on target and we get the field delivery we expect, I expect that percentage that you see in the Table of 18.1 percent for administrative costs to fall to between 15 and 16 percent. This is largely due to the full effect of decentralization, and other cost reductions at Headquarters.

The comments on the support cost methodology and it being complex coming from the External Auditors' Report are fully taken and, certainly, we will be looking at ways to simplify and rationalize the various approaches we have to cost recovery in this area. However, I would just like to forewarn that it is not as easy as it looks. Most of them are determined by donors and not by the Organization. For example, at least three of those techniques that are quoted there are determined by UNDP as the modalities to be employed, by which they will reward us for the work we do for them. Incidentally, they are combining two of the techniques so that will be an improvement. But we will be making every effort. We can to improve further.

The distinguished delegate of Germany also asked a series of technical questions on Trypanosomiasis and, in paragraph 265, on the Draft Strategies for Agricultural Development. They were, I know, circulated to various groups including the World Bank. I do not know the full details and I do not know whether they are accessible on the Internet. I will get back to him on that. I will also get back to him regarding amount of consultancy funds incurred under TCP and what the statistics are there. If we can, we will give him a written response to those. I hope he will understand that we are a little bit short of manpower tonight.

With regard to the question by the delegate of the United States of America concerning paragraph 13, I'd like to say that yYes, it was over-optimistically stressed as being a success in that it refers to the Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources which was developed, but was not actually approved. That is really stated too positively and should be corrected.

On the question of FAORs, you may be interested to note that the Programme and Finance Committees, at the Joint Meeting, asked for a full Report on the Decentralized Offices and how they work including FAORs, their mission and their relationship with the other offices in the Organization. In fact, the Report will be about Decentralisation in general and will, I believe, address all those questions. Information on grade levels will be provided not by country, but in such a way that you can evaluate what the sorts of numbers are.

Regarding the suggestion that we should combine the PIR and the PER, can I say that we are looking into that, and we will be responding to the Programme and Finance Committee, the Programme Committee in particular, that is addressing this particular issue. It has pluses and it has minuses. I, too, like the idea of having all of the *post-facto* implementation, monitoring and evaluation reporting in one place. It has a lot going for it.

The two reports, however, at the moment are on a completely different time schedule. You will get the next PER biennial document for 1998-99 at the next meeting of the Council. We have already largely prepared that, so I do not think we should throw it away at this stage. The PIR follows the biennium and comes out later. The point I am making is, can you let us come back to the Programme and Finance Committees with specific suggestions, rather than making a decision here which might not be based on the best advice from us?

I am afraid I am not familiar with what happened on the Fisheries Meeting. We will look into it, and come back to you specifically on it.

Similarly, I am not familiar with the issue of the location of the Secretariat of the Near East Desert Control Commission. Mr Moore is familiar with that one, so I will pass over very shortly.

I think that covers all the questions, but please come back to me if you think I have missed something.

CHAIRMAN

I think the mathematics of Mr Wade are very good. It should nevertheless be noted that the issue of support costs is really complicated, and somehow expensive, starting from the 13 percent as a basic support cost. However, it is something on which the Secretariat is reflecting. I think that at this phase of our debate, we can just wait for the next explanations at the next meetings.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I understand that the question was whether the seat of the Commission, or the location of the Secretariat, can be determined by the Council, or whether this is a matter for the Commission. The Agreement for the establishment of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region is one which was adopted under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution. Article 3 of that Agreement says that the seat of the Commission shall be determined by the Commission. In other words, it is for the Commission to take that decision. Does that answer your question?

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

We are speaking of restoring the post of the Secretary-General of the Commission, and not the Headquarters of the Commission.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I think we should come back to this tomorrow. The only point we have here under the Agreement is that the Director-General of the Organization shall provide the Secretary and staff for the Commission who, for administrative purposes, shall be responsible to him. Nothing else is said about that. I think it is better that we look into this situation and come back with a full reply for you tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN

Is there any supplementary question? If this is not the case, I think I will ask for your brevity to go onto the next Item. It is agreed.

The next Item is the fact that the Programme and Finance Committees had joint meetings on 6 May and 23 September 1998. Australia has a Point of Order.

Point of order

Point d'ordre

Punto de Orden

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

I am sorry, Mr Chairman. I think this farce has gone on long enough. We have been sitting here now almost seven hours. We have not had a quorum for some time. We, as Council Members, deserve better than this from the Secretariat. While we have to be flexible, this is the second highest level of governance of this Organization. I am afraid that I think we should call time here, acknowledge that we have wasted another hour-and-a-half of interpretation time, like we did last night. I am very, very disappointed that having on Monday morning an approved Timetable and an Agenda, we find ourselves in these circumstances at 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening.

It is very disappointing, Mr Chairman, but I do not feel, given that the items or Item 10 in particular, which involves some very important points, particularly Item 10.1, in relation to Savings and Efficiencies in Governance, a major Item which affects all of us and involves some quite political decisions, should be subject to discussion by less than a quorum. I think, even if we did have just a quorum, I would still seek a cessation of the Session. This is not how the Council should run. This is not how this Organization should treat serious matters, with discussions with less than, or even just marginally, a quorum. This is too serious a matter to go on like this.

I would suggest that it is time that we finished, and took Item 10 tomorrow and any unanswered questions from this evening. It is unusual that we stump our Legal Counsel. I would certainly like

it on record that I am afraid I feel that we have been let down by the Organization on the running of this Council session.

CHAIRMAN

Of course, I am in the hands of the Council. I mean we have a quorum. They can decide if to adjourn to tomorrow morning. I just want to recall that we are late in our Agenda. We were supposed to have other issues resolved, discussed and concluded today. It has not been possible. I am afraid that if we do not recover this delay, all the work of the Council could be in some way compromised. Of course, it is not only Item 10 that is important, but also the previous Item was important. I am ready to stay as long as all the issues are raised, and all the questions are answered. If the majority feels that we should continue tomorrow morning, even though we have to face a very important Item, which is something that will take up most of the morning and even if we risk delaying discussion of the Items on our Timetable, then I will go along with their wishes.

I defend the Secretariat because the Items discussed were so important and interesting that interventions were longer than could have been foreseen, but *la question est qu'elles sont*, and I think that a decision has to be made. Either we go on with another Item of the Agenda, or we can just risk the delaying of all Items on our Timetable. As I said, I am in your hands.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Me uno al llamado muy racional que ha hecho nuestro colega de Australia. Creo que todos somos testigos de su laboriosidad como Representante. Consideramos muy importante el Tema de Economías, y estimamos que debería ser tratado a una hora más propicia, que creemos debe ser mañana.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

I think at this hour of the evening, you are not going to get very good brainpower applying itself to these critical issues, and if I understand the sentiment in the room that we have delayed our discussions on these Items, then perhaps we should commit to changing the tempo of our discussions tomorrow. For now, I really do not think it would serve any purpose to continue the discussion. We should rather undertake to start on time tomorrow, and pick up the tempo of the discussion, because I think that is where we have lost time. These matters are too important to deal with in a half-hearted manner.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal)

Je suis d'accord sur ce qu'a dit mon collègue et je voudrais faire une recommandation; que vous vous réunissiez en tant que Bureau demain matin à la première heure pour essayer de voir comment les travaux évoluent, faire une évaluation et nous proposer un calendrier qui puisse nous permettre d'atteindre notre objectif. Je crois que le moment est venu pour le Bureau d'exercer sa fonction traditionnelle, faire l'évaluation des travaux et nous proposer une issue. Par exemple, comme l'a dit l'Australie, une séance de nuit doit être programmée à cause des petites délégations et ce n'est pas la faute du Secrétariat si celle-ci n'avait pas été programmée, mais la nôtre en tant qu'Etats Membres. Je crois que le Conseil juridique a été fidèle à sa tradition, et il ne répondra à une question que lorsqu'il aura tous les éléments.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

I hate to waste another half-hour debating the fact that we do not have half-an-hour to waste.

We had an agreement at 6:00 p.m. that we would go until 8:30 p.m., perhaps 8:45 p.m.. That was the understanding that every delegation had on this floor. I have every confidence in the ability of my colleagues that are still here to debate the issues before us, but I hesitate to open up the possibility of someone coming in tomorrow morning and saying: 'But I did not have a chance to debate that Item. I was not told that there would be a Session at 9:30 p.m., and I wish to address it.'

So I fear that our good work would simply be undone tomorrow morning. I therefore echo the sentiments of previous speakers, particularly the recommendation from the delegate from Senegal that we have to clarify how we are going to call evening sessions, and give people adequate warning.

CHAIRMAN

I thank the delegate of Canada for his statement.

I only would like to make a call to all delegations, that if you want to respect a Timetable, I think that the statements tomorrow should be shortened in some respect. Otherwise we can go on until we run into the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Of course, it is up to you. I do not want to do this because all the interventions are quite interesting, but I recall that when we were in the OECD there was a red lamp flashing after three minutes, and then ringing after one minute. So either we find a system like that or, if we want to exhibit all our rhetorical abilities, I think that we shall not be able to respect the Timetable.

So I am ready to go on all night. I recall that when we were in Brussels and up until midnight, the spirits became be alive again. But if it is now the feeling of the assembly, I can certainly agree to adjourn.

So if there is nothing to raise again, I think we can adjourn until tomorrow morning. Be lively and ready.

The meeting rose at 21.30 hours

La séance est levée à 21 h 30

Se levanta la sesión a las 21.30 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
FIFTH PLENARY MEETING CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
25 November 1998

**The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.40 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

IV. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(continued)

IV. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION (suite)

IV. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS (continuación)

10. Reports of the Joint Meetings of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee (May 1998 and September 1998) (CL 115/4; CL 115/19)

10. Rapports des réunions conjointes du Comité du programme et du Comité financier (mai et septembre 1998) (CL 115/4; CL 115/19)

10. Informes de las Reuniones Conjuntas del Comité del Programa y de Finanzas (mayo y septiembre de 1998) (CL 115/4; CL 115/19)

10.1 Savings and Efficiencies in Governance (CL 115/5)

10.1 Economies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance (CL 115/5)

10.1 Economías y eficiencia en el ejercicio del gobierno (CL 115/5)

D.F.R. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

This Item has three Sub-items. 10.1 is probably the most important one and, therefore, I will first try to concentrate on this point and then after we have completed this debate I will turn to 10.2 and 10.3, which can probably be handled relatively quickly.

Item 10.1 refers to your request to the Finance and Programme Committees to consider under the issue of Savings and Efficiencies in Governance: firstly, Working Procedures of Conference Sessions and secondly, the Implementation of the Council Resolution 13/97, Review of FAO's Statutory Bodies. The latter was forwarded to our Joint Meeting in September in the form of a Progress Report -- and you are very familiar with the decision of the Conference -- on how far the various Statutory Bodies have been reviewed and on what steps the Secretariat has taken regarding directives by the Conference on abolition or changes, etc. in the sense of finding deficiencies in Statutory Bodies. I would like to draw the second Item to the attention of the Council for information only. I do not think there is a need for debate on it. You will find this Report attached to the Report of the Joint Meeting of Finance and Programme Committees, in document CL 115/19.

Regarding the Working Procedures of Conference Sessions, we first had a discussion on this round in our May meeting and at our request, the Secretariat prepared a document for our consideration for possible changes to be introduced to meet the requirements of the request made by Conference and Council in improving the working procedures.

You will find our deliberations on this issue in CL 115/19, and I will brief you only on the most salient points of our discussion. The first point is in paragraph 35, under the headings A to H, a range of eight measures for Improvements of Procedures. The majority of Members of both Committees agreed to recommend these eight measures to the Council, including that the Nominations Committee be abolished and that the number of Commissions be reduced from three to two. Out of these eight measures, maybe these two are the most important ones.

Further on, besides these eight measures, actions were proposed for three other items: the Validity of Credentials in paragraph 36; the Voting System in paragraph 37; and the Handling of Resolutions in paragraph 38.

Finally, regarding modifications of the General Debate by Heads of Delegations, the Joint Meeting considered various options, in particular the three listed in paragraph 39. The Committees did not agree to any specific accommodation on these issues, and concluded that further consultation among Members was required. This is probably the most important, to see if the Council could find a way out of these various options, that is, to consider all possible views on how to improve the General Debate of the Conference and to make it more efficient.

What is important is that the CCLM had meanwhile also further discussed this important Item on the basis of the Report of the Joint Meeting, and I think the Legal Counsel will make reference to the findings of the CCLM on our report, as well as to the issues raised.

This was a brief introduction and listing of the main points of the outcome of our deliberations on the Improvement of Procedures in Conference Sessions.

CHAIRMAN

I just want to underline what Dr. Bommer has said. To avoid confusion, we suggest that we examine Item 10.1 first: Savings and Efficiencies in Governance. After that is concluded, we will take up the other items.

Before the debate, I would like to give the floor to the Chairman of the CCLM.

Moussa Bocar LY (Vice-Président, Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques)

En l'absence du Président du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques, il me revient, en ma qualité de Vice-président, de vous présenter le rapport du Comité sur ce point.

Le Comité a examiné les suggestions faites par la Réunion conjointe du Comité financier et du Comité du programme. Il ne s'agissait pas, en vérité, pour le CQCJ d'entrer dans le bien-fondé de ces suggestions qui sont soumises en ce moment à l'attention du Conseil, mais il s'agissait d'identifier les dispositions des Textes fondamentaux qu'il y aurait lieu de modifier si ces propositions étaient retenues. Et c'est ce que le Comité a fait, concernant en particulier la suppression éventuelle du Comité des candidatures et le transfert de ses fonctions au Conseil et l'introduction du système de vote électronique et les procédures de vote pour les élections lorsque le nombre de candidats est égal au nombre de postes vacants ou qu'il n'existe qu'un candidat pour un poste. Là, le paragraphe 9 est pertinent.

Le CQCJ, en examinant cette question particulière, a considéré qu'elle devait être tranchée en premier lieu au plan politique et il attend donc de votre Conseil une décision politique sur cette question du vote.

De même, le Comité a noté que, depuis de nombreuses années, la Conférence n'avait pas fait appel au mécanisme des Comités techniques, visés aux Articles XV.2, XV.3 et VII.1 du Règlement général de l'Organisation (RGO). Il sollicite des directives de la part du Conseil pour pouvoir examiner éventuellement, en rapport avec le Secrétariat, le bien-fondé de leur suppression, compte tenu du fait que ces dispositions n'ont pas été utilisées depuis un certain temps.

Le Comité s'est également penché sur la question de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs et il a retenu que la proposition de la Réunion conjointe était réalisable. Il compte, d'ailleurs, faire une étude à ce sujet, mais, sur le plan juridique, rien ne s'oppose à cette proposition.

Voilà les décisions qui sont attendues de la part de votre Conseil, en ce qui concerne ces points particuliers examinés par le CQCJ du point de vue strictement juridique et du point de vue de sa réalisation juridique. Je suis à la disposition des Membres du Conseil pour toute clarification sur ces différentes situations.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

Thank you to the Chairs of both the Programme Committee and the CCLM for their introductions.

The area of Savings and Efficiencies in Governance is important and will certainly add to the ability of Members to get a better return from their involvement in the Organization. So, it is certainly with great interest that Australia read through the documents.

In regard to the Programme Committee first, Australia would be very supportive of the suggestions in paragraphs 35, 36, 37 and 38. We think those would be changes which would improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the working arrangements for the Conference.

With regard to paragraph 39, we are interested in trying to encourage greater interaction among Ministers. We think this would be to the benefit of all of us at Conference in addressing issues that warrant Ministerial involvement and we would therefore like, at least in terms of an initial indication, to suggest that in paragraph 39, the third dot point, a few topics could be selected which Ministers could address in separate but simultaneous meetings. It would, in fact, be a very good opportunity for the Organization to draw on the senior representatives from Member Nations to discuss issues of immediate pertinence.

We have seen this style of Conference work very well in Australia. The regular Outlook Conference of the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics runs this sort of simultaneous key issue items, and has done so for a number of years with great effect, with subsequent reporting back to a Plenary Session. I think that would work extremely well for the Conference.

Turning then to the CCLM, I thank the Members for applying their expertise to the legal implications of paragraphs 35, 36, 37 and 38, suggestions by the Programme Committee, and would certainly agree with the suggestions in Appendices A, B and C, which reflect the Nominations Committee, the introduction of an electronic voting system and voting procedures for elections, respectively.

In relation to paragraph 9 of CL 115/5, I would suggest that secret ballots remain for the Director-General, the Independent Chair and for new Members of the Organization. However, I think that in relation to Members of the Council, if we do have an agreed slate it should not be necessary for secret ballots on this occasion.

Finally, with regard to paragraph 12 of CL 115/5, where there is a suggestion that a paper will be put up looking at provisions that have not been used in many years. There is a saying in Australia, "If it ain't broke, don't try and fix it." I am not quite sure why we would, perhaps, need to change these rules. They do not seem to be affected by either the suggestions from the Programme Committee or interfere with efficient and effective governance. Perhaps the suggestion of the Secretariat preparing a paper might throw more light on this. I would not stand in the way of such a paper being prepared, but I would just add that slight caution about whether we really need to have this change introduced. We have a number of others which do need to be addressed, and perhaps we should focus on those in the immediate future.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

I should like to ask for the floor for the Austrian delegate.

Ms Hedwig WÖGERBAUER (Observer for Austria)

I would like to refer to item 10.1 of the Agenda.

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, the Austrian Presidency would like to make some comments on the items set out in documents CL 115/4 and CL 115/19.

We generally approve the eight recommendations listed in paragraph 11 of document CL 115/4 and the three main items in paragraph 35 of document CL 115/19.

Efforts should be made to keep the Agenda of Conference sessions as short as possible. Contentious Items should, whenever possible, be settled in the Council sessions preceding the Conference, in order to reduce the number of Items of the Conference Agenda and to avoid lengthy debates.

As far as the examination of possible modifications of the General Debate by Heads of Delegations is concerned, we would like to see this high-level segment linked with the work of one of the Commissions to promote interaction among delegations. We would like to suggest dealing with the Agenda Item "Review of the State of Food and Agriculture" in a more focused and effective way. The Item itself should be maintained since Heads of Delegations do indeed address the general state of food and agriculture in their countries, regions or in the world. However, it could be improved by placing the consideration of this Item at each session in the

context of a specific and thematic issue of particular interest to Members. The issue should refer to one of the main political topics regarding agriculture, forestry or fishery under discussion in the previous two years. In this way, the debate by Heads of Delegations would be better targeted and more lively.

The consideration of the possibility of reducing the number of Commissions from three to two, as suggested by the Programme and Finance Committees, finds our support. The merging of Commission II and Commission III could help the restructuring of the Conference, and we suggest that the following structure could be considered:

- Commission I could deal with substantive agenda items related to major trends and policies in food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry;
- Commission II could deal with the Programme of Work and Budget, the Medium-Term Plan, the Strategic Framework, as well as constitutional, administrative and financial matters;
- The Plenary could concentrate on the high-level segment, including the State of Food and Agriculture and a specific topic, as well as the procedural and formal matters, including elections, the approval of the Programme of Work and Budget, and of the Conference Report.

It should also be pointed out that Commissions should not meet at the same time that items of special and wide interest are scheduled in the Plenary, such as the statement of the Director-General, the McDougall Lecture or the distribution of awards, or when votes are being taken. This would allow small delegations to attend Plenary sessions without missing the opportunity to follow the debate on major Items in one of the Commissions.

This proposal should lead to a real reduction of costs and could help to have a better targeted and more efficient debate, without effecting the substantive way in which Items are dealt with or reducing the content of discussions.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

La FAO, como el resto de los organismos del sistema de Naciones Unidas ha observado durante los últimos años un permanente ejercicio de reforma y de racionalización. Ahora este Consejo tiene a su consideración importantes medidas de éste que podríamos llamar un proceso permanente. Entre las propuestas que nos presentan los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas hay algunas que son bienvenidas, como la parte relativa a que durante la Conferencia los Ministros mantengan un encuentro. Esto nos parece muy positivo porque sin duda reforzará la FAO como organismo de discusión; también la introducción del voto electrónico consideramos que como método de procedimiento es una medida que merece un elogio.

Sin embargo hay otras propuestas que nos causan alguna preocupación, principalmente la primera incluida en el párrafo 35(a): se propone que la Conferencia delegue en el Consejo algunos Temas. Yo me pregunto, a la luz de las dos últimas jornadas que ha tenido el Consejo; ayer se trabajó 7 horas continuadas, desde las 14.30 de la tarde a las 21.30 de la noche; si con el número de días que tiene asignado el Consejo que ahora de hecho son cuatro, si vemos además que la agenda del Consejo se ha reducido realmente a cuatro días, de lunes a jueves porque el viernes está dedicado a los trabajos del Comité de Redacción. En estas circunstancias creo realmente que la eficiencia del Consejo y de la Organización quedarían menguadas si por lo menos en términos de tiempo se mantuviera pasándose Temas importantes de la Conferencia. Yo creo que este es un Tema que debe reconsiderar tanto el Consejo como la Organización. El Consejo de hecho ya ha reducido de dos a una semana, si bien recuerdo su número de sesiones, y todavía si aumentamos de Tema yo creo que esto va a tener ciertos efectos en la eficiencia que por lo visto es lo contrario de lo que se busca.

Otro tema que también nos preocupa es el párrafo 35(d), donde se propone que el Tema más importante, el Tema a discusión entre los ministros sobre el Estado Mundial de la Agricultura y la Alimentación durante la Conferencia, se pase a la Comisión I. Entendemos desde luego las cuestiones de racionalización, así como también el hecho de que se reduzcan las pistas con objeto

de que todos los países puedan participar, pero consideramos también que esto iría en detrimento del propio foro de la Organización, el hecho de que el Tema principal de la Conferencia pase a una de las Comisiones no lo estimamos en principio como una medida adecuada. Consideramos que se debe mantener en Plenaria por el nivel del debate que debe de tener este Tema.

Por lo demás no tenemos ningún comentario, consideramos que son medidas muy positivas y que están en línea para mejorar los trabajos de la Organización. Queremos aprovechar la ocasión para reiterar un punto de vista nuestro que ha sido una constante en este debate, de que no en aras de reducir los costos, no en aras de reducir las cuestiones de gastos, se afecte el trabajo de fondo de la Organización.

Takashi SEKIGUCHI (Japan)

Regarding working procedures of Conference sessions, Japan wishes to continue its efforts to make discussions more effective and essential. Based on this viewpoint, we appreciate the proposals of the Joint Meeting on the improvement of the working procedures of Conference sessions.

However, regarding the recommendation that the Item on the State of Food and Agriculture be discussed in Commission I, we think that country statements on this Item should be made in Plenary. At present, statements of each country are delivered in Plenary and a lot of time is spent on this. Commission I is not appropriate for these statements.

Another point on which we hope to see improvement is in the working procedures of the Conference session regarding the proposals of Draft Resolutions about which the Member Nations are not informed about in advance. Member Countries therefore, cannot be prepared for these resolutions and a lot of time is necessary for them to grasp the contents and make queries to their capital on action to be taken. In many cases, delegations cannot make a thorough examination of these because of time constraints. Except for pressing issues, the Draft Resolutions and the reasons for their proposal, should be received by each Member Nation at the earliest possible stage.

Regarding the General Debate among Ministers of Member Nations, although we can support the idea of promoting discussions among Ministers, we expect it will be difficult to organize only one meeting to be attended by all ministers, considering that five days are currently spent for statements by Member Nations.

Accordingly, it seems appropriate to take a more realistic approach to arrange some opportunities in which the Ministers can participate and discuss freely on particular topics of their interest.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I think it is appropriate for the Secretariat to ask for additional clarification from the Council regarding the idea of holding some form of meetings or dialogues amongst the Ministers. I know that the delegate from Australia suggested that simultaneous, but separate, meetings of ministers may be a good idea, and I believe some other delegations also referred to that.

However, it would be helpful if we had some guidance from you on how we would deal with the extra costs of separate, simultaneous meetings, in particular, the language factor and the interpretation that would be required.

So if you could give us a little more guidance on that, it would be helpful.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

The Africa Group is very willing to pursue the direction of trying to seek increased efficiency and effectiveness of our Governing Bodies, particularly Conference, in this case. I would just like to make some comments regarding the suggestions that have been made in document CL 115/19.

Regarding Sub-paragraph 35(a), we also have a certain hesitancy here about the delegation of further authority to Council. We do not have a problem with the principle, but I think the type of

issues for which delegation would be passed down to Council would have to be clarified before we could agree to this.

We certainly agree with sub-paragraph 35(b), which we think is probably the minimum time required for Conference to deal with its matters in a proper way.

We attach particular importance to sub-paragraph 35(c), seen in relation to Sub-paragraph 35(e). It is particularly important for countries with small delegations, so that their delegates are able to participate adequately in all discussions of Conference.

Finishing with sub-paragraph 35(e) before going back to sub-paragraph 35(d), we would not have a problem with the elimination of Commission III and the other matters dealt with in Commissions I and II.

On sub-paragraph 35(d), we would also have the reserve that has been expressed there by GRULAC and by Japan about the State of Food and Agriculture being an important issue that needs to be aired and discussed in Plenary rather than in a Commission.

We could go along with sub-paragraphs 35(f), 35(g) and 35(h).

Regarding paragraph 36, we could also go along with the flexibility that is expressed in the document CL 115/19 regarding this paragraph.

Paragraph 37 would be okay, as well as paragraph 38.

With regard to the important paragraph 39, dealing with the matter of Heads of Delegations and, in many cases, Ministers; again the principle of getting more value out of the time that our Ministers spend here is agreed with. However, recording the point I made just now about small delegations not being able to split themselves very much, we would not be in favour of separate and simultaneous meetings. We do not see how important topics dealt with in separate meetings could be followed by one Minister. So we would agree with the principle of perhaps suggesting topics or a topic that could inspire Ministers to focus on without restricting them too much, but not simultaneous and several meetings.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Concerning the recommendations in document CL 115/19, particularly referring to Savings and Efficiency in Governance, we support the recommendations, particularly in paragraph 35. We also support the proposals in paragraph 36.

We note that CCLM has requested the Secretariat to present a study dealing with the topic of accepting credentials by facsimile or by other electronic methods. We think it is wise that we look into the practice in other Organizations before we come to a decision on that particular issue.

However, we agree with the other proposals to streamline the Credentials Committee.

Paragraph 37 is fine.

We agree with the recommendations in paragraph 38 on the Resolutions Committee and would also like to support the concerns expressed by Japan in terms of a number of last-minute Resolutions that do come before us that we are not prepared to handle as delegations. Perhaps we should consider adopting a procedure that is in place in other multilateral organizations, of ensuring that Resolutions have a number of co-sponsors, so that they are considered by Members of, at least, some other Regions and some other interests, and would have a broader support before they make it to the Resolutions Committee.

Concerning paragraph 39, and the Deputy Director-General has asked for clarification on how one of these options might work, Canada certainly agrees with the sentiments expressed by Australia that we should go for the third option of selecting some topics which Ministers could address in separate but simultaneous meetings.

We, too, have seen this practice work quite successfully in other fora. In terms of cost, we currently have Conferences which have scheduled three simultaneous sessions for two

Commissions and Plenary going on, so we currently have occasions where we have three or four sets of interpreters going. What we had foreseen was that these separate sessions would go for perhaps one-and-a-half or two days, and that they would be a totally separate occurrence from the meetings of the Commissions. They would take place perhaps the first day-and-a-half of the Conference. Then we would move on to the meetings of the Commissions.

In terms of small delegations, I think the idea would be that the Minister or the Head of Delegation would select one topic that they would wish to attend. It would be impossible to go around and attend all three, two or three, or whatever number we select. The idea would be that the Minister of Agriculture, for example from Canada, would look at the two or three lists and decide that he or she wished to attend the one on perhaps environmental concerns. That is the one they would attend. Delegations would not have to split to cover others.

Concerning document CL 115/5, paragraphs 4 to 12, we agree with the recommendations that are there. I would like to just discuss paragraph 9 for a moment.

We had noted the recommendations of the Joint Meeting that, at every occasion where we currently are required to vote where it is not really necessary, we look into options of not having a vote. We would agree that there are some occasions where we do, in fact, require having a secret ballot, and we would agree with the suggestion that those would be the election of the Director-General, the election of new Members and the election of the Chairman of Council. We do feel, however, that for the election of Members to Council where there is a clean slate, there is no need to have an election.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the Chairman of the Programme Committee filling in, in his capacity as Chair of the Joint Meeting last fall, and the acting Chairperson of the CCLM for their Reports.

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados)

I would like to specifically refer to document CL 115/19 because that seems to be where the action is, including the Appendix -- a very useful Appendix which lists all of, or most of, the actions that have been taken in respect of abolition of a series of Working Groups and Commissions.

I would like to refer specifically to paragraph 35(e), starting with the number of Commissions because this is like music to the ears of the countries with very small delegations. In this case, Barbados is a delegation of one but very often a delegation of two. The larger countries with several delegates do not really feel it in the way that small countries, islands and island states feel it. Where there are three Commissions it is not always a matter of choosing because all of the topics in all three are relevant and important, because in a small country, the country has to cover everything that a big country has to cover. Two delegations and two Commissions would certainly be much more helpful to the smaller countries in terms of being able to have more adequate coverage, because usually there are one or two persons. So Barbados fully supports the question of the reduction of the Commissions proposed in paragraph 35(e), as I said in referring closely to document CL 115//19.

Regarding the question of the Nominations Committee being abolished and taken over by the Council, I think we should go cautiously there. We should try to explore why was that Nominations Committee set up anyhow. Maybe it was set up to give the general membership more say in the persons that should be nominated. So I think we have to be very cautious. My colleague from Australia said you should not fix it if nothing is wrong with it -- or words to that effect -- and I think we should try and explore, go back to the original reasons and let us not be too quick. Barbados is not too happy about this business of simply abolishing this Committee. I think we should review and perhaps there could be a compromise where the Members make their nominations and the Council actually reviews these nominations, but we would advise caution on paragraph 35(f).

Similarly, we would advise caution with regard to the work of the Credentials Committee, which is dealt with in paragraph 35(g). I had the good fortune of sitting on that Committee last year. The question of the faxes came up, and that is also covered in paragraph 36. Now, there is one argument that we need to use modern technology, but modern technology also gives rise to the greater possibility of fraud, deceit and even gimmicks. Anybody can send a fax to anybody, and we have to be cautious about how we use the faxes.

The other thing is the question of timing in terms of the signed originals. Last year it was very disappointing to me that some of the decisions were taken on the basis of the faxes and then the originals never came, or came after the decisions had already been taken or the meeting had been concluded. With regard to the receipt of the originals, we have to be careful that we look at the question of timing. I think ideally the originals should come before the meeting takes place or before the voting takes place. Were they come after the voting, they would really not be effective. So we have to be very careful about the Nominations Committee and the faxes.

I turn to the question of no voting taking place where the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, covered in paragraph 35(h). At first I was a little curious about that, but it may be that this allows people to express an interest or their views on the candidates who have been nominated. Because there is no contest it does not mean that everybody actually supports that particular candidate. Indeed, sometimes people vote in secret and in private differently from how they speak publicly. So I think we also have to be very cautious about saying that because there is no contest, there should be no voting. We have to be careful about that, because if we were to apply that in some political systems then we would perhaps have no elections at all. So we have to be very cautious.

With regard to the proposed Ministerial Interaction in paragraph 39, it has struck me that on every occasion where I have attended a meeting like this, or in other parts of the world, even where the person is not a Minister, he feels the need to give a statement - a long statement usually prepared at home and usually very often telecast. I think it is often the case in some of these fora where the television cameras carry what the Minister is saying and then it is broadcast at home to a very appreciative audience. Very often his speaking in international fora has political implications. I think that what we have to be careful about here is the question of interaction between the Ministers. In some organizations the officials meet first and negotiate some of the issue for the Ministers, then the Ministers meet to discuss those issues and sometimes have private sessions where they even exclude the most trusted advisers.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

First of all, I just want to add my voice to the voice of South Africa which is the Chairman of the African Group. I agree totally with what South Africa has expressed, but further emphasize the fact that the Item on the State of Food and Agriculture really is the Item that has been put before each of the Member Nations as homework to be able to achieve the World Food Summit goals. Therefore, it is an item fit to be discussed in the Plenary so that each of us can be able to hear from each other on progress being made. From this, we may be able to learn about the way to put into place our Plan of Action. Therefore, I think, the interactions when we are together will be very, very vital.

On the question of fora for the Ministers in particular to be able to have interactions, once again I think the Ministers, while they can still have these, should not take refrain from attending the main deliberations where many important things may be mentioned. Sometimes Ministers can learn quite a lot from these and be able to go back to the decision-makers and the policy-formulators. They could then be able to take up some of the positive interactions that they may have with other delegations, since many of them, actually do have well-prepared texts which are authoritative and relate to what governments approve.

I just wanted to add my voice to reaffirm what South Africa has said on behalf of the African Group.

Kiho YOON (Korea, Republic of)

I will be very brief on this Item right now. In paragraph 35 of CL 115/19 on the eight recommendations concerning the Working Procedures of the Conference, we are supportive of (a), (b), (c), (e), (f), (g), and (h).

Concerning the possible modification of the General Debate by the Head of Delegation, we would prefer the first option of holding the session in two stages so that sustained debates could take place.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

As would be expected and welcomed, we have a range of views. What I am wondering now is what we do with this range of views other than write a report that says there was no agreement on number of the items.

I think there are some very interesting alternatives being put up. One way may be to have the Programme Committee do a further consideration and bring these back through the CCLM, and that may be certainly one way of doing it. Could I perhaps suggest another way, that the Council may wish to consider an Inter-regional Group to try and take this up because the Programme Committee is much smaller and I am wondering whether, in fact, that may be an alternative. Perhaps the Deputy Director-General or the Legal Counsel may wish to give a comment on cost interpretation difficulties, or legal difficulties with that, but it just seems that we have now gone through the process a couple of times at the Programme Committee stage.

Maybe we could accelerate this process and bring some of these very good ideas to better bearing on the issues by having a slightly different group to take the Council's discussions away, consider them and bring them back to the next Council.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

I should like to support the intervention of Austria on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

With regard to the state of our deliberations here, I should like to point out, furthermore, that we should make an effort to shorten the discussions on the State of Food and Agriculture item. It should be possible that delegations make very short statements mentioning within two or three minutes the major issues, and then the contributions explaining the situation in their countries should be taken to the Verbatim staff and issued in writing. This would help us to devote more time to other items where we need real and substantial discussion.

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

La delegación de Brasil también ha analizado el documento CL 115/19 con mucha atención. De todo lo que se habló aquí no resta la menor duda de que hubo un gran esfuerzo por parte del programa para llegar a un denominador común que reduzca el trabajo y el tiempo que se pierde muchas veces en cosas que podrían ser dichas en otros foros o en Comisiones durante la Conferencia. Pienso que es un trabajo muy loable y que muchas de estas sugerencias deberían ser consideradas.

Hay una, sin embargo, que nos deja absolutamente azorados, es en el punto 35(d). Está muy bien que la Organización, donde nosotros con mucho honor y orgullo trabajamos, sea cada vez más técnica. Nosotros, los políticos, estamos rodeados por técnicos expertos de origen bastante elogiosa, provenientes de grandes universidades, gente que no piensa en otra cosa que en el adelanto técnico de la FAO. Nuestra delegación está absolutamente de acuerdo con ello, pero lo que nosotros no podemos admitir son sugerencias como estas que el *State of Food and Agriculture*, yo leo en inglés porque el papel que tengo es en inglés *should be dealt with in Commission I rather than the Plenary*.

Nosotros tenemos un Director-General, el Sr. Diouf, que desde hace dos años hace lo posible y lo imposible para que tengamos reuniones a nivel de Ministro para el COFI y el COFO. Nosotros tenemos nuestros ministros que vienen aquí durante la Conferencia y que justamente durante el *State of Food and Agriculture* tienen la oportunidad de hacer sus discursos. Vienen de muy lejos para eso, para ilustrar la posición de sus respectivos países en la Conferencia. Para Brasil, en todo caso, es inadmisibile e inaceptable que este Tema se pase a la Comisión I.

Raúl ALEGRETT (Venezuela)

Creo que ha llegado el momento de pasar a otro Tema. Hemos tomado más de una hora y cuarto y creo que las distintas intervenciones han ido convergiendo hacia algunas posiciones claras, y en general se respalda el documento y su propuesta. Creo que ha habido manifestaciones muy claras a las cuales nosotros nos sumamos en cuanto que el Tema del Estado de la Agricultura debe tratarse en Plenaria. Estamos también de acuerdo con que el Tema de las credenciales debe prestársele especial atención, de que se reduzcan las Comisiones de tres a dos, y de que pueda haber la oportunidad de que los Ministros se reúnan separadamente. El Tema de si esto pudiera implicar o no mayores costos, creo que más bien debería manejarlo la Administración, creo que se puede encontrar una solución que permita el funcionamiento de algunas sesiones exclusivas de Ministros sin que eso represente necesariamente un gran costo adicional o un costo significativo importante.

Pienso que estamos llegando al final de las intervenciones, tal vez yo la haya pedido justo cuando se iba a cerrar el debate, pero quisiera que efectivamente le diéramos punto final a este Tema para que no nos ocurra lo que nos ocurrió ayer. Tenemos muchos otros Temas importantes que tratar y creo que deberíamos acelerar un poco el transcurso de estas deliberaciones.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

It is just to allow me to come back and intervene a second time. It is simply because a number of Members have expressed some concerns about the proposal to have Conference delegate to Council a number of issues to settle. I do not think we should allow the experience of this particular Council Session, which over the first two days seemed to have been getting a bit out of hand to influence us, since under your capable guidance I am sure it is going to come back into schedule.

We should not allow this experience to blind us to the fact that Council is the decision-making body between Conferences. It is our function to take on these more difficult duties and our challenge is to find a way of doing that. If the Conference decides that these should be delegated to Council, then we have to find a way to accommodate that but surely it is easier to come to a decision among 49 Members than it is among 184, and growing.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I tend to agree with the delegation of Venezuela that we heard about as much as we need to on this particular Item. Although we have not reached a consensus on everything, my sense is that we may have enough guidance from you to work with the Drafting Committee in presenting to you some decision items on most of the paragraphs on which you have commented. But with respect to paragraph 39 concerning how to facilitate dialogue among Ministers, it does appear that there is considerable difference of opinion.

I believe, the delegation from Australia made a good suggestion in that an effort be made to look into greater detail at some of the advantages and disadvantages of these various options, including the cost involved and the implications on the Conference scheduling.

It would be the preference of the Secretariat that this be done using existing mechanisms, rather than any *ad hoc* mechanism. I would suggest that the Council may wish to ask the Secretariat to produce a discussion report for the next Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees with regard to paragraph 39. That might be one thing that the Council would wish to ask the Secretariat to do - to prepare a discussion paper on the options in paragraph 39 that could be addressed by the next Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

LEGAL COUNSEL

First of all, we have noted the political guidance given by the Council with respect to the amendment to Rule XII.9(a) and the suggestion that the secret ballot procedure should remain for the election of the Chairman of the Council, the Director-General and the admission of additional Member Nations. That will be reflected in the revised paper presented to the next session of the CCLM. They will then have a number of amendments to the General Rules which they can recommend to the next session of the Council.

I also wanted to say one thing regarding the point raised by the distinguished delegate of Australia with respect to the recommendation of the CCLM in paragraph 12 of their report, to possibly delete the rules dealing with the Technical Committees of the Conference. He said there is an adage "don't fix it if there is nothing wrong". I think the point here is, not that there is something wrong, but the Technical Committees are not used at all and the practice of convening them was specifically discontinued by the Council back in 1970. In fact the Technical Committees were set up in 1961 by the Conference and they were supposed to meet, you will note, before the sessions of the Conference. In other words, they were set up by one Conference to meet before the subsequent session of the Conference. Basically these Technical Committees initially were to deal with agriculture, economics, fisheries, forestry, nutrition and information and publications. As you will now understand, this role has been pretty well taken over, I think, by the Technical Committees of the Council, the COFO and COFI and the Committee on Food Security, etc. Therefore since these Committees were specifically discontinued, the CCLM felt it was perhaps time to tidy up the Basic Texts while they were dealing with the procedures of the Conference.

D.F.R. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

I am happy that the Deputy Director-General has taken on the reports to sum up what we have actually discussed in the Council. I found that there was a large degree of consensus, and there are only a few points where we still have to find the best way to accommodate the various wishes.

I found it very clear that the majority wanted to keep the *State of Food and Agriculture* within the Plenary. Now the question is how can we reform the Plenary to make it more to the point, or of greater interest? Really we have said it - the world is looking to the Plenary. Now it is very dull, and nobody cares about this Plenary. We sometimes feel we should do away with it because it is a waste of time, a waste of time even of Ministers. It would be much better if they could call and talk to each other, instead of sitting there and listening to relatively unimportant speeches. This is the basic question, and I hope that we get some guidance in the meanwhile on how we can best achieve it.

We know and we have discussed, that simultaneous meetings result in additional costs. If we have two or three meetings at the same time, we have three times the number of interpreters, and so on and so on. This we have to keep in mind, and if we are very cost-conscious, I think the difficulty may be in the improvement of the substance of the Plenary and the level of debates conducted there. -- Really debates, not only statements -- which would considerably improve it. This is, I think, the key question which we have to solve.

The rest in my opinion was relatively clear. Barbados reminded us of using caution and not risking to take decisions specifically as faxes for credentials are concerned. But I think this can be easily handled. So I felt more or less there was a wide consensus and the few outstanding points should be able to be resolved at least at the next Council session. I shall proceed with Items 10.2 and 10.3 after receiving your guidance.

CHAIRMAN

I think that we do, in principle, have some consensus on many things, but there are indeed points which need further work, and I think that should be returned to the Secretariat to finish.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Quiero reaccionar a los comentarios hechos por el Sr. Harcharik y por el Sr. Bommer sobre este importante Tema. Primero nos parece muy adecuada la propuesta del Sr. Harcharik, y consideramos que esa es una excelente manera de proceder. Con respecto a lo expuesto por el señor Bommer, simplemente queremos comentar que más allá del Tema que mencionó, sí hubieron otros puntos de divergencia como el que expresamos nosotros sobre el punto 35(a). Quiero aprovechar el uso de la palabra para enfatizar que sobre el Tema, donde se propone que la Conferencia delegue al Consejo, se tomen en consideración dos aspectos muy importantes: cuestiones de tiempo y cuestiones legales. Hay que considerar que la Conferencia es la instancia máxima y universal de la FAO, que hay temas que no puede delegar por su propia naturaleza al Consejo. Esto yo creo que es muy importante que se considere en el documento que se presente al Comité de Programa, así como las cuestiones de tiempo.

CHAIRMAN

I agree with you. That is why we have a general consensus on so many things and more work has to be done by the Secretariat. With that, I think we should go on to Item 10.2: Arrangements for Consideration of JIU Reports, document CL 115/4, and also Item 10.3. I would like Mr Bommer to make the introduction.

10.2 Arrangements for Consideration of JIU Reports**10.2 Dispositions prises en vue de l'examen des rapports du CCI****10.2 Acuerdo para el examen de los informes de la DCI****10.3 Other Matters Arising out of the Reports****10.3 Autres questions découlant des rapports****10.3 Otros asuntos planteados en los informes****D.F.R. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)**

Now I am referring to Item 10.2: Arrangements for Consideration of JIU Reports. You might remember that we actually raised this issue, and it was at our Joint Meeting in May where we discussed the matter with the Finance and Programme Committees. We had a Joint Meeting, which was chaired by Mr Thomas of South Africa and it is reflected in CL 115/4, paragraphs 15 to 18 in which we have confirmed, actually after our debate, the current arrangements for consideration of these reports as established by the Council at its Eighty-second Session in November 1982. In order to facilitate consideration of these Reports by the Committees, they agreed that at the beginning of each session of both Committees, individual Members should indicate their interest in discussing specific JIU Reports. That is why we have handled it in this way.

Item 10.3 refers to Others Matters Arising out of the Report. This is specifically the Special Reserve Account, and you will recall the request of the Director-General to use up to US\$5 million to cover unforeseeable costs which had arisen out of an amount of the ILO Administrative Tribunal to the Organization. After careful discussion and additional information which we had asked the Secretariat to provide, both Committees approved in their fourth session the use of the Special Reserve Accounts up to this amount, or less as may be proved necessary, to cover the unbudgeted extra costs arising from the award. Two Members of these Committees could not join a consensus on this matter because their authorities had fundamental difficulties with the use of the Special Reserve Account for the purpose of posts.

I think I have dealt with both items which I had to present. I do not think really there is a need for discussion on these points. I certainly do not want to rush ahead, but I think this is mere reporting to you on business done and performance since.

Point of order

Point d'ordre

Punto de Orden

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

I should like to raise a Point of Order. A great number of our delegations have flown in specialists for Item 6 and they have their flights booked early this afternoon. I think for the quality of discussions it would be essential to have specialists here. I should therefore like to suggest that we interrupt Item 10 and start the discussions with Item 6 because the change of order of the two items this morning was too sudden to be taken into account over these preparations. I should be very grateful if you could arrange the Order of the Day accordingly.

Ms Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Before we do that perhaps we should see if there is a consensus on these two matters. We were one of the two countries, as my colleague from Germany was the other, who was unable to join a consensus with respect to the use of the Special Reserve Account. We understand that this Item is going forward in any event. We just had two minor questions that we would like to put. Perhaps I can raise those separately with Mr Wade afterwards and we can complete our work on this Item and move directly into Plant Genetic Resources.

CHAIRMAN

Mr. Bommer has indicated that he does not see any need for intervention, as these Items are very straightforward. Do we agree with that so that we can conclude these Items and move on to Plant Genetic Resources? If there is no objection we conclude Items 10.2 and 10.3, and we move on now to our Agenda Item 6.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Just while we are using this interval of changing over, I would like to make a point about an unanswered question from last night's debate on the Programme Implementation Report. Canada specifically made reference to the 1995 Conference decision of mainstreaming of gender issues and asked that the Secretariat inform Council on two issues: first, the status of employment within the Organization and second, the steps the Organization is taking to implement the mainstreaming issue. I do not think it is important that this be addressed now but perhaps under Other Business. Perhaps the Deputy Director-General might enlighten us on what is happening within all of the parts of the Organization, because this is an interdepartmental question and perhaps someone from Personnel can enlighten us about these statistics.

II. WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION (continued)**II. SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE (suite)****II. SITUACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACIÓN (continuación)****6. Negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (CL 115/13)****6. Négociation de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phylogénétiques (CL 115/13)****6. Negociaciones relativas al Compromiso Internacional sobre los Recursos Fitogenéticos (CL 115/13)**

Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vice-Chairman of the Council, took the Chair.

Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vice-Président du Conseil, assume la présidence.

Ocupa la presidencia Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, Vicepresidente del Consejo

CHAIRMAN

We will now turn to Item 6 on the Negotiations of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. The document is CL 115/13 which also includes the report of the last negotiating session held in June 1998. I would like to give the floor now to the Chairman of the Commission on the Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Mr Fernando Gerbasi, whom I wish to thank for being here with us today. I also thank him for all the work he has done on the session that we have. I think that his role has been really important and I hope he will be successful rather soon because I think most of delegations will stress the importance of this Convention for all our countries.

So I wish to give you the floor, after having thanked you for all the work you have done, and wish you all the best for the remaining job you have to face.

Fernando GERBASI (Presidente, Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura - CRGAA)

Deseo presentar este informe en calidad de Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, en particular sobre la situación en que se encuentran en el momento actual las negociaciones relativas al Compromiso Internacional Sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos, en el convencimiento que este Consejo nos proporcione, tal como lo ha hecho en el pasado reciente, las correspondientes orientaciones políticas que nos permitan avanzar y concluir satisfactoriamente nuestras labores.

A raíz de la Resolución 3 del Acta Final de la Conferencia de Nairobi, donde se aprobó la Convención sobre la Diversidad Biológica, la Conferencia de la FAO, en su 27º período de sesiones celebrado en noviembre de 1993, adoptó por unanimidad la Resolución 7/93 titulada "Revisión del Compromiso Internacional sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos", por medio de la cual pidió al Director General que proporcionase un foro destinado a las negociaciones entre los Gobiernos con la finalidad de: 1) adaptar el Compromiso internacional sobre recursos fitogenéticos en armonía con el Convenio sobre diversidad biológica, 2) examinar la cuestión del acceso en condiciones mutuamente concertadas a los recursos fitogenéticos incluidas las correcciones *ex situ* no comprendidas en el Convenio, y 3) hacer realidad los derechos del agricultor. Igualmente se convino, en esa ocasión, designar a la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos como el foro apropiado donde se deberían llevar a cabo tales negociaciones.

Aunque estas negociaciones han sido intensas, lamentablemente no se ha podido concluir aún la Revisión del Compromiso, lo que nos obliga a regular nuestros esfuerzos para poder terminar en el tiempo previsto y permitir a la Conferencia en noviembre de 1999 adoptar el Compromiso Internacional Revisado. Esta situación se debe, entre otras razones, a que los temas que son objeto de análisis son complejos y delicados tanto desde el punto de vista técnico como desde el punto de vista político, e involucran diversos factores que van desde los Gobiernos, instituciones de investigación y académicas hasta el sector privado. No obstante lo anterior, deseo destacar la seriedad con que se han adelantado los debates y los avances que hemos logrado, en particular durante el último año y medio, como consecuencia de una mayor racionalización de nuestros trabajos que nos ha permitido alcanzar un Texto de Negociación Consolidado así como un conocimiento más amplio y profundo de las distintas posiciones de las regiones y países.

El Texto de Negociación Consolidado que se encuentra en el documento CL115/13 es el resultado de nuestra 4ª Reunión Extraordinaria celebrada en diciembre de 1997 y contiene elementos positivos y alentadores que en muchos casos tienen, en mi opinión, el más amplio respaldo. Es así, en lo que se refiere al ámbito que abarca los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura. En lo que respecta al acceso a los recursos fitogenéticos, éste se facilitaría a través del establecimiento de un sistema multilateral que sea eficaz, efectivo y transparente, y permita compartir de manera justa y equitativa los beneficios que se deriven de la utilización de tales recursos. Igualmente, reconoce este Texto que el acceso a los recursos fitogenéticos es un beneficio importante para aquellos que participan en ese sistema multilateral.

Emerge además del documento un amplio apoyo a las actividades que cada país, y cuando proceda en cooperación con otros, llevará a cabo para promover un enfoque integrado de la prospección, conservación y utilización sostenible de los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura, así como en lo que respecta a los compromisos nacionales con tales fines. También se subraya y destaca la importancia de la cooperación internacional, en particular en lo que se refiere a un amplio intercambio de información en el marco del sistema multilateral y el compromiso para ejecutar el Plan de Acción mundial adoptado en Leipzig en junio de 1996.

En el pasado mes de junio la Comisión celebró su 5ª Reunión Extraordinaria y centró sus trabajos en las cuestiones de acceso, incluida la distribución de los beneficios y los derechos del agricultor. Al tratar lo relativo a la distribución de los beneficios también se discutieron los posibles

mecanismos financieros para hacer efectiva esta distribución. Aunque se realizaron progresos en el transcurso de la Reunión, la Comisión tuvo que reconocer que las posiciones seguían siendo distintas y distantes en lo que se refería al tema de la distribución de los beneficios derivados de la utilización comercial y de otra índole de los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura.

En cuanto al mecanismo financiero, los países en desarrollo propusieron la creación de un Fondo Internacional que debería recibir los beneficios financieros, así como las contribuciones del sector privado, Organizaciones no-Gubernamentales, Organizaciones Internacionales y otras fuentes, con arreglo a lo que decidieran los Miembros del Compromiso. Por otra parte, la Unión Europea, con el apoyo de otros países de la Región Europea, propuso un mecanismo para facilitar el acceso y canalizar mejor el flujo de fondos procedentes de fuentes existentes. Otras delegaciones no se pronunciaron al respecto y en definitiva tampoco se pudo llegar a un entendimiento sobre esta delicada materia.

Aquí deseo destacar de manera muy particular la positiva postura asumida por la industria representada por el FIS y ASSINSEL quienes agrupan alrededor de 1200 mejoradores de plantas y comercializadores de semillas de todo el mundo, que indicaron que estaban dispuestos a estudiar un sistema en el cual los propietarios de las patentes contribuyan a un Fondo que se establezca para la recolección, mantenimiento, evaluación y mejoramiento de los recursos genéticos.

En lo relativo a los derechos del agricultor, siguen persistiendo aún diferencias en cuanto a su reconocimiento, promoción y desarrollo a escala internacional.

Por todo lo anterior, la Comisión consideró que era más oportuno tomar más tiempo para reflexionar y permitir a las distintas delegaciones analizar las diversas posiciones, efectuar consultas e identificar los sectores de posible compromiso antes de continuar las negociaciones. En este orden de ideas la Comisión convino que el Presidente consultara con los Miembros, cuando lo considerase necesario, a fin de evaluar la situación y luego tomar una decisión sobre una posible Reunión Extraordinaria durante este año, siempre que se constatará la voluntad política y una actitud flexible y espíritu de compromiso entre los Miembros así como los fondos extrapresupuestarios disponibles.

Con base a lo anterior consulté a partir de agosto del año en curso a los países que participaron en el Grupo de Contacto del Presidente así como a los señores Miembros de la Mesa Directiva por representar ellos, a mi entender, a sus Regiones y haber participado activamente en todo el proceso negociador. Les solicité me informaran si en su opinión existían condiciones para alcanzar un compromiso y superar el impás en que habían caído las negociaciones sin por ello generar falsas expectativas; incluso, les agradecí cualquier posible texto de compromiso y les pedí sugerencias de cómo hacer avanzar el proceso.

En el caso particular de los países industrializados, les pedí también que tuvieran a bien informarme si sus Gobiernos estarían dispuestos a contribuir financieramente en la preparación y realización de una Sesión Extraordinaria de la Comisión así como facilitar la participación de países en desarrollo en dicha Sesión.

Al analizar las distintas respuestas recibidas se llega a las siguientes conclusiones: en términos generales, existe la opinión que se hace necesario dar tiempo a las distintas delegaciones para realizar consultas ya sea al interior de sus propios países como con terceros. Estas últimas consultas podrían realizarse bajo la responsabilidad de la presidencia e involucrar un número restringido de delegados que fueran a su vez representativos de las distintas Regiones que conforman nuestra Organización.

En definitiva, existe la opinión generalizada que una nueva sesión extraordinaria de la Comisión no se debe efectuar durante lo que queda de 1998 y se prefiere utilizar el tiempo lo mejor posible para preparar bien dicha sesión extraordinaria, la cual debería celebrarse en el transcurso del primer semestre de 1999.

Como consecuencia de lo anterior nadie comprometió fondos para una Sesión Extraordinaria en el transcurso 1998, aunque algunos ya señalaron su disposición de colaborar financieramente con dicha Sesión cuando existan posibilidades reales de hacer avanzar la negociación. No obstante, antes de mi consulta, algunos países ya habían dado fondos que permitirán sufragar en parte una nueva Sesión Extraordinaria.

Esta es la situación en que se encuentran actualmente las negociaciones para la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional y su armonización con el Convenio sobre la diversidad biológica.

¿Qué hacer de aquí en adelante? Creo que lo primero que la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos debe tener en mente es el apoyo y estímulo que a lo largo de estos años ha recibido en este proceso de la Conferencia de la FAO y de este Consejo así como de la Conferencia de las Partes del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica - apoyo y estímulo que se han manifestado a través de distintas resoluciones adoptadas por estos órganos, quienes también nos han solicitado concluir pronto y satisfactoriamente nuestras negociaciones, incluso, el compromiso obtenido por la misma Comisión en su 4ª Reunión Extraordinaria cuando destacó, y cito "la importancia de que las negociaciones relativas a la revisión del Compromiso Internacional estuvieran ultimadas para mayo de 1999 para su examen por el Consejo y su aprobación por la Conferencia de la FAO en noviembre de 1999." En segundo lugar, conviene tener presente la importancia que tiene, tanto para las generaciones presentes como futuras, una adecuada Revisión del Compromiso Internacional así como los esfuerzos invertidos, humanos como financieros, a lo largo de este proceso.

Por todo lo anterior, y derivado del mandato que me dio la Comisión en su 5ª Reunión Extraordinaria, continuaré con mis consultas con miras a reducir las diferencias que aún persisten. Estoy convencido que las consultas con países individuales no me permitirán avanzar con la premura que el tiempo nos impone. Por ello, propongo convocar en el primer trimestre de 1999 a un grupo de delegados, representativos de las distintas Regiones y de las diversas posiciones, para que me ayuden en las consultas colectivas y podamos convocar entonces a una Sesión Extraordinaria de la Comisión para la Negociación Final. Estas consultas, si bien deben centrarse en la cuestión de la distribución de los beneficios, incluyendo aquellos comerciales derivados del uso y manejo de los recursos fitogenéticos, deben tratar obligatoriamente lo relativo al mecanismo financiero que se habrá de establecer para canalizar la distribución de tales beneficios.

La cuestión de los derechos del agricultor definitivamente merece nuestra mayor atención así como cualquier otro tema que pueda surgir de las consultas que actualmente estoy realizando.

Finalmente, y aunque no se ha discutido, considero conveniente que se revise el estatus legal que tendría el Compromiso. En mi opinión creo no equivocarme en afirmar que existe una tendencia bastante amplia de que éste sea de obligatorio cumplimiento debiéndose determinar oportunamente la forma que éste adoptaría.

Permítame afirmar mi convencimiento que el efectivo acceso a los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura, para la obtención de variedades vegetales sobre bases multilaterales, es la condición *sine qua non* para el aumento sostenible de la producción sin el cual el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación no podría realizarse. Las dificultades en el acceso a los recursos fitogenéticos afectarían en manera especial a los trabajos de investigación y mejora genética de los centros nacionales de investigaciones agrícolas y de los centros internacionales del Grupo Consultivo. La importancia de completar con éxito la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional quizás no haya sido aún completamente percibida. El fracaso de estas negociaciones perjudicaría, en primer lugar, a los más débiles, los pequeños agricultores y las empresas agrícolas de pequeña y mediana dimensión; también tendría consecuencias negativas e impredecibles para las generaciones futuras por constituir un obstáculo insoslayable para conseguir la sostenibilidad del desarrollo agrícola y la seguridad alimentaria.

Por muy difícil que se presente nuestra tarea, no podemos no concluir con éxito. Esperamos entonces con renovado interés las indicaciones que el Consejo nos proporcione, las cuales deberán contribuir a hacer avanzar nuestras negociaciones y si posible concluir las en el plazo estipulado.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to stress the importance of the remarks that Ambassador Gerbasi has just made. They are important for all of us, and they are important for our Organization.

Yesterday, everybody was stressing the importance of FAO's normative role. In my opinion, among the negotiations going on, this is a very important one, if not the most important one. I wish Ambassador Gerbasi the best of success in his efforts and timetable.

I believe our discussions now should be limited to giving policy orientation and a clear mandate. It is what Ambassador Gerbasi needs, and what the Organization needs. Therefore, even though some delegates will certainly make some general declaration, I invite the delegations to concentrate on giving a clearcut political mandate for the negotiations to pursue and to conclude happily, I hope, with the Conference in November 1999.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

I should like to ask the floor for the Austrian delegate.

Ms Hedwig WÖGERBAUER (Observer for Austria)

The European Community and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to the FAO Resolution 7/93 on the Revision of the International Undertaking and the need to complete the negotiations as soon as possible, and to adjust the Global System on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The European Community and its Member States consider that the best way to guarantee the conservation of plant genetic resources is to ensure the effective and beneficial utilization in all countries. All nations can be contributors and beneficiaries of plant genetic resources, relevant information, advanced and local rural technologies and funds.

A multilateral system for the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture would be the major vehicle of the International Undertaking for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits, and facilitated access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture to all participants of the multilateral system. The wider scope of the system, the greater the benefits, fair and equitable shared will be.

The multilateral system should include a wide range of participants, including the private sector, NGOs and farmers' organizations and should be based, as appropriate, on existing institutional structures.

Regarding the legal status of the International Undertaking, the European Community and its Member States are currently negotiating as if the revised International Undertaking will be a legally-binding instrument, and urge that the decision be taken on this issue at this session.

We, therefore, request the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to work towards the preparation of a draft of a legally-binding instrument, and to report on its progress to the Session of the Council in June 1999.

The European Community and its Member States will continue to play a pro-active role in supporting activities at an international level on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. At the same time, we recognize the need for greater transparency, efficiency and predictability of financing and implementing activities which would be achieved through the implementation of a Revised International Undertaking.

Regarding the continuation of the negotiations, the European Community and its Member States suggest that high priority should be given to an intersessional process with enough time provided for all delegations to review the proposals of the last session. We consider that the multilateral system, including benefit-sharing and the issue of farmers' rights, are the cornerstones of the Undertaking. There is no single solution or answer to these issues and various options should be

explored. These could be considered by smaller, but representative groups to ensure careful preparation for the next Session.

The European Community and its Member States call on the FAO Members and the Secretariat to increase the emphasis on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in its plans, programmes and policies in general. We fully support the efforts being made by FAO and its Commission of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to negotiate a Revised International Undertaking. We acknowledge the progress reached up to now and encourage FAO to further prioritize this issue with the aim of seeking compromise and successfully concluding the negotiations for the Revision of the International Undertaking and adopt such revised International Undertaking at the next FAO Conference in November 1999.

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

La delegación de Brasil, en primer lugar, felicita la labor que ha desarrollado el Presidente de la Comisión, Embajador Gerbasi, durante todo el tiempo que estuvo al frente de ésta y apoya totalmente la propuesta que se ha hecho como reconocimiento de esta labor incansable, eficiente y refinadamente especializada en esta materia. Desde la última Reunión de la Comisión en mayo de este año, el Embajador Gerbasi busca el consenso o el camino para el consenso, y durante el resto de este año, sin descuidar su importante trabajo frente a la Embajada de Venezuela en Colombia, ha contactado las delegaciones de todos los países representados en la Comisión en la casi desesperada búsqueda de este camino. La sugerencia que ahora hace de reunir informalmente y personalmente a representantes de diferentes países y de diferentes opiniones por región parece a la delegación de Brasil no sólo aceptable sino altamente recomendable. Quizás como un último recurso para que se pueda redactar un documento borrador de importancia que sirviera de base de discusión para la también propuesta Reunión Extraordinaria concomitante con la reunión del año que viene.

La delegación de Brasil por delegación de la Presidencia del GRULAC sugiere que este Consejo se manifieste favorablemente a la conclusión de las negociaciones sobre la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional Sobre los Recursos Fitogenéticos antes del final de 1999 como ya previsto anteriormente. En este sentido, Brasil, en nombre del GRULAC propone específicamente que se incluya en el Informe de la presente reunión del Consejo la siguiente frase: "El Consejo subraya la importancia de que se concluyan las negociaciones sobre la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional antes del final de 1999". Esta sugerencia, además está prevista, como dijo el mismo Embajador Gerbasi en su discurso, por la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura en el informe de la 4ª Reunión Extraordinaria en su párrafo 11, y por la Conferencia de las Partes del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica en su decisión 4/6, que además está expresada en este documento CL 115/13 en su párrafo 4.

I. Nyoman ARDHA (Indonesia)

First of all, on behalf of the Indonesian Delegation, I would like to congratulate the Commission for preparing an excellent draft on the Negotiation Text.

We would like to emphasize that the Farmers' Rights issue is very crucial in this aspect. Therefore, I think it needs to be negotiated very urgently so that we may finish this in a timely manner.

Since this is a very important issue, we would like to suggest that FAO organize an Extraordinary Session next year to enable us to complete the Undertaking in time to discuss it at the Council meeting of November 1999.

We trust that all the Members of the Commission are fully committed to complete their mission on the International Undertaking in a timely fashion. We have made considerable progress in revising the Undertaking to develop a package of mutually-supportive issues and ideas. On the other hand, we are still struggling to overcome differences on certain delicate issues, particularly with respect to benefit-sharing and Farmers' Rights. We are particularly worried that to date, a lot

of square brackets need to be removed. We are very concerned because unless flexibility is given by all the delegates, this discussion will be dragged on for a long time.

Therefore, we need to urge all the Member Nations to be flexible in negotiating this issue so that we can complete the Undertaking in a timely fashion.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (India)

Our delegation would like to congratulate Ambassador Gerbasi for the efforts taken in bringing about a consensus on this knotty issue.

The slow progress made on the negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as also the differences and perceptions of the nations in the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the FAO Commission in June 1998, are indeed a cause of concern to us.

Being concerned with the economic development and also international cooperation, we stand committed to harmonizing, in a stipulated timeframe, the Undertaking with the FAO Conference Resolution 7/93, the Resolution 3 of the Nairobi Conference of the UNEP, the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity and, among others, the trade-related intellectual Property Rights System of the World Trade Organization.

We strongly believe that the division of the International Undertaking must recognize the issues of facilitated access, fair and equitable benefit-sharing, Farmers' Rights and the International Fund as inseparable components of equal importance. As the saying goes, the "gene rich" are "seed poor" and, even with the best of efforts, the spread of improved seed varieties has been fairly low in the developing countries.

Nevertheless, the availability of selectively rich diversity in agriculture has sustained food security and provided them with a buffer of useable beneficial genes. Access to such invaluable resources, which have been inherited and utilized over generations, should be treated at par with the products of advanced technology and the technologies *per se*.

In India, the richness of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture is illustrated by the fact that more than 350 crop plant species are known to be used and an equal number of species constitute the wild gene pool of potential value. Forty-nine major and minor crops are endemic to the country. This biological diversity has enriched over several generations. Our traditional knowledge base in agriculture is extremely strong.

We have contributed valuable genes to the world and have the potential and willingness to continue to do so. We recognize the need for integrated conservation measures encompassing *in situ* on-farm conservation as per the Global Plan of Action, in addition to the *ex situ* Conservation Programme.

We all agree that an institutional mechanism should be developed to share the financial benefits from the commercial and other uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. We feel strongly that such a mechanism will have to be developed with the participation of all countries involved in the implementation of regulations, for facilitated access, on prior informed consent and on mutually agreed terms.

In this context, we are not very sure about the matters being discussed by small groups, or small representative groups in inter-sessional meetings, as proposed by the European Union.

We reaffirm our commitment to the realization of Farmers' Rights for the past, present and the likely future contributions made for fostering, sharing and sustaining plant genetic resources, which are vitally important in ensuring food and nutritional security and preservation of biodiversity. Biodiversity and economic development can flourish in conjunction, rather than in isolation, albeit with due recognition of the rights of the farmers to have quality seeds, technologies and the means to generate resources from the rich bounty of genetic resources preserved, reared and made available by them.

The sectoral and cross-sectoral plans for sustained availability of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and actively useable genes require large investments. We would like that negotiations should continue in a spirit of cooperation and recognition of the interdependence among nations. We look forward to a consensus on this issue so that a mechanism can be developed for sharing and allocating resources for such activities.

The Fourth Technical Conference had made a provision of US\$100 million for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. This amount is grossly inadequate to meet the costs on implementation of agreed action points in developing and least developed economies. There is need, therefore, for a realistic and positive approach on the part of all parties to the negotiations, so that we can conclude expeditiously and in a mutually beneficial manner.

Ms Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Like others before me, *complimenti* to Ambassador Gerbasi for doing such a tireless and skilled job of trying to bring these important negotiations to conclusion.

The United States supports the suggestion to hold an inter-sessional discussion of key issues involved with the Revision of the International Undertaking. We think this should be, if possible, a small, rather than a large, group and it should be an opportunity to exchange ideas rather than go word-by-word in the text, because we feel there is a need to exchange ideas. If invited, we will attend and we will also provide financial assistance so that others might attend.

We have all worked hard to achieve a good agreement and the United States intends to continue this effort because revising the Undertaking is very important to guarantee the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources and is thus, as you pointed out Mr Chairman, essential to global food security. However, my delegation would oppose any effort by this particular Council to characterize the legal nature of this Agreement. This Council has no mandate or expertise to do so, either directly or through the process of preparing the Council Report.

Since the discussion -- hopefully the small discussion, as Ambassador Gerbasi pointed out -- will possibly address the legal status of the Revised Agreement and since there is likely to be another Extraordinary Negotiating Session, as well as the Session of the whole Commission before the June Council, we see no reason to determine now how the June 1999 Council should treat this.

The US delegation believes that Council Members must have time to consult with capitals before agreeing to the Commission's suggestion that the Commission on Genetic Resources be instructed to work toward a legally binding instrument and report on that to the next Session of Council.

Dato' ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

At the outset my delegation wishes to compliment Ambassador Gerbasi, Chairman of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, for his comprehensive reporting and to also thank the Secretariat for preparation of document CL 115/13.

The idea of an International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources was adopted by Conference Resolution 8/83, and Conference further unanimously adopted Resolution 7/93 requesting FAO to provide a forum for intergovernmental negotiation of the Undertaking.

The last two years saw serious negotiations of the Undertaking among Members of the Commission on Genetic Resources. There were times during the negotiations when Member Nations were very close to achieving some compromise solutions. However, though closer, we are still not there yet.

As Malaysia has often reiterated at the Commission, on behalf of the developing countries of Asia, we understand fully the interrelated, interlinking and complex elements of the Undertaking such as the recognition of Farmers' Rights, facilitated access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing arrangements, these elements being consistent with the principles of the Convention on Biodiversity. A small number of countries, however, are not ready to recognize Farmers' Rights, others are hesitant to the idea of benefit-sharing, while many others are reluctant to provide access to their rich genetic resources without the assurances of benefit in return.

To move forward, my delegation recognizes the urgent need for more flexibility and accommodation in the negotiation process. We are optimistic that, for the sake and benefit of global food security, biodiversity and agricultural sustainability, it is desirable and achievable to obtain a consensus on a multilateral exchange system that is coherent, transparent and institutionalized for accessing genetic resources, as well as for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their commercial utilization.

We are optimistic and hopeful that the apparent reluctance of a small number of countries in committing themselves to achieving equitable results in the last negotiations is but only a temporary setback, thereby allowing time for reflection and refining of some mechanisms and processes that have been put on the table by various regions and countries. The temporary setback should not at all deter Member Nations and the international community from their commitments to implement the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture that all of us agreed to at Leipzig in 1996.

We believe that, if the programmes of this Global Plan are successfully implemented, they would only contribute positively to the negotiation process as these actions would help remove the scepticism some countries might have in realizing the various principles under negotiation.

Malaysia, therefore, strongly urges Members of the Commission to move forward speedily on these two fronts of plant genetic resource development, especially to conclude the negotiation of the Undertaking before Conference next year. In this regard, adequate funds must be made available to conduct Extraordinary Sessions of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources.

Malaysia is also supportive of the proposal made, just now, by the Chairman of the Commission to have a two-phased approach by having a smaller group discussion representing the Regions and interest groups, followed by the Extraordinary Session.

On our part, Malaysia and other developing countries of the Asia Region, we believe, are ready and willing to work closely with other Member Nations in achieving the above goals.

LIANG QU (China) (Original language Chinese)

My delegation notes with satisfaction that there have already been five Extraordinary Sessions to discuss the international Undertaking within FAO. Important steps have been made, results achieved and we commend this Commission and its Member Nations.

I would now like to express my views on future negotiations. First of all, with regard to access to plant genetic resources, we believe that it is necessary for every country in the different regions to have access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture as required. This also requires exchanges and trading of these resources on an equal footing in the interest of all countries. We very much object to having no restriction whatsoever on access to plant genetic resources. We also feel that we should include medicinal plants, flowers, and herbal plants in all the plants involved, as well as legumes.

Concerning the sovereign right of states of plant genetic resources and breeders' rights, we maintain our view, and it is that each country has sovereign rights on its own plant genetic resources. Plant genetic resources, as every country knows -- especially those that have contributed to the resources of the country -- are the result of years of effort on the part of the scientific community of a country. Therefore, we must also recognize the contribution of farmers in the breeding and conservation of these resources and, therefore, their rights.

We also believe that Farmers' Rights are eternal because selected resources conserved by farmers have very special characteristics and are indispensable, initial material to conserve and further breed these resources. An exchange in resources cannot be fully achieved without a convention. We, therefore, hope that the Commission can fulfil its role and come up with a system of compensation on plant genetic resources on a global scale.

Furthermore, the establishment of an information network and an early warning system is essential. For the research of plant genetic resources, it will be necessary to establish an

international network for the exchange of information and a method for rapidly searching and finding these resources, as well as also allowing all countries to participate in this network considering their special characteristics. We cannot expect them to be able to participate overnight.

Support should also be given for those genetic resources which are in danger of disappearing. To this end, it is important to have an early warning system, to also prevent and reduce losses. In this area, it is necessary to support developing countries with technical and scientific backstopping.

With regard to the Consolidated Negotiating Text, the experts of our countries are reviewing it and we hope that it will be used as a basis for future negotiations. We are willing and ready to participate in a new revision of the Text at the next Session.

The Commission for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should do all that is necessary to establish an International Fund for Plant Genetic Resources so as to accelerate the negotiating process.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Con que satisfacción lo vemos ocupar la conducción de este Tema, Embajador Fontana-Giusti; todos conocemos y sabemos su capacidad.

Permítame en primer lugar hacer llegar al Embajador Fernando Gerbasi la satisfacción con que lo recibimos de nuevo en estos predios. Al verle nos recordamos su constructiva y activa participación como Presidente del Grupo de los 77 en aquel proceso inolvidable e histórico de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación en que contamos con su competencia, constituyendo uno de los pilares en la aprobación de los textos de la Declaración Política y el Plan de Acción que hoy está en la fase del cumplimiento de sus acuerdos, ejercicio no menos difícil y que necesita flexibilidad y un necesario conocimiento para llegar a las metas que nos comprometimos y sobre todo lealtad a los compromisos contraídos a sus acuerdos. En nombre de Cuba y como latinoamericano, Embajador Gerbasi, lo saludo y le expresamos que nos sentimos muy satisfechos con verlo otra vez aquí donde tanto se le aprecia.

Ya dentro del Tema y en nombre de mi delegación, destacamos la introducción del Embajador Gerbasi que tuvimos la oportunidad de escuchar. Nuestra delegación la respalda y la apoya así como lo expresado muy claramente por Brasil en nombre de nuestro Grupo Regional.

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

Speaking on behalf of the Africa Group, I would like to say that the Africa Group have taken note of the report of the Chairman of the Commission and would like to commend Mr Gerbasi for steering the process of Negotiations on the International Undertaking.

Complex as the issues are for reaching total agreement, as Member Nations in the FAO we believe Council, at this point, should mark the progress made and endorse the principle that the Negotiations proceed after having been enriched by deliberations in the smaller, but well-representative group of countries, and should develop to develop options on the various issues mentioned by Mr Gerbasi, namely: the Distribution of Benefits, Structuring and Working Options for the Financial Mechanism, Giving Effect to Farmers' Rights and Revising the Legal Status of the Current Undertaking.

We have not all, as mentioned by a Member of Council earlier on, come with technical people to this meeting, on the understanding that those issues are best dealt with at the technical level and through well-structured consultation. As African countries, therefore, who have a clear vested interest in attaining a positive, yet balanced, outcome of these Negotiations. We reaffirm our commitment to actively work with the Chairman of the Commission and other Member Nations to take collective responsibility and to work towards finalization of this matter by the next FAO Conference.

Paul FINANTU (Roumanie)

La délégation de la Roumanie tient à saluer et remercier le Secrétariat pour avoir inclus dans l'Ordre du jour de cette session du Conseil la question des négociations de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phylogénétiques. Nous connaissons tous le contexte dans lequel ont commencé les négociations entre les Gouvernements dans le cadre offert par la Commission des ressources phylogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture.

En dépit des progrès réalisés lors des sessions ordinaires et extraordinaires de la Commission, de certaines clarifications et de l'harmonisation avec les objectifs de la Convention de la diversité biologique, on peut remarquer que, malheureusement, pendant les négociations de la Cinquième session extraordinaire de la Commission, les positions des groupes régionaux se sont écartées, notamment en ce qui concerne la question du partage des avantages tirés des utilisations commerciales et autres, des ressources phylogénétiques, mais aussi de l'accès aux ressources phylogénétiques, leur conservation et utilisation durable en vue de préserver la sécurité alimentaire à l'avenir.

Nous considérons qu'il est possible de surpasser l'impasse de ces Négociations. Chaque Groupe régional doit avoir des consultations entre les Etats Membres pour analyser les positions des autres Groupes, mieux les comprendre et à la fois trouver des voies plus faciles pour relancer les Négociations. La Roumanie se déclare disponible et prête à participer activement au processus de négociations qui doivent se poursuivre à un rythme soutenu, en vue d'aboutir à un texte révisé de l'Engagement international des ressources phylogénétiques, concordant avec les prévisions de la Convention de la diversité biologique et acceptable pour tous.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (Mexique)

Primeramente queremos felicitar y reconocer la labor que el Embajador Gerbasi ha hecho en el marco de la Comisión para avanzar en las Negociaciones Sobre el Compromiso Internacional sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos. En esta línea queremos adherirnos y subrayar lo señalado por el Embajador del Brasil sobre la importancia de que se concluyan en los plazos previstos por el propio Consejo las negociaciones respectivas.

No obstante, deseamos referirnos a algunos aspectos que mi delegación ha reiterado siempre como fundamentales a lo largo de toda la negociación. Primeramente consideramos que el avance en los tres temas básicos, en los tres capítulos del compromiso deben ser homogéneos.

Lamentablemente, antes de bloquearse las negociaciones se había advertido un progreso más significativo en uno de los aspectos dejando de lado un tema que para nosotros es fundamental, que es el relativo a los derechos del agricultor. Nosotros queremos sobre este particular manifestar la disposición de nuestro país a continuar cooperando positivamente con los esfuerzos para llegar a un acuerdo. En esta línea respaldamos también lo planteado por el Embajador Gerbasi con respecto al mecanismo para lograr estos avances.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

In expressing our congratulations to Ambassador Gerbasi, we wish to assure him and the Members of Council that, while we are making slow progress in the Negotiation of the International Undertaking, that slow progress is in absolutely no way a reflection on his efforts. He has worked tirelessly and skilfully to bring us to a conclusion, and we urge him to take heart and to continue his efforts to find a solution.

I think, on this particular occasion, I can confirm that the delegation of South Africa spoke on behalf of the Africa Region and Canada. We support the points that it made, particularly the points concerning the fact that this is not the occasion to debate the legal status of the Undertaking. This is one of the major items that is being negotiated in the Extraordinary and the Regular Sessions of the Commission. We feel that is the appropriate opportunity.

Ms Malgorzata PIOTROWSKA (Poland)

Poland reiterates its commitments to the FAO Resolution 7/93, related to the International Undertaking and to the on-going process of the harmonization of the International Undertaking with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The concern over the loss of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, in the light of the need for the global food security, provides particular incentive and imposes responsibility on the international community to ensure measures for the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Broad access to PGRFA and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits which accrue from the use of PGRFA are fundamental elements of the multilateral system for plant genetic resources, which is currently under the deliberation of the Commission for PGRFA within the scope of the International Undertaking.

Like many European and non-European countries, Poland considers the multilateral system as the most integrated, effective and efficient mechanism to provide for realization of the objectives set out by CBD in the area of plant genetic resources. Its effectiveness, however, will much depend on the range of the participants and its scope. Full participation of parties, sectors and institutions of interest would provide for a better system. Likewise, the bigger the scope of the system, the greater the benefits generated will be, and shared in a fair and equitable manner.

Poland participates in the Negotiations of the International Undertaking and acknowledges the progress which is being made during each of the Negotiating Sessions of CGRFA. We view the International Undertaking as an important instrument which should provide for assured access to PGR and benefit-sharing under the multilateral system, including financial mechanisms.

In order to fulfil these expectations, we need commitments of parties to the revised International Undertaking. We, therefore, urge the Council to take a decision that the revised Undertaking will be a legally-binding instrument.

With reference to the statement of the European Community and its Member States, regarding continuation of the negotiation of the International Undertaking, we support the proposal that inter-sessional dialogue should take place in order to facilitate further progress and to successfully finalize the Negotiations.

In this respect, we also encourage FAO to give due importance to plant genetic resources issues in its plans and programmes, and to make further efforts to bring the Negotiations of the International Undertaking to a conclusion.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Commission for the excellent introduction he made to this Item. I would also like to commend him for the efforts he has made in this respect.

We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the document under discussion.

The matter under discussion today is very important for sustainable agriculture for all countries of the world. Its impact will be reflected in increases in production that will facilitate achievements of food security in our countries in the next century.

It is quite clear that there are still some important points on which we have not been able to reach agreement. We do not have enough time to discuss these remaining points.

The Near East Group believes in a multilateral methodology regarding genetic resources for food and agriculture, and feels that all its aspects should be taken into account. We also believe, in the Near East Group, that access to plant genetic resources, benefit-sharing and Farmers' Rights are all interlinked and it is important, in this respect, to reach positive results regarding the three mentioned matters on an equal footing and basis.

Therefore, we would like to support the holding of inter-sessional meetings, as well as an Extraordinary Session of the Commission in order to discuss these matters, so that we will be able to reach an agreement before the next session of the Council in 1999.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

Firstly, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Gerbasi as the Chair of the CGRFA for the excellent work he has done, both at the Extraordinary Sessions and also in the inter-sessional work where he has worked tirelessly in trying to drive towards a successful conclusion, a Revision of the International Undertaking.

Australia is committed to the International Undertaking and to its revision. Australia has worked for a number of years with that objective firmly in mind. We have made considerable efforts in revising the International Undertaking and have been negotiating on the basis of a package of mutually-supportive and beneficial issues and ideas.

Accordingly, we would support the initiative being suggested by Ambassador Gerbasi, for a small group to meet early in 1999 to pursue discussions on benefit-sharing, Farmers' Rights, a financial mechanism, the legal status, as well as other issues that could arise. Access is, for example, one that springs to mind.

This initiative, we think, is a reflection of the astuteness that the Ambassador brings to his chairing and could well provide a much needed impetus to drive us towards a successful conclusion of the Revision of the International Undertaking.

Australia would certainly welcome the opportunity to participate in such a small group meeting.

Australia would join with other Members, such as South Africa, Canada and the United States, who have suggested that the legal status of the International Undertaking should not be pre-judged at this Council session. The issue has been identified by Ambassador Gerbasi for future discussion. We would certainly agree with his judgement. The issue should be left for further consideration and will undoubtedly be picked up in the discussions at future sessions of the Members negotiating a revised International Undertaking.

Chao TIAN TONG (Thailand)

We would like to voice our concern over the completion of the negotiation on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. At the same time, we would like to support the intervention made by Malaysia.

During the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, we had a very lengthy discussion on the topics of benefit-sharing and Farmers' Rights. The meeting could not continue due to the differences in our positions.

The Secretariat was requested to carry out an analytical financial study on a possible formula for the sharing of benefits and should make the results of the study available as soon as possible.

We feel that the results of this study should enable the negotiations to proceed more effectively, so we will be very pleased to learn of the progress from the Secretary.

Gerasimos APOSTOLATOS (Observer for European Community)

It is very positive that many delegations have expressed their commitment to the revision process and they are asking for the conclusion of these Negotiations as soon as possible.

I would like to ask through you, the Secretariat and FAO in general, for some advice on some arithmetic. For example, if the Commission reaches an Agreement on a text in the next Extraordinary Session, I believe that the next FAO Council, due in June 1999, will be able to take care of and do what is necessary for the adoption of this agreement by the Conference of 1999. This is an optimistic position.

On the other hand, if the Commission, for various reasons, is not able to agree or to conclude the Negotiations, is it possible for the Council to undertake this work to finalize and, in due time, to prepare what is necessary for adoption of this revised Undertaking by the Conference of 1999?

If I can have an answer, it would be very good.

CHAIRMAN

This is quite a provocative question, and I hope that the Secretariat will be able to answer you, as well as the Council.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Uganda endorses the query and the position expressed by South Africa as the head of the African Group. We agree that further consultations, involving especially our technical experts, in order to reach a final understanding on the benefit-sharing and the rights of the individual countries over genetic resources are important.

We are great supporters of Farmers' Rights. These men and women have kept and preserved diverse plant genetic resources for generations, and their rights are paramount.

My Government and the farming community have had recent fears over emerging technologies which threatened the rights of farmers over their right to use their traditional seeds. We do not accept, and I hope it is not part of the Undertaking, to terminate a technology that is developing.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Nos sumamos a todo lo expresado por las delegaciones que nos han precedido en relación al trabajo realizado por el Embajador Gerbasi y, seguramente con el ímpetu que lo caracteriza, llegaremos a un compromiso aceptable para todos en el curso del año 1999.

Sumando a la declaración inicial de nuestra delegación, queremos ratificar nuestro compromiso en la Negociación, pero agregando un criterio que fue sostenido por la delegación argentina en todas las reuniones que tuvieron lugar en la Negociación.

Como lo han señalado otras delegaciones, los puntos centrales de este Compromiso requieren un equilibrio. Apoyamos la reunión del Grupo Interseccional y creemos que en esa Reunión, aquellos puntos que han generado equilibrios o desequilibrios en el transcurso de las reuniones pasadas deben estar suficientemente sopesados, de modo tal que no lleguemos a una Reunión Extraordinaria en la que, nuevamente, surjan desequilibrios y con ello no consigamos tener un texto. Hay suficiente experiencia a través de los negociadores, para saber cuáles son esos puntos que generan mayores desequilibrios. En tal sentido, la preparación de la futura Reunión Extraordinaria debería tener perfectamente incorporada estos puntos de modo tal que alcancemos un Compromiso aceptable para todos.

Con relación al carácter vinculante del compromiso, sin duda alguna, sería deseable que todos los compromisos que se adquieran en la comunidad internacional lo tuvieran; pero, a veces, por diversas circunstancias no es así. Creemos que no es ésta la oportunidad de expedirnos sobre el carácter vinculante o no del compromiso. Se tiene que sopesar también en la Reunión del Grupo Interseccional y, seguramente, en la reunión extraordinaria que tendrá lugar más adelante, si debería haber una clara manifestación de los países que integran la Comisión sobre la vinculación o no de este Compromiso.

Mohammed Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

I would like to join other speakers to congratulate Ambassador Gerbasi for his skilful and tireless efforts in the Negotiations, and I wish him full success in the future.

I would like to endorse the statement made by the distinguished Representative from Egypt on behalf of the Near East Group. To be brief and not to repeat other speakers, I would like to emphasize once more the importance of the following issues: access, benefit-sharing, Farmers' Rights, and of not excluding any group of plants from the negotiations.

My delegation believes that Ambassador Gerbasi is in the best position to plan the future stages of negotiation and, therefore, we fully support his two-stage negotiation process for the future. Furthermore, we feel that we free his hand to make some changes if necessary as a result of consultations with other delegations.

Kiho YOON (Korea, Republic of)

Commenting on this Agenda Item, I would also like to join the previous congratulations to Ambassador Gerbasi and the Secretariat.

I would first like to mention that my country remains committed to the Revision of the International Undertaking in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity. I consider that facilitating access to plant genetic resources is one of the key issues and contributes greatly to achieving the main objective of the Undertaking, that is: conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in ensuring future food security.

Regarding the question of sovereign rights over plant genetic resources and Farmers' Rights raised by some Members, I am of the view that there is a need for flexibility on those issues so as to find a consensus solution. I agree with other delegations' positions that progress has been made in the negotiations for the Revision of the Undertaking. In view of the progress made and with the goal of finalizing the negotiations, my country will continue to make every effort to clarify the remaining difficult issues through the negotiation process.

Raúl ALEGRETT (Venezuela)

En primer lugar quisiera sumarme con entusiasmo a las manifestaciones de agradecimiento que se hicieron al Embajador Gerbasi por su labor como Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Fitogenéticos y asimismo deseo contribuir a estimular las exigencias de esa labor tan importante. Apoyamos asimismo su declaración y su plan de negociaciones y quisiéramos reiterar, como lo hicieron algunos otros delegados que me precedieron, la necesidad de avanzar simultáneamente en los distintos temas y reconocer que el acceso a los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura está necesariamente vinculado a la distribución justa y equitativa de los beneficios y a los Derechos del Agricultor. Quisiéramos también solicitar que se prestara particular atención a la revisión de los mecanismos financieros y al acceso a la tecnología y refuerzo de la capacidad institucional a los fines de asegurar la distribución de los beneficios.

Quisiéramos concluir esta intervención manifestando nuestra preocupación porque, a pesar de todos los esfuerzos realizados, pudiera presentarse en la próxima Reunión también un estancamiento porque, como lo señala en su declaración el Embajador Gerbasi, el logro de los acuerdos en esta delicada materia está necesariamente vinculado a una voluntad política y una actitud flexible y espíritu de compromiso entre los Miembros. Creo que es necesario que los distintos países, particularmente aquellos involucrados en la Comisión, realicen un esfuerzo con el objetivo de presentar propuestas y soluciones que puedan ser compartidas por los demás países y que estén enmarcadas dentro de un cuadro de justicia y equidad. Sin este espíritu, me temo que la recomendación que aquí se ha hecho de poder concluir en el año 1999 con un documento de consenso va a ser realmente muy difícil.

Finalmente quisiera referirme al carácter obligante o no de los acuerdos que aquí se tomen; creo que es preferible primero llegar a los acuerdos, pero en todo caso debe buscarse alguna fórmula para que los países que libremente adhieran a este documento se comprometan a darle el debido cumplimiento.

CHAIRMAN

May I consider that the Assembly unanimously expressed a decision, Ambassador Gerbasi, and avoid introductory remarks and come to the point?

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

The discussion has shown the unanimous support and it has also shown the necessity to give all possible support for the future work of Ambassador Gerbasi and his Commission, and the efficient way in which the matter has been handled. The importance and urgency of the subject matter cannot be stressed enough. I would therefore like to support wholeheartedly the proposals of the European Commission, and I also want to thank the Polish delegation very much for the pertinent remarks on the subject matter.

Hirofumi KUGITA (Japan)

I would like to join my previous speaker in admiring the enormous efforts made by Ambassador Gerbasi.

My delegation appreciates that some progress has been made so far with respect to negotiations on the Understanding since 1994. We also recognize that we have two major outstanding issues to be addressed.

The first issue is the definition of Farmers' Rights. While my delegation recognizes farmers' contributions to the conservation of genetic resources, we need to further clarify the definition of Farmers' Right.

The second issue is how we can define a multilateral system, in particular a method of benefit-sharing. My delegation holds the view that benefit includes information sharing, technology transfers and the mobilization of available funds for the implementation of activities under the Global Plan of Action adopted in Leipzig, and that those benefits should be shared in a fair and equitable manner among parties concerned.

I support the two-stage approach starting with discussion by small groups. Japan is willing to join that process.

Japan will continue to participate in the Negotiations with a view to finding a consensus solution to outstanding issues.

Cé GAMY (Observateur de la Guinée)

La Guinée a pris la parole pour souhaiter que les négociations des ressources phytogénétiques puissent se poursuivre afin que les parties acceptent le partage des avantages permettant de rémunérer l'énorme contribution que les agriculteurs de toutes les Régions du monde, et spécialement ceux des centres d'origine et de diversité des plantes cultivées, ont apporté et continueront d'apporter à la mise en valeur des ressources phytogénétiques. Voilà la petite intervention de la partie guinéenne.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original Language Arabic)

I would also like to thank Ambassador Gerbasi for the efforts he made during the past period and is still making in order to reach a positive result on the negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources.

Document CL 115/13 contains a number of complex matters, but I think at the same time it should receive the necessary support. We, as the Group of 77, support the need for more negotiations. We also think that we have to accelerate these negotiations and we have to make all the necessary efforts in order to amend the International Undertaking and to adapt it to be in conformity with and in line with the Convention on Biodiversity.

We would like to say that we accept the proposal made by Ambassador Gerbasi for holding an Extraordinary Meeting of the Commission at the beginning of 1999 in order to give more momentum to these Negotiations. These Negotiations should ultimately lead us to an acceptable methodology in order to share the benefits and that this Undertaking will be binding. We would also like to state the form of this obligation.

I know that this is a difficult task and we have to make additional efforts. Since we have the necessary will and determination from our countries, and since Ambassador Gerbasi is leading the negotiations we will undoubtedly achieve our goals, God willing.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador de Perú)

Yo estoy de acuerdo en la forma concisa con la que usted desarrolla el debate. No obstante debo decir que éste es un Tema de importancia primordial, al menos para la mayoría de las delegaciones presentes y creo que no podemos limitarnos a un factor tiempo.

Quiero decir simplemente que resulta sorprendente para mi delegación que un Tema tan crítico como éste haya tenido un ritmo tan lento en su desarrollo. Ello, no obstante el esfuerzo realizado por el Embajador Gerbasi y por una serie de delegaciones interesadas en este tema en un asunto que viene ya desde el año 1993. Hace años que estamos hablando de este Tema y hemos tratado desde esa fecha de culminar las Negociaciones con éxito. Si seguimos en este ritmo, terminaremos el Compromiso en el próximo milenio.

Quisiera pedir a los Estados Miembros de dar muestra de flexibilidad, para que se acelere el ritmo negociador a fin de culminar efectivamente el próximo año de manera definitiva con un Texto que resulte en un Compromiso vinculante que recoja Derechos del Agricultor, distribución de beneficios, acceso, y ámbito.

Apoyamos totalmente la propuesta del Embajador Gerbasi así como la propuesta presentada por el representante del GRULAC esta mañana.

Anton KOHLER (Observer for Switzerland)

Let us try to bridge the gaps. Ambassador Gerbasi can be assured that Switzerland is supporting him fully when it comes to finalizing the Negotiations, hopefully before November 1999.

With a flexible attitude of compromise and consensus-building, with a will to overcoming the existing impasse, and with the important issue of Farmers' Rights in mind, Switzerland is looking forward to assisting actively in the renewed effort. We welcome Ambassador Gerbasi's initiative and will assist him fully in organizing an Extraordinary Session to be held early next year.

Ahmed Ali Hummed AL-HAWRI (Observer for Yemen) (Original language Arabic)

I am speaking as the last speaker because we have an important issue, namely the Desert Locust Control activities which have been cancelled by the Secretariat. Undoubtedly, you know about the dangers caused by Desert Locusts in our part of the world. FAO has through the Desert Locust Control Commission been able to launch a campaign. I would like to ask the Council to reinstate the position of an official dealing with the Desert Locust Control in the Near East. I believe the conditions prevailing now dictate such a step. After consultations with the various groups, we thought it necessary to raise this point here because it is very important for us.

We wish that you would take up this matter of the reinstatement a post in the Desert Locust activities.

CHAIRMAN

I thank everybody because it was a very interesting and stimulating discussion.

Before giving the floor to the Secretariat I would like to just come back to my introductory remarks. Is the Council willing to give a policy orientation and a clear mandate to Mr Gerbasi to have a quick, speedy and conclusive negotiation?

Of course, in our report, we cannot insist on some items which are still uncertain, for example, the legally-binding character on which some delegations are not willing to make any commitment at this stage. Also, the nature of the inter-sessional small group, whether it is to be a restricted group or an open-ended group, is something Mr Gerbasi will deal with personally.

However, what I invite the Council to do is just to give a very political push to the negotiations to go on. I mean, if we can agree on that, I believe we can have a very positive result. In fact, there are divergencies, I do not want to enter into the questions of access, Farmers' Rights, or financial mechanisms because you know how complex they are. We just need to gather the results in a very

political nutshell for Ambassador Gerbasi. Then we can all say “congratulations and best wishes,” and proceed as speedily and conclusively as possible. Can we agree on that? Thank you.

J.T. ESQUINAS-ALCÁZAR (del Personal de la FAO)

Respondo a las preguntas específicas dirigidas al Secretariado, primero por parte del distinguido representante de Tailandia con respecto al estudio solicitado por la última Reunión de la Comisión, Estudio Financiero-Analítico sobre las posibles fórmulas para la distribución de los beneficios basadas en distintos indicadores. Este estudio está siendo finalizado y esperamos que pueda ser distribuido a todos los países en las lenguas oficiales de la Organización en el mes de enero próximo.

La segunda pregunta vino del distinguido representante de la Comisión Europea y, siendo de carácter legal, estimo que el Consejero Legal podría responderla mejor.

LEGAL COUNSEL

The question was the time limits and the process and how quickly we have to finish the negotiation process. The time limits are stated in Rule XXI of the General Rules of the Organization, which says that the Director-General shall notify Member Nations and Associate Members of any proposal for a Convention -- that is, if it is a binding agreement under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution -- not later than the time when he despatches the Agenda of the Session of the Conference. “If it is to be a legally-binding agreement that would mean that notice would have to be given in August when the Agenda is normally sent out. If it is not a legally-binding agreement, that time limit does not apply.

So the normal process would be that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture would try to reach agreement on a text and then send it on to the Council in June 1999. If it is a legally-binding agreement, it goes on to the CCLM and then on to the next Council and thence to the Conference in November 1999. The question was that if the Commission does not reach final agreement on everything, do the negotiations have to stop there? The answer is no. You will have other opportunities.

The Council, for example, when we were negotiating the Compliance Agreement and the revision of the IPPC, did, in fact, set up open-end working groups during its June sessions in the Conference year, in order to continue the negotiations. You also have the possibility of revising the legal wording of any agreement at the CCLM, and also of having other substantive consultations. Thus, after a proposal has been notified in August, you can have another substantive Negotiating Session to work on refining any proposal. That was done also in the case of the Compliance Agreement.

Fernando GERBASI (Presidente, Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura - CRGAA)

Quisiera agradecer brevemente a los distinguidos delegados y muy particularmente a usted por sus generosas palabras que implican una gran responsabilidad, también por el amplio apoyo otorgado por el Consejo a la sugerencia que hice de poder convocar unas consultas al inicio del año próximo. La idea, para concretarla, es que de esas consultas pueda yo elaborar un texto que me permita entonces convocar la Sesión Extraordinaria para una Negociación que espero sea final. Sin embargo, esta decisión del Consejo debe recordarle a los países que las negociaciones las realizan ellos, el presidente no es sino un vehículo para lograr que estas negociaciones puedan avanzar con un cierto dinamismo y en un sentido positivo.

Quiero finalmente agradecer de manera muy especial al Gobierno Suizo por el apoyo que me va a prestar para organizar esas consultas, al igual que al de los Estados Unidos que ya señaló aquí públicamente su disposición de facilitar la presencia de algunos delegados de países en desarrollo en esas conversaciones.

CHAIRMAN

I wonder if those few lines will be enough in the final report. Do you need a motion or a specific resolution?

Fernando GERBASI (Presidente, Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura - CRGAA)

Yo creo, Sr. Presidente que el resumen que usted hizo es más que suficiente. Lo importante es que se me permita revisar esas consultas y, reitero, serían personas convocadas a título personal. - Indiscutiblemente sabemos lo que eso significa - y en un grupo restringido que represente las regiones y las distintas posiciones que hasta el momento se han manejado para desbloquear nuestras negociaciones y poder entonces redactar un texto que facilite la negociación final.

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much for this stimulating and most interesting debate and thank you again, Ambassador Gerbasi.

The meeting rose at 12.50.

La séance est levée à 12 h 50.

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.50 horas.

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
SIXTH PLENARY MEETING SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
25 November 1998

**The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.40 hours
Mr Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti,
Vice-Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti,
Vice-Président du Conseil**

**Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 14.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti,
Vicepresidente del Consejo**

IV. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(cont'd)

IV. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION (suite)

IV. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS (continuación)

11. Reports of the Seventy-ninth (Rome, May 1998) and Eightieth (Rome, September 1998) Sessions of the Programme Committee (CL 115/7; CL 115/8)

11. Rapports des soixante-dix-neuvième et quatre-vingtième sessions du Comité du programme (Rome, mai et septembre 1998) (CL 115/7; CL 115/8)

11. Informes del 79º (Roma, mayo de 1998) y 80º (Roma, septiembre de 1998) períodos de sesiones del Comité del Programa (CL 115/7; CL 115/8)

CHAIRMAN

We should now turn our attention to Item 11, the Report of the Seventy-ninth and Eightieth Sessions of the Programme Committee. The documents are CL 115/7 and CL 115/8.

Once again, I would like to invite the Chairman of the Programme Committee, Professor Bommer, to report to the Council the gist of the discussion that took place in the Programme Committee.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

I have to report to the Council on the remaining items of the work of the Programme Committee referring to the two Reports of our spring and fall Sessions.

The first one, very briefly, was a review of programmes. You will have noted that the Committee continued its review of programmes that the Organization prescribes in GRO-XXVI, and in line with the established timetable. In May, the Major Programmes of Fisheries and Forestry, contained in CL 115/7, paragraphs 13 to 29, and in September the Major Programmes on Contribution to Sustainable Development and the Special Programme on thrusts, were reviewed. The report is contained in CL 115/8, paragraphs 53 to 67. I wish to draw the attention of the Council to our observations contained in both of these reports.

The second item is the Developments for the Medium-Term Plan and Preliminary Programme Priorities for the year 2000-2001. This is in our document CL 115/8, paragraphs 22 to 27. I think the Medium-Term Plan will provide an effective bridge between the Strategic Framework, which we have discussed, and the successive Programme of Work and Budget, which is now being prepared. Until the Strategic Framework has been finalized and adopted by the Governing Bodies, the Medium-Term Plan cannot be satisfactorily formulated. Instead of providing a 'hybrid' version, in the next years the energies of FAO should better concentrated at this stage on the development of the new programming model. The Committee accordingly recommended that the Council consider dispensing with the preparation of a separate Medium-Term Plan document in this transitional phase. Instead, the Programme of Work of Budget could contain an appropriate Medium-Term Perspectives section.

On the development of the next Programme of Work and Budget, Members of the Committee indicated, in a preliminary way, areas to which their countries attached particular importance. They are contained in paragraph 26. Council Members might wish to support, revise or amend this list.

The third Item is Strengthening JIU Reports, which is contained in document CL 115/7, paragraphs 30 to 36, and in CL 115/8, paragraphs 69 to 70. In both Sessions, the Programme Committee considered a total of six JIU Reports which are drawn to the attention of the Council. The Report on Strengthening Field Representation of the UN System, the JIU Report 97/1, with the comments of the Director-General and the additional information the Committee received on FAO's Field Officers' answers are also of particular interest to the Council.

Regarding the Progress Report on the Follow-up of Past Programme Committees Recommendations', we have noted that for the first time in document CL 115/8, we received such information at our request on what has been done in implementing recommendations the Committee has made, and we have been satisfied at this stage and look for further information in subsequent meetings.

With regard to the Review of Working Methods of the Programme Committee, it was decided it was premature to establish a schedule for future programme reviews, expected by the Council to be carried out in the non-Conference years 2000 and 2002. In the light of the considerable changes expected from the revised programme process, the Committee decided to return to the matter in a subsequent session. I hope very much you will understand this reaction and recommendation by the Committee.

Among the Possible Items for Consideration at the Next Session, we have clearly listed Items which we have to deal with in our next Sessions: the Strategic Framework Version 3.0, the Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001, and the Programme Evaluation Report for 1998-99. The Committee suggested additional subjects for review, depending on time available and on the Secretariat's capacity to prepare other correct documentation.

One of these items is Decentralization of the Organization and its Effect on Programme Delivery, to be considered for the meeting with the Finance Committee. The Chairman of the Finance Committee, I am sure, will come to the subject from the point of view of the Finance Committee. Mainstreaming of Gender within FAO Programmes; the Policy for the Use of Languages Within the Organization; and Programme Evaluation in the Context of the Revised Programme-Budget Process are other items proposed for review.

It is to be remembered that in discussing the Strategic Framework, we referred already to the importance of an increased and efficient evaluation system within the Organization to cope with this new format, and this will really give the new Programme Implementation Report the necessary criteria for evaluation.

These were the points which we discussed, and I hope we receive the support of Council for the points we raised.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Just to draw the attention of Council to a couple of issues on the Report of the Programme Committee.

First, we understand that in a few moments we will be discussing the Report of the Finance Committee, which was also going to be looking at elements of decentralization. We would ask that, in addition to the Items to be examined requested by the Finance Committee, we also take up the issue which was noted in the Report of the External Auditor, which was the question of the accompanying decentralization of authorities to undertake the activities which have been decentralized. We hope that this Report could also include a section that would look after Decentralization of Authorities.

Secondly, my delegation would certainly support, as listed in paragraph 81, an early inclusion on the Programme Committee agenda of an Examination of the Request of the 1995 Conference to Mainstream Gender Concerns Throughout the Departments of the Organization.

Louis DOMINICI (France)

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je voudrais vous demander, si vous le voulez bien, de donner la parole à la délégation de l'Autriche qui s'exprimera au nom de l'Union européenne.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

I am speaking on this Item on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, and I should like to make the following comments on the information set out in documents CL 115/7 and CL 115/8.

First of all, we would like to thank all Members of the Committee for their commitment in the preparation of the documents. We endorse most of the Committee's suggestions and take this opportunity to stress some of them. Let me begin with the document CL 115/7.

As far as the Major Programme Fisheries is concerned, we support the recommendation to develop integrated approaches to complex issues and to ensure that the training provided and the data collected actually do reach users at the community level.

As far as the Major Programme Forestry is concerned, we consider the closest cooperation and collaboration with all civil society partners to be essential in the implementation of current and long-term forestry activities. Nevertheless, clear rules must be defined to guide cooperation with the private sector in order not to compromise the Organization.

As far as the Item Working Methods and Future Programme of Work of the Committees is concerned, we must stress how important it is for Members to receive documents well in advance of the Committee sessions.

Turning now to document CL 115/8, with regard to the cross-organizational issues, we believe in an encouraged inter-disciplinarity and inter-disciplinary approach in the formulation as well as in the implementation of the strategic objectives. We endorse the recommendation of the Committee to dispense with the preparation of a separate Medium-Term Plan at this stage, because the proper Framework for it is still lacking. Moreover, we are deeply concerned about the fact that the actual budgetary constraints of FAO render priority selection unavoidable. It therefore becomes extremely important to establish a ranking of high priority activities in order to make sure that funds are made available to implement them.

Finally, gender aspects must be given the proper attention they require in programming activities, as well as in implementing programmes.

I would also like to ask you to pass now the floor to the Netherlands, which will address a particular item mentioned in the Report of the Programme Committee. It concerns the FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land.

Jacob Bernard PIETERS (Observer for Netherlands)

As said by Austria, I would like to highlight a particular item mentioned in the Report of the meeting of the Programme Committee of September 1998. Indeed, it concerns the FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land.

The Netherlands and FAO have taken the initiative to organize this international technical conference, and I would like to stress the word 'technical', a conference in preparation for the Eighth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in the Year 2000.

At that Session the CSD will examine the sectoral scene of integrated planning and management of land resources and economic sector of agriculture, which have their basis in Chapters 10 and 14 of Agenda 21.

Over the last ten years, the view of sustainable agriculture as a means of producing food and income while minimizing negative impacts on the environment has changed in favour of a much more positive and multifaceted vision. In that sense, agriculture and land use are crucial vehicles for the achievement of improved socio-economic, biological and physical environments.

The sub-title of the Conference, therefore, refers to the multifunctional character of agriculture in the same way as in the title of Commitment 3 of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit.

The objectives of the Conference are: firstly, to review progress achieved since 1992 Rio Summit, UNCED, in the implementation of Agenda 21 in terms of sustainable agriculture and integrated land management, and secondly, to identify and analyse the main issues of maximizing the benefits of agriculture's multiple functions in the future.

The Conference is expected to produce recommendations for implementation and policy options for sustainable agriculture and land management, which will be presented to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

The Conference will be held in Maastricht in the southern part of the Netherlands in September 1999. Other countries and institutions are expected to join in and participate during the preparation process. My delegation welcomes the preparations to date by FAO for this Conference, which included an extensive scoping process to which a large number of persons and institutions around the world will submit their comments and suggestions through electronic-mail.

We request FAO to prepare a Progress Report on the preparations for the Conference for the next meeting of the Council in June 1999. The outcome of the FAO/Netherlands Conference will be presented to the FAO Conference in November 1999 for endorsement.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie)

Permettez-moi, Monsieur le Président, de faire quelques commentaires sur les documents CL 115/7 et CL 115/8 que nous approuvons, mais en demandant cependant de prendre en considération quelques modifications mineures sur certains paragraphes plus ou moins importants pour ma délégation.

D'abord, pour ce qui est du premier document, le CL 115/7, nous tenons à ne pas répéter ce qui a été dit hier en ce qui concerne le Cadre stratégique, mais, en ce qui concerne le paragraphe 17 du document, je crois qu'il faudrait souligner l'importance des activités de formation ainsi que celle des données recueillies qui pourraient être utilisées d'une manière très importante et très correcte par les communautés concernées. Aussi, il faudrait qu'un renforcement du rôle de la FAO en matière de biodiversité forestière et dans l'application de la Convention sur la désertification soit pris en compte. Ce renforcement est nécessaire parce qu'on constate que le document parle d'un examen sur ce rôle, sans pour autant prendre en considération l'importance d'un renforcement. Aussi, au paragraphe 28, le Comité du programme encourage l'allocation de ressources suffisantes aux commissions régionales. Je crois qu'il faudrait aussi tenir compte des disponibilités des ressources du fait que, dans un autre plan, l'Organisation a favorisé l'autonomisation du budget de certaines organisations régionales, notamment en ce qui concerne le secteur des pêches. Je crois que l'importance de l'utilisation des ressources doit être prise en considération.

Pour ce qui est du document CL 115/8, je pense qu'au paragraphe 26 où les membres ont été invités à donner leur avis sur les priorités à mettre en lumière dans le prochain Programme de travail et budget, l'accent a été mis uniquement ou principalement sur les activités normatives. Je crois que nos interventions précédentes ont mis en exergue l'importance des activités opérationnelles. Je ferai aussi une proposition quant à l'importance du programme PCT qui mérite d'être pris en considération parmi les priorités. Aussi, en ce qui concerne le point 4 concernant les aspects liés à l'augmentation durable des approvisionnements, au point sur la protection des cultures, nous demandons de rajouter "la protection des cultures et la lutte contre les ravageurs" et, à la fin "la lutte contre la peste bovine".

Au point suivant concernant le développement de la recherche, il faut aussi tenir compte de la recherche et de la formation. Pour ce qui est du point 6 sur les activités visant la conservation et l'utilisation durable des ressources naturelles, à la fin, nous rajoutons "la lutte contre la sécheresse et la désertification".

Pour ce qui est du paragraphe 27 où la proposition et la discussion ont eu lieu concernant le niveau du budget, la proposition est réaliste, et nous la soutenons, mais elle devrait répondre aux attentes des Etats Membres et nous souhaiterions qu'il y ait un budget évolutif et non un budget régressif.

Au paragraphe 41, en ce qui concerne le Grand programme 2.2 "Politiques et développement alimentaires et agricoles", à la dernière phrase, il est indiqué que le Comité a noté qu'il existait un besoin similaire en matière d'application des accords OMC du Cycle d'Uruguay. Nous demandons

de rajouter la mise en œuvre de la décision de Marrakech sur les effets négatifs possibles sur les pays en développement importateurs nets de produits alimentaires.

Richard B. HELM (United States of America)

We will confine our comments to the Report of the Eightieth Session of the Programme Committee, and to those issues that are not covered elsewhere on our agenda.

First, given the work underway on developing a Strategic Plan, we agree with the Committees recommendation that FAO dispense with a Medium-Term Plan during the next biennium, provided that the next Programme of Work and Budget include a brief section devoted to prospectives for the medium-term.

Second, while we were somewhat surprised to see the Programme Committee addressing the next biennium's programme priorities, we are very supportive of the List of Priorities identified by the Committee, and believe that the list serves as a useful basis for initiating the next PWB.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our support for the preparations underway for the FAO/Netherlands Conference, as outlined by the Netherlands delegation. We commend the Netherlands for initiating and sponsoring this meeting, and the FAO for its technical support to the Conference as part as its responsibilities as Task Manger for the Chapters of Agenda 21 under discussion at the Conference.

As our colleague from the Netherlands has mentioned, this Conference will serve as an inter-sessional meeting for the UN Commission on Sustainable Development meeting in April 2000, which will focus on integrated planning and management of land resources, including sustainable agriculture and rural development. Because of the key importance of the Conference, as an inter-sessional meeting for the CSD, we support the proposal by Netherlands that a Report on the outcome of the FAO/Netherlands Conference be presented to the FAO Conference in November 1999, which in turn would pass on the report to the UNCSO.

At the same time, we would like to take the opportunity to comment on the title of the Conference which, as was noted, was changed to incorporate the term "Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land". As our colleague from the Netherlands noted, the current title reflects terminology adopted in the Plan of Action for the World Food Summit. However, the United States, as well as some countries on the Programme Committee, have voiced concerns about the potential for misinterpretation of the term "Multifunctionality" in a way that could potentially undermine commitments taken in other fora.

I refer in particular to the Communique of the OECD Committee for Agriculture at the Ministerial level which met in March 1998. With regard to the multifunctional character of agriculture, the Ministers at that meeting agreed that policies should allow agriculture to manifest its "multifunctional character in a transparent, targeted and efficient manner. The challenge is to use a range of well-targeted policy measures and approaches which can ensure that the growing concerns regarding food safety, food security, environmental protection and the viability of rural areas are met in ways that maximize benefits, are most cost-efficient and avoid distortion of production and trade."

For us, the overriding message is that multifunctionality should not be misconstrued as a pretext for revisiting key commitments made in the Uruguay Round, nor as a justification to slow down progress on further agricultural trade liberalization within the context of the WTO.

To conclude, we believe that the FAO/Netherlands Conference represents a valuable opportunity for FAO Member Nations and civil society to provide input to the UNCSO on important issues related to sustainable agriculture and rural development. If the Conference pursues its agenda within the framework of relevant concepts envisioned in the World Food Summit Plan of Action, we are confident that the Conference will be successful and will fulfil its mandate under the UN Commission of Sustainable Development.

Etsuo KITAHARA (Japan)

I welcome the proposal made by the delegate of the Netherlands.

As I pointed out yesterday, FAO has the legitimacy of conducting an objective study of multifunctionality of agriculture. What we are seeking is a technical common ground on which, I hope, we will be able to exchange our views on the issue of multifunctionality of agriculture, including its policy implications. Japan is prepared to make contributions in the coming international Conference.

I hope that the international Conference to be held at Maastricht will make contributions, and provide us with a basis for further discussions.

Finally, we should not address this issue with preoccupations. We are open to any future development.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

We do welcome the proposal of the Government of the Netherlands, and we too will be willing to participate in a very open and objective manner at that Conference.

My question is purely a technical one for you, Mr Chairman, on our behalf. What will be the nature of the Report that goes before Conference next November? Will it be a Report that goes for information or will it have to be adopted by Conference before it is passed on to another Body? If it, in fact, has to be adopted or approved or a decision required by Conference, I would suggest that we make time available on our Council Agenda early next November, simply to review this. If it is a purely objective Report, then it will not take much time. If it does require discussion, I would much rather see it take place at Council rather than at Conference.

I note that there is no appropriate meeting of a Technical Committee between the Conference in the Netherlands and our own Conference, which would be appropriate to review this. It is simply a question of process.

CHAIRMAN

I think that the issue raised so much interest from the intervention we just heard, that it certainly would need space in the next Council. The length of time allocated to its discussion will depend on the answer to your question, on which I will ask the Secretariat to reflect and to give a definite answer, as soon as possible.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

Australia is pleased with the work of the Programme Committee. It is operating effectively, particularly under your able Chairmanship, Dr Bommer.

We are in agreement, in general, with the recommendations of the Committee. In particular, Australia recognizes the difficulties in developing the next version of the Medium Term Plan in the current transitional phase of the Revised Programme budget Process and agrees with the conclusion of the Programme Committee that until the Strategic Framework has been finalized and adopted, the Medium-Term Plan cannot be satisfactorily formulated.

In this respect, Australia supports the Committee's recommendation to dispense with the Medium-Term Plan during this transition phase -- as suggested in paragraph 25 -- but agrees that the forthcoming PWB contain an appropriate Medium-Term Section which demonstrates the links between the proposed work priorities and the Strategic Framework.

In terms of the Programme of Work and Budget for 2000-2001, Australia broadly supports the priorities expressed by Members at the September Session of the Programme Committee. In particular, Australia strongly supports the forthcoming Programme of Work and Budget to include, as a priority, work on sustainable development of natural resources, agricultural research, fisheries and forestry resources, plant genetic resources, integrated pest management, FIVIMS and early warning, the facilitation of international trade in agricultural and food products through

the standard-setting work of Codex and IPPC, and support of developing country capacity in responding to increasing trade liberalization.

Our emphasis is, therefore, on normative and standard-setting activities and a slight shift of resources to increase emphasis on forestry and fisheries.

Australia also endorses the view in the Committee's report that there is no scope for increasing Assessed Contributions in the coming biennium, given the growing financial and economic difficulties that many Members are currently facing. Indeed, the Australian Government continues to face severe pressures for change and budget stringencies, and must also adopt a fiscally responsible approach to its contributions to international organizations. This pressure will necessitate that FAO continue to be more effective and rigorous in determining its priorities in ensuring their maximum impact.

In this regard, it is important that FAO be realistic in establishing its priorities, given that these will need to be achieved within a realistic budget of Zero Nominal Growth.

Finally, Australia also wishes to express support for FAO co-sponsorship of the proposed Conference on Multifunctional Agriculture and Land to be held in September 1999. Australia supports FAO being closely involved in a Conference focusing on sustainable land management issues, as these relate to agriculture.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal)

Permettez-moi, à l'instar des autres délégations, de féliciter M. Bommer et l'ensemble des membres du Comité du programme pour le travail accompli.

Pour être bref, je voudrais appuyer la déclaration du représentant de l'Algérie et, notamment, me référer à la Convention des Nations Unies sur la lutte contre la sécheresse et la désertification, Convention dont la deuxième Conférence des parties se réunira, comme vous le savez, la semaine prochaine au Sénégal et sera ouverte par le Président de la République lui-même, pour marquer l'importance que notre zone du Sahel accorde à cette question et aux problèmes que l'Afrique subsaharienne connaît, qui sont loin d'être résolus et qui devraient avoir la priorité dans toute réflexion et toute analyse d'un Cadre stratégique quel qu'il soit.

Il en va de même pour la lutte contre les ravageurs, en particulier le criquet pèlerin.

Nous remarquons que, parmi les questions que le Comité a retenues pour examen à sa prochaine session, figure le Cadre stratégique. Je crois que, sur ce Plan, le représentant de l'Afrique du Sud a déjà parlé, au nom de notre Groupe, des problèmes qui, dans notre continent, qui reste encore le continent oublié des années que nous vivons et, peut-être, des années à venir, devraient constituer une priorité. Nous remarquons également que le Comité du programme a décidé d'examiner, lors de ses prochains travaux, la question de la décentralisation, en rapport avec le Comité financier qui, lui-même, examinera cette question, et également l'intégration des questions de parité. Là, je crois que c'est l'une des faiblesses du Cadre stratégique, comme l'a remarqué également la représentante de l'Afrique du Sud, lorsqu'elle intervenait sur le Cadre stratégique au nom de notre continent.

Enfin, parmi les questions qui seront examinées, il y a la politique de l'utilisation des langues. Comme vous le savez, à Rome, nous avons un Comité de la francophonie, dont l'objectif est de veiller à ce que le français ait un traitement égal à celui des autres langues, à la FAO, mais également au FIDA et au PAM. Nous nous réjouissons qu'enfin cette question obtienne l'attention du Comité, et nous nous attendons à une réflexion profonde et, surtout, à des résultats concrets suite à l'examen de cette question, de façon à ce que toutes les langues puissent avoir le même traitement, un traitement équilibré, et surtout, en ce qui me concerne en tout cas, la langue française que nous utilisons comme outil de travail dans cette organisation et dans d'autres organisations sises à Rome.

Louis DOMINICI (France)

J'interviens au titre de la délégation française, alors que la Présidente de l'Union européenne est déjà intervenue au nom de tous les membres de l'Union. Et je tiens, en le disant, à souligner, bien entendu, que notre délégation adhère totalement à la déclaration de la Présidente de l'Union. Mon intervention a uniquement pour objet d'aborder un point particulier, qui nécessite un approfondissement. Je veux dire celui du plurilinguisme de l'Organisation, dans la ligne de ce que vient de dire notre collègue sénégalais. Je m'exprime sur ce sujet en tant que pays francophone, en communauté d'idée avec les pays francophones, mais en soulignant, bien entendu, que les préoccupations des francophones en faveur du français rejoignent celles de tous les autres pays, en faveur de toutes les langues de l'Organisation.

Nous relevons, en lisant attentivement le rapport de la quatre-vingtième session du Comité du programme, que celui-ci a l'intention d'inscrire à l'Ordre du jour de ses prochains travaux l'Examen de la politique d'utilisation des langues au sein de l'Organisation. Je me réjouis de l'attention portée par ce Comité à cette question, qui, je le rappelle, avait fait l'objet de plusieurs demandes de la Conférence, renouvelées lors de sa dix-neuvième session, il y a plus de vingt ans, laquelle priait alors le Conseil de charger le Comité du programme de procéder à un examen initial, puis à des examens périodiques, de la politique et de la pratique de l'Organisation en matière linguistique. Ces examens systématiques n'ont pas été effectués.

Est-ce à dire que la préoccupation commune d'assurer l'équilibre entre l'anglais, l'arabe, le chinois, l'espagnol et le français dans les travaux de l'Organisation serait satisfaite? Ma délégation ne le croit pas. D'ailleurs, personne ne le croit. Et nous attendons avec un vif intérêt le débat que nous engagerons sur cette question, dès que le Secrétariat aura préparé le Rapport qui lui a été demandé. Le rôle positif de la diversité linguistique et culturelle dans la pensée et l'action internationales n'a plus à être démontré. Or, forcés de constater qu'en période d'austérité budgétaire, les moyens d'assurer l'usage égal de toutes les langues de l'Organisation risquent, si on n'y prend garde, d'être rendus de plus en plus insuffisants, nous tenons à dire que nous souhaitons que, dans le prochain budget, des moyens supplémentaires soient affectés au renforcement de l'utilisation égale des langues de l'Organisation.

En attendant le Rapport du Secrétariat, permettez-moi encore, en quelques mots, si vous le voulez bien, de donner quelques indications sur le type d'informations que nous attendons de ce Rapport. Premièrement, l'analyse des politiques et des pratiques de l'Organisation en matière linguistique devrait porter sur l'ensemble des activités de l'Organisation, c'est-à-dire non seulement sur le fonctionnement des organes statutaires, comme aujourd'hui, mais aussi sur les publications et la communication externe de l'Organisation, et notamment son site *Internet* aujourd'hui. Et aussi, enfin, sur le fonctionnement général du Secrétariat, choix linguistiques pour la constitution des bases de données, capacités linguistiques des administrateurs de haut niveau, pratiques linguistiques dans les communications écrites et orales au sein des diverses divisions et avec les fonctionnaires des bureaux décentralisés de l'OAA.

Deuxièmement, l'analyse devrait reposer, dans toute la mesure du possible, sur des indicateurs chiffrés, qui seuls permettront de suivre objectivement, dans ce domaine, l'évolution des paramètres choisis, et constituer ainsi un nouvel outil de gestion pour le Secrétariat, ainsi que pour les Etats Membres attachés comme nous à observer une restauration, je dis bien une restauration, de l'équilibre entre les langues de l'OAA dans toutes les activités de l'Organisation.

Ma délégation, et je conclurai sur ces mots, ma délégation est très désireuse de poursuivre collectivement la réflexion sur cette importante question, à laquelle les francophones sont très profondément attachés, de même que, nous en sommes persuadés, tous les autres Membres de l'Organisation. Nous sommes prêts à échanger toutes idées utiles avec les délégations qui le souhaiteraient, en préparation du débat que nous aurons au Conseil après qu'aura été établi et diffusé le rapport du Secrétariat.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je remercie la délégation française ainsi que la délégation sénégalaise d'avoir soulevé un problème très important qui, je suis sûr, est à cœur de la majorité des Membres de cette assemblée et qui trouverait certainement un consensus si nous avions le temps de l'approfondir et d'en discuter.

Henri DJOMBO (Congo, République du)

La délégation congolaise voudrait appuyer la recommandation du Comité du programme selon laquelle l'organisation devrait pouvoir jouer un rôle de premier plan, c'est-à-dire de chef de file, en matière de coopération dans le domaine de la foresterie. Il s'agit aujourd'hui, surtout pour les pays en développement, de défis énormes liés notamment à la connaissance des ressources forestières qui conditionnent bien l'élaboration de plans d'aménagement adéquats. Dans ce cadre, la FAO devrait pouvoir s'impliquer davantage en ce qui concerne la définition des principes, critères et indicateurs de gestion durable permettant ainsi de sortir des discours et des dialogues polémiques qui s'instaurent souvent entre les ONG, les utilisateurs et les possesseurs de ressources forestières. Il est donc question de jouer un rôle de premier plan, comme je l'ai dit, et de faire en sorte que de plus en plus on puisse avancer à l'orée du troisième millénaire dans des méthodologies plus fiables qui permettent d'assurer véritablement une gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers dans nos sous-régions.

Le Comité du programme a déploré également le fait que les documents soient parvenus en retard et n'aient pas permis une contribution efficace des Membres. Il en est ainsi du Conseil: beaucoup de Membres n'ont pas reçu leurs documents à temps et les ont reçus ici dans la salle, ce qui ne leur a pas permis de se préparer de manière efficace pour que ces assises puissent jouir de contributions plus intéressantes.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group, I should like to express my thanks and appreciation to Dr Jacques Diouf, the Director-General of FAO, and to the Secretariat for their interest in the activities of FAO and in managing the Organization.

You know how important this question is for all the Members of the Organization, since language is the first means of communication between countries and between countries and the Organization, in order to discuss all matters of importance and relevance to the membership.

Therefore, we strongly support the request made by France and Senegal to treat all the Organization's languages recognized by the United Nations System on an equal footing. Languages should be accorded the utmost priority in our Organization.

In conclusion, I cannot but express my thanks once again and appreciation to the Director-General of the Organization and the Secretariat for their interest in that subject, namely that the languages used in the Organization receive equal treatment.

I hope that all the Members of the Organization and the Secretariat will be successful in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Aceleraré para adelantar los trabajos que nos quedan pendientes. Pero pendiente es una palabra que también ha surgido en este breve debate respecto al tratamiento igualitario de los idiomas en la Organización. Como ha afirmado el distinguido representante de Francia, este problema está sin solución desde hace muchos años, creemos que es hora de darle el impulso necesario para que tenga un tratamiento definitivo e igualitario. Este Tema lo discutimos prácticamente a diario tanto a nivel personal como en sesiones oficiales con los miembros del GRULAC. Nos ha ocurrido muchas veces tener dificultad con los idiomas, hay documentos que aparecen en un idioma y luego de un cierto tiempo aparecen traducidos al resto de los idiomas y en otras políticas que lleva adelante la Organización.

No debemos olvidar que los destinatarios finales, o sea nuestros representados aquí que son nuestros pueblos, a los cuales va dirigida nuestra información o nuestro trabajo y que a través de los diversos medios a los que puedan tener acceso, obtener la información lo más rápido posible para poder ser eficientes y activos difusores de los acontecimientos que ocurren en la Organización de los cuales ellos también deben sentirse parte. En tal sentido, respaldamos la moción efectuada por el representante de Francia, por el Grupo Regional que representa el distinguido representante de Senegal, también el Grupo de Medio Oriente y queremos sumar nuestro pedido como Grupo de América Latina y del Caribe para que esto sea tenido en cuenta e incorporado como un Punto de discusión en la Agenda de las próximas reuniones del Comité del Programa.

Pedro PINTO da SILVA (Portugal) (Original language Portuguese)

Portugal concuerda plenamente con las declaraciones hechas por Austria nuestro Presidente de la Unión Europea

(continúa en español).

Por esta razón nosotros concordamos también con las declaraciones hechas, en buen tiempo, por el Embajador de Francia, sobre el proceso de empobrecimiento cultural que se está produciendo en el mundo, y del cual está siendo también víctima esta Organización.

(continue en français)

Jacob Bronowsky, le philosophe mathématicien que j'ai connu assez bien à l'Institut Salk en Californie, en a parlé dans son livre (aussi, série télévisive) "The Ascent of Man" affirmant que nos gènes ne sont plus des gènes "génétiques", mais gènes de culture. Notre évolution génétique, à ce moment, est tellement lente par rapport à celle de notre évolution culturelle qu'elle ne compte plus: c'est l'évolution de nos gènes culturels qui compte. Alors, quand je nous vois tous ici préoccupés par la préservation des gènes "génétiques", je crois que nous devrions être au moins également préoccupés par la préservation des gènes culturels. - *Our cultural gene pool*.

(continues in English)

And so, Portugal, - who also has a global language - would object strongly to any impoverishment of plurilingualism in this Organization.

Languages are a way of thinking and also convey a way of feeling. By acquiring other languages, we acquire empathy and we acquire the knowledge of other people in other continents. It so behoves any diplomat who works here to know at least two, and possibly many more, languages. He will work better, I can assure you, because he will understand others better. And this is what this institution is all about. It is not we and the others, but - us in the same boat.

Therefore, we will not accept any impoverishment, even for the sake of a convenience "Mac Language." For this "Mac Language" will -- and I say this with great respect and pleasure in the English language -- will not in fact be English. It will be some bastardized version of the great language of Shakespeare. What we need, in fact, are more, not less, languages. If we also wish to be prospective, we can see that the day coming very close when computers will provide us with immediate translations anyway.

These are my thoughts at this time.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

My delegation wishes to support the Programme Committee's recommendation with regard to the Medium-Term Plan, as given in para 25 of CL 115/8.

We note the priorities for the next Programme of Work and Budget articulated by the Programme Committee, but seek assurance that these have not been presented in the Report in any order of priority.

Sra. Eva BLANCO MEDIO (Observador de España)

Quisiera expresarme sólo sobre un Punto en el que ya me han precedido varias delegaciones, especialmente la delegación de Francia y la delegación de Argentina para el GRULAC, la delegación de Senegal y el Grupo de Medio Oriente. Es la defensa del uso efectivo de la pluralidad de lenguas, tanto en la FAO como en otras organizaciones internacionales, particularmente en las organizaciones del Sistema de Naciones Unidas. Así lo hemos hecho constar ya en varias instancias. Creemos que el mantenimiento del uso equilibrado de las lenguas oficiales en todas las actividades de la Organización es esencial para la participación, el trabajo y la expresión de los países. Así pues, ayuda a mantener el espíritu con el que estas organizaciones fueron creadas. Por ello tenemos gran confianza en el resultado del Informe que actualmente está elaborando el Secretariado.

Quisiéramos que la discusión que tendrá lugar posteriormente en el Consejo contribuya a que el deseable equilibrio de lenguas sea mantenido como un principio fundamental para el funcionamiento de la FAO.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Group of 77, we have to stress how grateful we are for the work achieved by the Programme Committee headed by Dr Bommer, and also the Finance Committee headed by Mr Thomas. The meetings of both Committees were held in September. Mr Thomas gave us a briefing on the conclusion of the meetings and, indeed, we cannot set up and establish programmes from nothing. We need the resources and, indeed, we appreciate their assistance in making the resources available for the implementation of programmes.

In the Group of 77, we did not discuss the International Conference to be convened in September in the Netherlands regarding sustainable development and land. However, on behalf of the Group of 77, we support the convening of such a Conference. It has been a custom for the Netherlands to convene such Conferences. Codex Alimentarius was also convened by the Netherlands. A number of developing countries attended.

The Netherlands is a country interested in agricultural production, either animal or plant production, and is interested in the developing countries' fate. The first Conference of the Parties on the Convention to Combat Desertification to be held in Senegal is welcome. We hope that it will adopt results that will help those who suffer from desertification, including the countries in the Sahel Region.

In conclusion, we have to make our comments on the letter sent by Ambassador Dominici, Ambassador from France, regarding the rules for the use of languages. It is quite a remarkable gesture and, as the Group of 77, we thank him for that. We thank him for the interest he has shown in languages, in all UN languages, without singling out any one language – but you all know which one it is.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador de Perú)

Mi intervención parte del plurilingüismo que se acaba de señalar. Insistimos en que debe darse una igual asignación a todas las lenguas de la Organización, en todos los trabajos de la misma, sean esos orales o escritos. Debe haber un equilibrio en el uso de lenguas oficiales; de ahí que apoyamos y casi reiteramos lo que dice Argentina, España, Francia, Senegal, Portugal y Sudán. Creemos que en el Comité del Programa se debe llevar adelante un análisis sustantivo como propuesto por el Representante de Francia, en el sentido de que tal trabajo debe tocar el conjunto de las actividades de la Organización - el funcionamiento de los órganos políticos y técnicos, las publicaciones, las comunicaciones externas, el sitio *Internet*, el funcionamiento del Secretariado, la base de datos, capacidades lingüísticas de los administradores de alto nivel, las prácticas lingüísticas de las comunicaciones escritas u orales en la sede de las diversas dependencias de la FAO, así como a nivel de las oficinas descentralizadas. En otras palabras, proponemos un trabajo de amplio espectro.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

I make reference to document CL 115/8, paragraphs 64, 65 and 66. I would like to thank the Committee that produced the Report.

We support the Special Programme for Food Security and we are happy to see that the Committee has found it a valuable programme. It is particularly important for us in Africa and the developing world, where we are trying to build up capacity but using resources that are limited.

Uganda is going to benefit from a technical cooperation input within the Special Programme for Food Security. Our focus has been on water, water for production - mainly in terms of irrigation, and using very rudimentary and small-scale methods.

We have a lot of hope but, as we have noted, the changing climate in many of our countries will not be able to support agriculture to achieve the goal that we set during the World Food Summit. Unless we join other developed countries that are using irrigation and other means of overcoming adverse climatic conditions, we will not be successful.

I would also like to add that, we appeal to Member Nations that have the capability and strong economies to support the Special Programme for Food Security wholeheartedly, so that together we can achieve the goals of the World Food Summit that we together set.

We would also like to support the South-South cooperation, which is also hinted at in this document, under paragraph 67, and appeal to those countries which have the know-how and better technology to come out and assist those countries which still lack technical expertise to improve methods of agricultural production, so that we can once again achieve the commitments of the World Food Summit.

CHAIRMAN

I do not see anybody, please help me because I have the spirit of a young man but the eyes of an old man, so I do not see everything.

I do not see anyone else asking for the floor, so I ask the Secretariat, Mr Wade, to answer the many points. In fact there are a lot of them, if I can just draw on a few of them.

On Fisheries and Forestry,

(continue en français)

Je crois que la défense de l'écosystème qui avait été faite par une délégation, l'écosystème forestier, est très importante, je crois pour tout le monde. I think that Fisheries and Forestry are two very important sectors of our activities.

I think also that somebody referred to the importance of research and information, which is also something very important and, as a matter of fact, it is the scientific dimension which is referred to on the relations that FAO has the CGIF, on the document. It is certainly something on which we are looking with great interest and attention.

The question of desertification has also been rightly raised. I wanted to draw to your attention that the global mechanism to combat desertification has been located in Rome, with IFAD, and I think this is one reason more for the three major organizations to work together.

I would mention four organizations, because we have IPGRI, which is just in the framework of the CGIAR.

I think one specific item came out, and I think that we could perhaps put it on agenda item 11, point A, the question of *plurilinguism*.

(continue en français)

Je crois qu'il y a eu l'unanimité de nos interventions pour réserver à la question la plus grande importance. Je crois que le Secrétariat a pris note de tous ces points très importants qui étaient traités et Tony Wade va répondre à chacun d'eux.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme and Budget and Evaluation)

The specific points that you have listed, of course, we have taken note of, and they will be taken into account in the development of the budget in the usual way, so I will not address them individually. There were some questions, however, concerning first of all, decentralization and the idea, or the point made by the External Auditor, that the Delegations of Authority should be examined in that regard. I confirm that we always come back on each of the External Auditor's recommendations and report to the Finance Committee, and will do so in this particular case as well.

With regard to the 1995 Conference-approved Plan of Action on Gender Mainstreaming, yes, there will be a Report as requested by the Programme Committee. We would ask you to bear with us as we would like to present that Report to the September session of the Programme Committee, partly because of the workload but also to avoid duplication. That Report will then go on to be a report to the Conference, as is currently required.

I would like to pass to Mr Carsalade the question concerning the process as regards the Conference on Multifunctionality of Agriculture.

On language, I make no comment, of course. I think the best thing to do would be to await the Report and have the debate at that time.

There was a comment on late documents because of the reference in the first of the two papers. CL 115/7 had a comment saying that the Committee regretted that the documents had been late. I would just draw the attention of the Members of that Council actually thanks the Secretariat for getting them out on time, which you may have missed in paragraph 71 of CL 115/8.

I do not think I had a great number of questions about priorities etc. but those comments will be taken into account - we have taken note of them and we will pay attention to Members' requests.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Brièvement je crois que l'Organisation attache une haute priorité à la mise en œuvre de l'Agenda 21; y-a-t-il meilleur exemple que la création que vous avez approuvée du Département que j'ai l'honneur de diriger, dont un des rôles est de renforcer l'action de la FAO dans cette mise en œuvre?

Nous accomplissons pleinement notre rôle de "Task Manager" pour les quatre chapitres qui nous ont été confiés, c'est pour cette raison que le rendez-vous de l'an 2000 à la Commission du développement durable numéro 8, où nous aurons à rapporter sur les chapitres 10 et 14 de l'Agenda 21 "Agriculture et Gestion des terres" est de grande importance pour l'Organisation.

C'est dans ce cadre donc, que nous avons répondu à la sollicitation, à l'initiative du Gouvernement des Pays-Bas, d'organiser ensemble une Conférence technique sur le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et de la terre. Cette Conférence qui se tiendra à Maastricht vient un peu en écho à celle de Den Bosch de 1992 qui avait créé, je crois, des éléments de réflexion importante qui avait nourri la Conférence de Rio, et je voudrais remercier le Gouvernement des Pays-Bas pour son initiative et son soutien. Je remercie également le soutien unanime que vous nous avez apporté; l'ensemble des délégations ont tenu à préciser leur support à cette entreprise, nous avons largement entrepris la préparation de cette Conférence et nous nous attacherons, avec le Gouvernement des Pays-Bas, à faire en sorte qu'elle soit un forum neutre pour permettre un débat technique dans la ligne du Programme d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation entre les pays et les sociétés civiles pour continuer à réfléchir ensemble sur les fonctions de l'agriculture de l'avenir.

Pour répondre à la question du Canada, le Secrétariat est bien entendu d'accord pour présenter un rapport d'avancement au prochain Conseil, qui vous permettra de prendre connaissance de l'avancement des travaux, de les suivre et de prendre toutes les dispositions que vous jugeriez utiles pour la suite du processus.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

Actually I can be very brief. I am very grateful to hear the reaction of the Council, on behalf of the Members of the Programme Committee, that you have more or less accepted our recommendations. I wanted to assure Pakistan that the list is not a list of priority: it is a ranking of priorities, it is a list of priorities without any particular order and this is certainly to be reflected in the preparation, together with the additional issues for consideration, under the priorities in the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget.

I think that is more or less my whole reaction. I repeat here we are also grateful to the Secretariat, as well that the Council has agreed that for this transitional phase we do not need to prepare an extra document on the Medium-Term Plan. It would be an unnecessary overload of work in this situation.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

It was simply to come back to the question we had raised earlier about the nature of the Report going to Conference next year. I had asked whether this would have to be approved by Conference or whether it would simply be for information. I recognize that there is a request for a Progress Report at the Council next June. I had asked specifically whether we would have to consider it at Council next November. Once the Report of the Meeting is finalized, and it goes to the Conference, will there be a need for a body to review the recommendation going to Conference?

9. Programme Implementation Report 1996-97 (C 99/8; CL 115/8; CL 115/10; CL 115/19)
(cont'd)

9. Rapport sur l'exécution du programme 1996-97 (C 99/8; CL 115/8; CL 115/10; CL 115/19)
(suite)

9. Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa, 1996-97 (C 99/8; CL 115/8; CL 115/10; CL 115/19) (continuación)

CHAIRMAN

I ask the Representative for Egypt for your indulgence because before starting Item 12 of the Agenda the Secretariat owes you an answer to the question you raised yesterday. We are now in a condition to give that answer, and will start point 12 immediately afterwards.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Yesterday the distinguished delegates of Egypt and Eritrea raised a question as to whether it was within the competence of the Council to take decisions or recommend action regarding the appointment of a Secretary for the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region. We have looked into that matter and can report to you on it now. You will note, as I said yesterday, that the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region provides that the Director-General will provide a Secretary and staff for the Commission. Until 1991, there was a separate full time post for a Secretary of the Commission, but this was then abolished. Since then the functions of Secretary have been entrusted to the Regional Plant Protection Officer in the Regional Office on a part-time basis.

The issue then, as I understand it, is not really whether there should be a Secretary. Obviously, the Director-General has undertaken to provide a Secretary for the Commission and, in fact, he has provided a Secretary for the Commission, although the post is part-time. I think the question then is whether it should be full-time.

On this point, you will understand that only provision for a part-time Secretary is included in the present Programme of Work and Budget approved by the Conference. It is therefore not possible for the Council to take a decision to say that there must be immediately a full-time Secretary, since that is not provided for in the approved Programme of Work and Budget. However, it is certainly open to the Council to make known its views that there should in the future be a full-

time Secretary, and this can then be taken into account by the Director-General in formulating his draft Programme of Work and Budget, and by the Conference in considering the Director-General's proposals.

I hope that clarifies the matter.

LE PRESIDENT

Je remercie le Conseiller juridique et je donne la parole, s'il veut ajouter quelque chose, au Sous-Directeur général, Monsieur Sawadogo.

Abdoulaye SAWADOGO (Sous-Directeur général, Département de l'agriculture)

Je crois que Monsieur Moore a à peu près tout dit. Je voudrais simplement rappeler que la suppression de ce poste a été décidée par la Conférence dans le vote d'un budget; selon l'orientation des discussions et si la majorité des pays de la région le demande - pour le moment nous n'avons reçu qu'une correspondance du Yémen -, sans doute dans les propositions de budget que nous ferons sur lequel la prochaine Conférence aura à prendre une décision, il sera tenu compte de l'orientation qui sortira des débats actuels.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to express our thanks to Mr Moore and Mr Sawadogo for their clarifications on this important issue, and I believe that we cannot have a Commission without a full-time Secretary. Thus, from this Council, we would like to submit a request to the Director-General of FAO through the Council, and through the next Conference, a request to appoint a Secretary to the Desert Locust Control Commission for the Commission to be effective in its work and efficient in serving the interests of the countries of the Region.

12. Reports of the Eighty-ninth (Rome, May 1998), and Ninetieth (Rome, September 1998) Sessions of the Finance Committee (CL 115/9; CL 115/10)

12. Rapports des quatre-vingt-neuvième et quatre-vingt-dixième sessions du Comité financier (Rome, mai et septembre 1998) (CL 115/9; CL 115/10)

12. Informes del 89º (Roma, mayo de 1998) y 90º (Roma, septiembre de 1998) períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (CL 115/9; CL 115/10)

12.1 FAO Audited Accounts 1996-97 (*C 99/5; CL 115/10 paras 18 to 25*)

12.1 Comptes vérifiés de la FAO 1996-97 (*C 99/5; CL 115/10 par. 18 à 25*)

12.1 Cuentas comprobadas de la FAO de 1996-97 (*C 99/5; CL 115/10 párrs. 18-25*)

12.2 Status of Contributions 1998 (CL 115/10 para 15; CL 115/LIM/1)

12.2 Situation des contributions en 1998 (CL 115/10 par. 15; CL 115/LIM/1)

12.2 Estado de las cuotas de 1998 (CL 115/10 parr. 15; CL 115/LIM/1)

12.3 Format of the External Audit Opinion (CL 115/5 paras 13 and 14; CL 115/9 para 48)

12.3 Présentation de l'opinion du Commissaire aux comptes (CL 115/5 par. 13 et 14; CL 115/9 par. 48)

12.3 Forma de presentación del juicio del Auditor Externo (CL 115/5 párrs. 13 y 14; CL 115/9 párr. 48)

12.4 Other Matters Arising out of the Reports

12.4 Autres questions découlant des rapports

12.4 Otros asuntos planteados en los informes

CHAIRMAN

I think that the Secretariat took note of your remarks and, if you agree, we will go back to Item 12 of our Agenda. I think that the first Sub-item relates to Audited Accounts, document CL 99/5 containing the Audited Accounts for the Biennium 1996-97, and document CL 115/10 with the comments of the Finance Committee and the Draft Resolution in paragraph 25 for submission to the Conference.

I ask Mr Thomas if there are any additional points and then I open the floor.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Yes, I plan to give an introduction on the work of the Finance Committee after which I presume you will open it for discussion.

I am pleased to be here with you today to present the Report of the Eighty-ninth and Ninetieth Sessions of the Finance Committee, as you have indicated which are reported in document CL 115/9 and CL 115/10, which took place in May and September of this year. At its May session, the Committee unanimously re-elected Ambassador Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, the Representative from Italy, as its Vice-Chairman for 1998.

It is indeed, a great pleasure for me to serve with you during this session. The Agendas of these Meetings covered a wide range of budgetary, financial and administrative matters concerning and affecting the overall situation of the Organization. In addition to its review of the financial position of the Organization, the Committee also considered the budgetary performance and Audited Accounts of the World Food Programme, the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Director-General's comments thereon and the Programme Implementation Report.

As usual, these sessions also included Joint Meetings with the Programme Committee. Indeed, as we have witnessed during the discussion of the Joint Meeting, you will already have had some insight into some of the workings and activities of the Finance Committee.

On the whole, these sessions of the Finance Committee were productive and enabled us to address a number of important financial and budgetary issues facing the Organization. I would like to thank Members of the Committee for their diligence and cooperation and, on their behalf, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat for its assistance in our deliberations.

In my introduction, I will highlight those issues which are of general interest to and/or which require attention and action by Council. I propose to give a brief overview of the items on our Agenda under Item 12, in other words 12.1, 12.2, 12.3 and then 12.4 which includes a number of items under Other Matters.

Turning back to Item 12.1 on FAO Audited Accounts 1996-97, the Committee noted that the opinion of the External Auditor on the Accounts for the Biennium was unqualified and endorsed the recommendations of the External Auditor outlined in his Report. You have that Report as one of the Council documents. I would just like to add that the Committee was, in fact, extremely satisfied with the constructive proposals of the External Auditor and the exhaustive and meticulous manner in which this job was done. In accordance with past practice, the Secretariat will submit a Progress Report on the implementation of the External Auditor's Recommendations to the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee recommended that the Council submit the Audited Accounts for 1996-97 biennium to the Conference for adoption. A Draft Resolution to this effect is contained in document CL 115/10 paragraph 25.

I now turn to Item 12.2, Status of the Contributions for 1998. At both of its sessions, the Committee expressed concern over the disappointing rate of receipt of contributions and renewed its appeal to all Member Nations with contributions outstanding to pay, to pay their Assessed Contributions and Arrears in full as soon as possible. Although this is a vital issue for this Organization, I do not think there is very much more to say about it at this stage.

Regarding Item 12.3, Format of the External Audit Opinion, the Committee considered the proposal to change the format of the External Audit Opinion and the necessary amendment to the Financial Regulations in order to bring these provisions in to line with the revisions suggested by the UN Panel of External Auditors. The Committee recommended the proposal, the proposed amendment of the Financial Regulations to the Council for transmission to Conference. This proposal appears on page 30 of document CL 115/9, the Annex to that document.

I now turn to Item 12.4, Other Matters Arising out of the Report. I will try and deal with this systematically. The first one is a budgetary matter that was raised at our session in May, and it concerns Programme and Budgetary Transfers in the 1996-97 biennium, an Annual Report on Budgetary Performance to Member Nations. The Committee reviewed the Director-General's

Thirty-first Annual Report of Budgetary Performance to Member Nations and endorsed it for transmission to the Council for notification. The Committee was pleased to note that the budgetary transfers were within the limits already approved by the Finance Committee at its September 1997 session. The Committee regretted the transfer of resources from the technical and economic programmes, but recognized that this had been anticipated by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in May 1996 when it had approved the Revised Programme of Work and Budget 1996-97.

The next Item I wanted to report on that was dealt with in our September session is also a budgetary matter and concerns the Special Reserve Account. However, we have already dealt with it exclusively and in fact have come to a conclusion, so I do not think it is necessary at this stage to add the Finance Committee's deliberation on this matter that was settled within the Joint Meeting and reported to you this morning. So I will move on the next matter which is a financial matter, After-Service Medical Coverage.

The Committee reviewed the liabilities of the Organization for After-Service Medical Coverage and noted that the last remaining problem was to take action to fund the liability for past services which was estimated to be US\$195,1 million at 31 December 1997. The Committee also noted that the Separation Payments Scheme and Staff Compensation Plan were now fully funded and that the value of these investments exceed the liabilities by some US\$40 million. Accordingly, the Committee endorsed the Director-General's proposal that any excess in investment income of these funds over their requirements should in principle be earmarked for the After-Service Medical Coverage liability. The Committee therefore decided to forward to Council and Conference, for their approval, a Draft Resolution that would implement this proposal. That Draft Resolution is in CL 115/10, paragraph 33.

It should be noted that the Committee was unable to reach consensus on a further proposal that any cash surplus on the General Fund be allocated as a priority towards funding the After-Service Medical Coverage liability. Accordingly, while some progress has been made with respect to this considerable and growing liability, the Committee was not able to make specific recommendations to ensure its funding. As a consequence, this problem remains largely unresolved in financial terms. It is expected that the Council will endorse the Resolution for transmittal to Conference, and that it may wish to give additional guidance to the Secretariat regarding the funding of the outstanding liability.

The second to last issue is FAO Investment Management Practices and Arrangements for Review of Investments of the FAO Reserve Funds. The Committee endorsed the proposed revised arrangements for the Review of the Investments of the FAO Compensation Plan Reserve Fund and the Separation Payment Scheme. The Committee also noted that the proposed change in respect of the oversight function would require an amendment to Financial Regulation 9.1. It endorsed the proposed amendment for forwarding through the Committee on Constitutional Matters to Council for its approval and then to Conference for adoption. The text of the change is shown in Report of CCLM document CL 115/5, Annex E.

The last Item that I had on my list concerns arrangements for the Selection and Appointment of the External Auditor. The Committee reviewed the proposal covering the arrangements foreseen under Financial Regulation 12 for External Audit together with additional information on experience of other organizations. The Committee noted that the proposal met the concern to achieve greater participation of developing countries in the audit process by permitting joint proposals under the sole responsibility of a lead auditor but involving the sub-contracting of work to one or more other eligible auditors. Accordingly, the Committee endorsed the proposal for transmission to the Council for its approval.

There is just one more item I would like to touch on that was raised by the Chairman of the Programme Committee, my colleague Dr Bommer, concerning the question of Decentralization. I had not had it on my list here because we have not had an outcome to this discussion yet but we have it on our Agenda for the next meeting, a subject which has already been started by Finance Committee because of the financial implication, because of the financial importance of the

FAORs. The external representation of this Organization, as we know, represents some just below 10 percent of the regular budget. In this context, we felt it was valid and right to look and to gain a better understanding of this, and the aspects that we plan to be looking at are detailed in paragraph 50 of document CL 115/10.

That is all I would like to give you as an introduction and naturally remain at your disposal for any further clarification I may be able to provide.

Khalid MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department)

Just information for the Council, since the preparation of our document CL 115/LIM/1. We have received some contributions from three countries. We received from Uganda US\$13 855, from Latvia US\$ 236 728, and from Mozambique US\$ 31 950.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

There were a number of issues raised by the Reports, the two Reports of the Finance Committee that the Canadian delegation wants to question. The first one, coming from the External Auditor's Report, is the question of Decentralization and the degree to which Decentralization of Authorities have already been or may not have kept pace. We have already raised that and I understand that a response is going to be made to the External Auditor. I just hope that, as well, the study to be presented to the Finance Committee will include aspects of the degree to which authorities are being delegated to the field, because you cannot have an efficiently operating delegated system, if the people in the Field do not have the authority to look after the day-to-day occurrences in the Field.

The other point that is raised in the External Auditor's Report, is also raised in the Report of the Finance Committee -- it is in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the Report of the Finance Committee. The External Auditor makes observations about the complexity of the number of categories for Support Funds. He also drew our attention to paragraphs 29 and 30 of the Report of the Finance Committee which mentions that a number of Trust Fund projects had the Project Servicing Cost waived or reduced during the 12-month period, 1997 through 1998.

We have checked with a few other multilateral organizations, and we note that it is not the policy in a number of other multilateral organizations for the membership to waive fees even on emergency operations. Therefore, we are wondering what was the value of the Project Servicing Cost waived on these projects for the biennium, or for a 24 month period.

Secondly, we note that the reasons we did this was in line with pre-established criteria. I wonder if the Secretariat could outline for us what those pre-established criteria are and who established them, and what level of governance would be required to amend those. We note that the vast majority of these waivers had been granted for emergency operations, and we would wonder what was the nature of the remaining projects for which we waived the Project Servicing Cost.

The second item that causes us concern is the Resolution that we are asked to adopt for the After Service Medical Coverage. The report of the spring Committee of the Finance Committee, noted that there had been approximately a US\$ 24 to 25 million windfall, and recommended that that windfall be allocated to the After Service Medical Coverage Fund. At the Joint Meeting in the spring, we had asked for an explanation of where that windfall had come from, what had been the origin and what would be the normal distribution of that windfall. In other words, we were being asked to allocate it one way. Our question was what would happen to that under normal circumstances if it did not get allocated in that fashion. The Secretariat produced a Report which reviewed the origin of the problem with the After Service Medical Coverage, but did not answer that question. We again, raise that question. What was the origin?

Now the proposal in front of us, the proposed Resolution, contains a few problems for us. One is, it explains to us that there are two existing funds, the Separation Payment Scheme and Staff Compensation Plans which are now more than adequately funded, and more than adequately endowed with investments, and suggests that the proceeds of these extra investments be allocated to the After Service Medical Coverage. Our question is again. What would be the normal

distribution of these funds if they did not go to the After Service Medical Coverage? Would they be returned to the General Fund for example?

Secondly, we are wondering if staff funds are included in these funds. In other words, do they include contributions of the staff of the Organization and, if they do, we are wondering whether consultations have been made with the Staff Association for this particular change.

Thirdly, we cannot agree with a proposal that would see future surpluses in the General Fund being allocated, either automatically or on a priority basis, to the After Service Medical Coverage. We would prefer to see the existing distribution, under the existing financial regulations followed.

CHAIRMAN

These questions will certainly be answered by the Secretariat afterwards. I think that our Chairman of the Finance Committee dealt with all the Sub-items of item 12 together, so I invite the assembly to treat the whole of Item 12 together as well.

T.J. KELLY (United Kingdom)

I ask that Austria be given the floor to speak on behalf of the European Community.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

The timely payment of FAO Member Nations of the Assessed Contributions is undoubtedly the best solution of most of the financial difficulties FAO is nowadays confronted with. This is confirmed by the auditing of the FAO Accounts, and we agree with the conclusions put forward in document C 99/5.

As things stand now, only about one-third of FAO Member Nations pay their contributions regularly. The fact that the vast majority of FAO Members do not fulfil their obligations on schedule, if they fulfil them at all, is of great concern to us.

Given that ten countries each owe amounts in excess of US\$ 1 million, we advise the Secretariat to intensify bilateral consultations with FAO's largest debtors. Intensified bilateral consultations appear to be the only practicable way in order to achieve the most rapid possible decrease of the amount of outstanding contributions. In addition, we suggest considering the possibility of complementing the current Incentive Scheme by the introduction of disincentive measures.

As far as decentralization of FAO's operational activities on the regional level is concerned, we agree with the rationale followed by FAO, but regard current implementation as unsatisfactory. At present, decentralization initiatives seem to be lacking in focus and consistency. Efforts to redefine their layout and operational criteria should be maximized. This would expedite the expected efficiency gains.

In this context, the following recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit are particularly relevant. Organizations should refrain from having new Representations and make use of existing common premises, especially through the Resident Coordinator. Organizations should harmonize as much as possible their respective geographical Representations at the Regional and Sub-regional levels. Local representatives, while continuing to advocate and promote activities related to their respective organizations' mandates, should be part of a team under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. All United Nations Organizations represented in the field should accelerate and intensify their efforts to establish common premises and enhance common services.

We are also concerned about the money which is being lost by accepting unfavourable banking conditions, and invite FAO to obtain bids from competing banks. Such an exercise would require relatively few resources but would have the potential to provide FAO with additional income and substantially-reduced costs.

One last point I would like to mention with regard to the Headquarters Accommodation question of the Rome-based agencies, we look forward to receiving a Report from the Representative of the Host Country in the Finance Committee and also from the Secretariat.

Filippo ALESSI (Italy)

After the Austrian Presidency has touched upon the matter, I would like to make reference and briefly comment upon paragraphs 61 and 63 of document CL 115/10 on Headquarters Accommodation.

My delegation could write a book on that but I will limit myself to the reference in the said document "...that it has not been possible for interested parties to arrive at a technical solution to the question of common premises." Maybe at this stage, it would be useful to provide some historical background.

The question was first raised in a note of the Dutch presidency of the European Union to Mrs Bertini, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme. The note was copied to the Director-General of FAO and to the President of IFAD on 26 June 1997. An answer from the Director-General of FAO was received on 1 August 1997. The British Presidency of the European Union followed up on the same issue on 6 March 1998, and obtained an answer from the FAO Director-General within the same month. The current Austrian Presidency also wrote to Mr Diouf on 21 July and received an answer on 12 August. Therefore, there are some reasons for the European Union raising the issue because the Rome-based relationship with agriculture, food, rural development and food security is intertwined. There is a need for close scrutiny in terms of efficiency and effective use of resources.

As a matter of fact we have calculated that from approximately 3 400 staff members in 1990, FAO has decreased, due to budget cuts and because of the recent decentralized process, to about 2 300 staff members. Now, according to the document distributed to the Finance Committee, the figures are even lower, something like from 1 900 to 1 800 actually filled posts -- according to document FC 90/16. Therefore, having lost so many of its staff we thought and, still believe, that in FAO Headquarters there could be room for more than one Organization.

To our regret and great surprise, FAO produced for the May Session of the Finance Committee, document FC 89/12 stating that only 20 rooms, about 263 square metres located on the fourth and fifth floors of building C would be available to house new projects. We then discussed the issue at the September Session of the Finance Committee -- and you can refer to document CL 115/9 -- which suggested that the three interested parties, FAO, the Government of Italy and IFAD, evaluate the technical feasibility of common premises.

After that, a trilateral meeting took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome with FAO and IFAD officials. Following that, the Permanent Representative of Italy wrote a letter to the Director-General of FAO on 16 June, suggesting the creation of a Working Group of Experts to examine together the situation of available space. The answer came one-and-a-half months later, and the first meeting of Experts took place in early August. A second meeting took place a few days ago, and on this matter we shall continue to ask for a thorough review of the Headquarters Accommodation space situation.

In the meantime, due to our Host Country responsibility, we could not keep IFAD in an uncertain situation. We agreed to consolidate the present location, extending it to a neighbouring building of the *Conservatoria* of the Real Estate Registers, while World Food Programme is also settled in a new building with a five-year contract in the Parco dei Medici location. We feel that FAO has lost an opportunity in this respect.

Finally, I would like to recall President Scalfaro's two interventions on 11 February 1998 on the occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of IFAD, and on 22 May at the Inauguration Ceremony for the new Headquarters of the World Food Programme, when he referred to scruples that each increase, each administrative and organizational multiplication, may absorb resources from the primary aim of fighting hunger and food insecurity - an invitation to reduce some overhead from

general expenditures. How many joint expenditures are duplicated or triplicated with three different Headquarters?

Ms Bongiwe NJOBE-MBULI (South Africa)

In view of the fact that my countryman chairs this Committee, the only thing I can really do is commend the quality of the work that has been done. We cannot boost African confidence otherwise.

I would just like to make a few comments on behalf of the Africa Group, which really point to what is obviously going to be a dilemma for FAO in its continued allocation of budgetary resources, and this is about balancing the expenditure in terms of the field and the normative work.

The point I would like to make is the fact that, inasmuch as there is only the need to balance allocation of monies on these issues, the reality is that up until the time the developing countries have the capacities to make use of the normative capacity of FAO, we will not have succeeded in our quest for food security. Therefore, we would like to appeal that FAO continues to maintain this delicate balance against all the financial difficulties faced.

The second point we would like to make is the fact that we support, and would like to see, the retention of the decentralized systems, as we think this is the way to go in terms of strengthening local capacities. While some of the experiences may not have been positive in the beginning, we believe that we are entering into an era where there is a greater realization, particularly on the African continent, of the benefits of working closely with regional and country-level offices.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Mi delegación tiene interés en plantear una pregunta a la Secretaría por lo que respecta al estado de las cuotas a la Organización. El documento presentado para debate incluye información actualizada solamente hasta el mes de febrero. Nos gustaría conocer qué porcentaje de las cuotas ha sido cubierto hasta la fecha, lo más actualizado que se pueda, y también nos gustaría saber sobre la posibilidad de que la FAO asumiera préstamos. Esta es una cuestión muy importante y queremos resaltar una posición que mi país, al igual que muchos otros, han señalado con relación a este tema sobre la importancia de que los Países Miembros cumplan con sus compromisos financieros. Consideramos que éste es un compromiso no solamente político sino ético muy importante con la Organización.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

Of course I fully agree with the intervention made by South Africa on behalf of the Africa Group.

I would like to say that Uganda, and probably other Members of the Africa Group, do endeavour to pay their contributions even if they are in a situation of real economic problems. Despite the programme for economies in Africa, we do support that an adequate budget for FAO is really important so that it can be able to fulfil the mandate that we have given it.

On the issue of field work and projects that have to be carried out in the different Member Nations, we do support that these should be given all the support. We also support the normative function that the Organization should have here. However, I think that for the developing world, especially Africa, it will be a great failure if the practical and project work that is supposed to be carried out in the field is curtailed because of preference in supporting normative activities.

We definitely have differences as Member Nations in our requirements and, whereas the preference would be for normative work for most of the world's countries, we find that the field work and the practical work is more relevant and more country-touching within the developing world. So we appeal that this consideration should be focused on.

We note the comments of the Committee that the decentralization system has, of course, had some problems because it is a new system that is being started. Uganda is one of the countries with a decentralized form of government. At the beginning it was not easy either, but the results

obtained through decentralization are very easily observed by the people concerned at the grassroots level. I would like to assure you that we, in Eastern and Central Africa, are already observing the benefits of decentralization and my interaction with other people where decentralization has taken place within the Organization has confirmed positive results.

I think what we can do is further supervise and further check-ups on the system to make sure that it has no loopholes, but I think we must go ahead with this particular system so that it shows the stakeholders. The stakeholders themselves can then check the system and report to the Organization.

P. W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Since this is the first time that Namibia has addressed the Council, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you and congratulate you for the manner in which you are handling this Session of Council, and also congratulate the Chairman, who you are standing in for, and also the three Vice-Chairmen who were elected at the beginning of the Council meeting. We hope that you will be able to steer this Council to greater heights in its deliberations.

Coming to the issue under discussion, Namibia wishes to submit that in the first place we congratulate the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Dr Thomas, for the good quality of work that has been produced, as reflected by the document that is before the Council today for discussion.

Having said that, we also would like to repeat and reaffirm what has been submitted by the Chairperson of our Africa Group, South Africa, indicating that as much as there are financial difficulties, there is a need for FAO to strike a balance between the allocations for normative work and for field work, more especially for the developing countries where we need to build capacities to be on a par with other developing countries. Without financial resources, this would be impossible.

Be that as it may, I also recognize the fact that like other African countries, if we wish to benefit from financial allocations from FAO, we should also be in the forefront of meeting our financial obligations of contributing to the funds of FAO, as were agreed upon by our political principles. We should not just expect handouts coming from FAO that have been contributed by other nations. I know, and we recognize the fact, that we do have financial difficulties, but other countries have the same difficulties, so it should be our obligation and we should meet that, so that at the end of the day we all benefit from the efforts and services offered by this Organization.

Further, I would like to also comment on the issue of exploring a single Headquarters or location for the Rome-based UN Agencies. This is a laudable effort, and we wish to urge FAO and the authorities to explore this further. Hopefully one day we might see most of the Organizations either here in Rome at the Headquarters level, or in regional institutions based in one building to curtail costs and also alleviate the heavy contributions that Governments have to make to keep these Organizations running.

CHAIRMAN

I do not see any other requests for the floor and, if you agree, we can pass and ask the Secretariat to answer the different points which have been raised, and then leave the last word to the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Khalid MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department)

There are quite a few questions and between us here we will try and answer all of them.

The first question was from the distinguished representative of Canada and it concerns decentralization. As has been pointed out by the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Finance Committee has asked for certain information and it will be considering this question at its next meeting. We will also be submitting a Progress Report. That is the practice which the Organization has followed for the past years. We prepare a Progress Report through the Finance Committee to the Council on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations. So

you will be seeing the Organization's reaction to the recommendations when the Progress Report is submitted to the Finance Committee.

On the question of delegations, one of the aspects which needs to be borne in mind is the Organization is in the process of developing a new financial computer system, as well as a human resources management system. So the question of delegations is tied to these systems because, for the delegations to be monitored, you need a proper system of management information to set in place the information and controls. So the delegations would be considered also as part of the implementation of the new system which is – at least the financial side – well advanced.

There was another question from the distinguished representative of Canada concerning the After-Service Medical Coverage. There are a few questions which he raised. One of them was; 'Where did the windfall come from?' It is as a result of a change in accounting policies which was recommended by the External Auditor. So the excess has come about as a result of the change in the accounting policies recommended by the External Auditor.

As to whether there is any amount belonging to the staff in this whole fund, I can confirm that these are amounts set aside by the Organization and the staff are not involved. These amounts are set aside by the Organization to meet future liabilities, so staff consultation is not necessary.

I will ask Mr Reddy to handle the question of distribution. There was also a question, or a suggestion – in fact the distinguished representative of Austria made quite a few suggestions and one in particular about going out to bid for a tender in respect of banks. FAO is preparing a tender, and should be going out soon to invite bids from various banks.

On the question of Headquarters Accommodation, I can confirm that the meetings which the distinguished representative from Italy enumerated were held. One was held very recently. Our view, and hopefully it will be taken up by the meetings which are taking place, is to work out the operational needs of the organizations first, and to compare those operational needs with the space available, and hopefully these meetings which are taking place will take this into account. As for whether FAO has been dealing with space matters or not, I will be asking Mr Alheritière, who is the Director of the Administrative Services Division, and who keeps the questions of space and space management under constant review, to provide the Council with certain other information.

There was another question from the representative of Mexico who wanted to know what was the up-to-date percentage of contributions received. With the three countries whose names I read out as having paid after our documentation was printed, the total percentage of receipts now are 93.29 percent.

I believe there was also a question, if I am not mistaken, whether the Organization borrowed any funds in 1998. There was no borrowing by the Organization.

There were two questions left outstanding, both from the distinguished representative of Canada: one on support costs and one on the distribution of this windfall. The support costs, with your permission, I would like Mr Wade to address and the distribution of this excess of income, as it were, I shall pass to Mr Reddy.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

The value of projects waived is slightly complicated by the fact that we report emergency projects as a waiver, which is not really accurate because the arrangement under emergency projects is that they are charged with direct operating costs. Those direct operating costs can vary from about three percent to six percent, depending on the nature of the project - what we see as being equal to the incremental cost of running those projects. When I say incremental costs, I mean the incremental cost of our Emergency Operations Unit, and in fact the entire cost of our Emergency Operations Unit.

The value of the emergency projects in the last Report, which went to the Committee and covered a period of 1 June 1997 to 31 May 1998, was US\$ 69 million. The waiver, if they had been charged 13 percent, would be worth US\$ 9 million, but there was no question of ever charging

13 percent on those projects because they have always been charged on the basis of the direct operating costs to be incurred.

That leaves the balance of the other projects which were reported to the Committee and the major element there is projects worth about US\$ 7 million, which were all subject to partial waivers because they represented direct support to our regular Programme of Work and Budget. You will recall that yesterday evening, I referred to the fact that there are quite a large number of projects that directly support the Regular Programme. For these projects -- and I will come to the Basic Texts and where it all comes from in a minute -- what the Rules say is that the Director-General has the authority to waive in whole or partially the project servicing costs for projects which provide direct support to the Regular Programme.

We have had some difficulty in recent years in making a judgement about what was the correct level, so one of the outputs of a cost study, which is part of the cost studies that result in the information that is in the Programme Implementation Report, was to try and identify what the incremental cost would be of supporting that sort of normative work. The estimated level is six percent. So generally speaking, we charge six percent on direct support to the Regular Programme, although frankly we do vary it occasionally, usually up rather than down, because projects are sometimes heavily normative, but have some other content in them. So we try to make a reasonable judgement.

We sometimes go below the six percent level. There are two particular areas which we have traditionally said should be full waivers. The first is where there has been a major International Conference, such as the World Food Summit or the World Forestry Congress, where we charge nothing. The second is where donors make substantial contributions to fund the travel of participants to such conferences, where we also charge zero.

The total waivers in that period, for this reason, were around about US\$ 500 000 and if the delegate would like, I can give him a copy of the Report that went to the Finance Committee, if he has not already have it. There are one or two other situations which are reported in there, but they are really very minor, so I think rather than take up the Council's time, I will not go through them now, but I would be happy to provide more details to the delegate if he so wishes.

Who established the criteria? The story goes back a long way, I am afraid. The source of all this is Financial Regulation 6.7, which authorizes the Director-General to establish Trust Funds and Special Funds to cover monies made available to the Organization for special purposes, provided that the purposes of such contributions are consistent with the policies, aims and activities of the Organization. But there is a rider on that Regulation. It also requires that the acceptance of any such contributions, which directly or indirectly involves additional financial contributions from Member Nations, shall require the consent of the Conference. So always from the beginning, the assumption was that if you accepted voluntary contributions, they should not result in additional obligations for other Members.

Right from the beginning, however, a problem arose with the Special Fund, the predecessor of UNDP. Rates were established by the UNDP Governing Council, not by this Organization. So this Organization decided to accept that it would receive resources from UNDP, previously the Special Fund, on the conditions that were so established -- at that time, I think, a rate of 14 percent, but I must admit my memory does not go back as far as this story goes back. That percent has changed over the years, it first went down to 13 percent. It subsequently went to a more complicated successor arrangement of 10 percent plus technical support services of two types, but I will avoid going into too much detail. The Conference has generally followed UNDP's changes, except for this last group of changes which were, frankly, too complex and inappropriate to apply to Trust Fund donors in the way they were structured.

All of this led in 1971 to a regular reporting requirement by the Director-General to the Finance Committee of waivers -- waivers being partial or full -- from the established set of rules that exist in the Manual Section that covers this. This is Manual Section 250. It has an Appendix A, which

lists all of the rules that apply, including the conditions of the waivers and it is from this that this reporting occurs. And in fact, this reporting has been going on now for twenty-six years.

Who can change and how do we change these criteria and the rules that apply? The policy in recent years has definitely been evolving but always in consultation with the Finance Committee, as reported to the Council. There has, for example, been the case when we have been asked to tender for particular technical assistance work, a major fellowship project, where we were asked not to submit it in the normal way but instead to go in with a tender, including a bid for the support costs. We did it on the basis of what we estimated the incremental cost would be, in consultation with the Finance Committee which accepted that approach.

There have been other variations without a formal change to the Rules. I would say that if we sought a change to Manual Section 250, which involved a change in the base rate, we would feel obliged to come back to Council at least. For changes, however, concerning how we manage it, we would probably carry out in conjunction with the Finance Committee, seek their endorsement and, of course, have that reported to you in case there was some objection to the way we were managing it.

I am sorry for this rather long reply, but I hope it has satisfied the distinguished delegates.

Michael E. RUDDY (Director, Finance Division)

I think Canada's question refers to the Draft Resolution, and what would be the normal way in which surpluses in these reserve funds would be handled in the account if it was not passed.

If I could share my understanding of what would happen by way of a small example it might help me. Assuming that the actuary determined that our liability were US\$200 million for these end-of-career type payments, and that at the start of the year we had, in fact, placed assets in these reserves equal to US\$200 million. If you assume that during the year those assets were invested and earned US\$10 million in income, the actuary returns at the end of the financial year at that point He does another determination of our liability for these things and concludes, that on his actuary assumptions, we need to put another US\$9 million into this reserve because the liabilities have grown by that much. Then, we would say in effect that of the US\$10 million earned, US\$9 million will go to cover this increased obligation.

Under this Resolution we would say that the US\$1 million remaining of what was earned on those assets would be invested in the After Service Medical Costs, a new reserve fund. In the absence of this Resolution, of course, the whole US\$10 million, minus what we have to put in, would accrue to the General Fund of the Organization.

Dominique ALHÉRITIÈRE (Directeur, Division des services administratifs)

Nous ne pouvons être que reconnaissants au distingué délégué de l'Italie pour n'avoir rappelé l'historique des discussions concernant les locaux du Siège que pour les deux dernières années, car, en effet, c'est un débat qui dure, je dirais, depuis la naissance de la FAO. Ces discussions sont permanentes, et pour toute organisation vivante et en pleine évolution comme la nôtre, il est normal que ce soit un dossier qui reste ouvert de façon permanente.

Loin donc d'ignorer ce débat, la FAO a, au cours de ces derniers mois, accordé une attention soutenue à la question des locaux du Siège. Des réunions de travail ont eu lieu avec le Ministère des travaux publics, qui est le ministère en quelque sorte de tutelle en ce qui concerne notre Siège. La dernière réunion a eu lieu il y a quelques jours seulement, accompagnée d'une visite sur le terrain, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, et d'intenses consultations ont eu lieu au cours des derniers mois toujours, avec nos partenaires à Rome, et principalement les partenaires du Programme alimentaire mondial et du Fonds international pour le développement agricole.

C'est d'ailleurs mon devoir de rappeler à votre auguste assemblée que la FAO abrite déjà de très nombreux organismes internationaux, de petits organismes internationaux, des secrétariats qui s'occupent du suivi de conventions internationales, des organismes conjoints avec d'autres institutions internationales, l'un des plus célèbres de ces organismes étant le Codex Alimentarius,

qui est conjoint avec l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, et qui, comme vous le savez, est abrité ici à Rome, dans les locaux de la FAO. Un nouveau recensement est d'ailleurs en train d'être fait en ce moment même pour avoir une idée exacte et complète de tous ces organismes qui sont abrités au Siège de la FAO. Cette liste n'est jamais fermée, elle est en pleine évolution; à l'heure actuelle, nous avons des discussions pour abriter un autre organisme, une partie d'un organisme frère d'une organisation soeur, qu'on appelle UNOPS.

La position de la FAO à ce sujet, je ne peux que vous la répéter, mais vous la connaissez déjà, je crois, est très claire et sans ambiguïté; la position de la FAO et de son Directeur général, est que nous sommes absolument en faveur de locaux communs, que ce soit au Siège ou sur le terrain, chaque fois que cette solution est possible techniquement et chaque fois que cette solution est avantageuse économiquement.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

I will be very brief. I think there are two comments, remarks, responses I would like to make. First of all, to thank the distinguished delegates for their constructive comments and support regarding the work of the Finance Committee and the Report that you had before us. Those comments will certainly be useful for us and guide us, as we move forward to next year.

I would just like to add that this spirit reflects the spirit of analysis and constructive criticism that we have on Finance Committee and, dare I say, that this is going to be well-tested as we move into the second half of our biennium and move closer to a decision on the budget towards the end of next year.

The second comment would be, in a sense, a corollary to what we were discussing yesterday on the Strategic Framework and the entire Strategic Planning Framework that we are moving towards, in terms of the long-term, medium and short-term framework and process, is that we are also going to face, of course, the challenge of aligning the budgeting and financial reporting processes with this planning framework. Not only the Secretariat but Members of the Finance Committee and all of us, in fact, are going to have to adjust to those new systems, get them under our belts and understand them well to move to the new system. As we know, when one is used to something, it is not always easy to move to something new. It is going to be a challenge facing all of us.

V. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS (Cont'd)

V. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES (suite)

V. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS (continuación)

13. Regional Distribution of Council Seats (CL 115/INF/18)

13. Répartition des sièges au Conseil par région (CL 115/INF/18)

13. Distribución regional de los puestos del Consejo (CL 115/INF/18)

Friedo SIELEMANN (Germany)

With your permission I would like to pass the floor to the Austrian delegation to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

Since the matter has become a European Regional one and we have agreed on this matter with other countries outside the European Union, I would kindly ask whether you could pass the floor to Greece. Greece is holding, at the moment, the Chair of the European Region.

John ECONOMIDES (Greece)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Regional Group and its Member States.

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretariat for the good overview of the historic development of the distribution of Council seats, as given in document CL 115/INF/18.

The figures in the document show, since 1977, there has been a change in the balance of regional representation in Council seats. Since 1977, in fact, the distribution of seats in the Council has

remained unchanged, where as the number of FAO Members has increased by 20 percent overall. This increase was unequally distributed among the seven FAO Regional Groups.

The number of Members of the European Regional Group increased by 40 percent, from 29 in 1977 to 41 Members in 1998. The Southwest Pacific Group more than doubled the number of its Members. These two Groups, at least, are comparatively weaker represented in Council than they were 20 years ago. We have the same situation in the Programme and Finance Committees, and in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

The European Regional Group has already drawn attention to this situation on several occasions, the last time being at the Twenty-first Regional Conference for Europe in Tallinn. At that meeting, the European Regional Group suggested that the same procedure be followed, as in the mid-1970s when preparing the most recent change in the composition of the Council. At that time, an Inter-regional Working Group of the Council proposed a solution which was subsequently adopted.

All viable options for the improvement of the present situation should be examined and taken into consideration, including the possibility of redistributing Council seats, as well as seats in the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal matters.

We therefore, welcome again the establishment of an Inter-regional Working Group on the distribution of seats in the Council, in the Programme and Finance Committee and in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters with a mandate thoroughly exploring all alternative solutions to rectify the current situation.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

Mr Chairman, we would request you to kindly give the floor to the delegation of the Philippines, the Chairperson of Asia Group to present Asia Group's position on the subject.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for Philippines)

On behalf of the Asia Group, I would like to express our general reservation to the proposal made by Europe. First of all, as we can read in the Order of the Day, under Provisional Agenda, this agenda item is for discussion only and not for decision. Therefore, we do expect that there should be no recommendation here. We believe that the only decision we can take here is for the Council to take note of Europe's proposal. Otherwise, if the Council wanted a decision on this matter, it should have labelled it as such.

On a more substantive basis, the document provides us with the evaluation of the numbers, number of Council seats and number of FAO Members, which are all arbitrary. The problem with these numbers is that it does not present a total picture of the whole issue of representation. We do not know the concrete principles, basis, criteria and ratio, for representation. We do not even know what is an equal and balanced representation. Therefore, before we can even arrive at a decision, we should have a groundwork for our terms of reference. Unfortunately, we feel that the document, as it is, is not requesting us to decide. Rather, the document is simply narrating to us the number situation.

Finally, we find the paper rather vague because it only talks about redistribution of Council seats. It has many implications which we are not comfortable with. For example, redistribution may mean increase in the number of total seats. It may also mean increase for a certain Region and reduction for a certain Region, so that the total number of Council seats is constant. This has to be clarified first, before a decision can be made, and that is not for us to decide at the moment.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Le solicitamos, Sr Presidente, le dé la palabra a Ecuador, como Presidente de nuestro Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe para referirse a este punto del Tema 13.

Miguel CARBO BENITES (Observador de Ecuador)

A nombre de la Región de América Latina y el Caribe nosotros tenemos dos puntos que señalar. En primer lugar, nos preocupa la documentación que ha sido entregada, en particular el documento CL 115/OD/3, el cual en su versión en español se refiere a distribución regional del puesto de Consejo para debate y/o decisión, que no fue lo que fue aprobado como el programa provisional, que consta en el documento CL 115/1-Rev. 1. Además este documento CL 115/OD/3 en inglés tiene otra versión. Nosotros consideramos que debe haber un error de Secretaría, eso como punto 1. Como punto 2, nosotros estamos en total acuerdo con lo manifestado por la representación de Asia en que esta reunión es simplemente una reunión para discutir el tema, no para tomar decisiones. Consideramos que el Consejo deberá escuchar las exposiciones de las diferentes regiones pero no se tomará una decisión sobre este punto.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

I just want to add my voice to the Representative of Asia Group.

We feel that in order to respond on the issue of unbalanced distribution of seats among the Regions, the criteria of distribution must be considered and adopted, before the decision on seat allocation is made.

Julian A. Thomas (South Africa)

On behalf of the Africa Group, we would just like to state that the Group is not against the principle of looking into or examining this question of redistribution, which has been done periodically in the past. We, however, would not commit ourselves to a structure to do this, as is suggested in the document, before we have a better understanding on the basis on which this type of redistribution would happen. In other words, I think, the criteria that have been identified by Asia and GRULAC as well. We feel that these are not presented in the document. We were not able to find them anywhere else in the record of the Organization and we feel that this has to be clarified, before any further progress is made with this. Therefore, we would also agree that we are perfectly prepared to discuss this item, but not to take any firm decision at this stage.

Mohammed Saeed Nouri-Naeeni (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

This issue was not discussed in the Near East Region because we did not know that we would have to make a decision on it. Therefore, we join Asia, Africa and the GRULAC Group in the sense that we are ready to listen to other groups, but in order to take a decision, we need more information and clarification. We are not ready to do that in this Council.

Ralph Boyce (Barbados)

The Barbados delegation wishes to support the position taken by Ecuador, the African and Asian delegations up to now.

When I read document CL 115/INF/18, it struck me as being a document that sets out the historical position of the increase of seats over the years, but it certainly did not appear to be asking for decisions. Certainly, our delegation is not in a position to take a decision, not having discussed this matter, because it really does not ask us to take any decisions. On the agenda, in fact, we say "for discussion". So clearly, as it says in English, CL 115/INF/18 is an information document.

That makes it very clear. This is a document that I got this morning as to what is to be discussed.

I have no updated information, and certainly no mandate to take a decision. Therefore, I agree that this could be discussed, and we could look at the historical developments over the years, but, we should not try to take any decisions at this time.

Nasreddine Rimouche (Algérie)

Je souscris également aux différentes interventions qui ont été faites par le Représentant du Groupe africain et celui du Groupe de l'Asie en ce qui concerne la présentation de cette question pour information. Je suis étonné de voir ce point inscrit à l'ordre du jour alors que le document est présenté pour information. Je crois que le Comité du programme et le Comité financier avaient

indiqué auparavant, lors des réunions précédentes, que les documents qui sont présentés pour information ne feraient pas l'objet d'examen au niveau du Conseil. Donc, celui qui a la volonté ou le souhait de soulever une question sur un document présenté pour information le fera, mais ces documents ne feront pas l'objet d'examen, pour gagner du temps. Je crois qu'il faudrait distinguer entre les documents qui sont présentés pour examen et décision et les documents qui sont présentés pour information. Il y a des choses qui se répètent mais on a les décisions qui ont été prises auparavant au sujet de ces questions. Je crois que cet amalgame ou cette question qui est présentée crée une certaine confusion. Le document doit être présenté, à mon sens, pour information et il fera l'objet d'examen au sein des groupes régionaux qui soumettront peut-être leurs propositions au Comité du programme ou, lors des prochaines sessions, au Conseil et fera l'objet d'un point inscrit à l'Ordre du jour. Mais, je crois qu'il est inutile de s'attarder et de prendre une décision sur un document présenté pour information.

LE PRÉSIDENT

S'il n'y a pas d'autres interventions, je voudrais dire que je suis d'accord avec ce que vient de dire le Représentant de l'Algérie et qu'ont dit d'autres représentants: à l'Ordre du jour, ces documents étaient pour discussion et nous sommes en train de discuter, et de la discussion que nous sommes en train d'avoir, il ressort qu'il n'y a pas d'accord possible. L'idée éventuelle de compromis serait d'avoir une réunion non pas d'un groupe formel constitué à la suite d'une décision, parce que justement la majorité est contraire à cette décision, mais plutôt d'un groupe informel au sein duquel la question pourrait être débattue et discutée de façon à la faire mûrir et d'avoir éventuellement un document différent qui ne soit pas seulement d'information, mais qui pourrait envisager quelques options sur lesquelles un des prochains Conseils pourrait se prononcer. C'est ma lecture des événements et je voudrais avoir d'autres réactions à ce sujet, ou sinon passer au prochain point de l'ordre du jour.

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

I speak now in my national capacity, as an Observer.

As we learn from this information document, since 1977, when the last decision on the composition of Council was taken, the number of Member Nations has increased. This happened also during the history of FAO. FAO started with about 40, or as Mr Moore said 45, Member Nations and with a very small Council. When the number of Member Nations increased, during the history, the number of Council seats was also increased.

I studied this very, very thoroughly during my long service here in Rome. I studied it several times. The purpose of the European Regional proposal was to provide Members of the Council with some information on the historical background. History, since 1977, shows us that the number of Member Nations of FAO has increased considerably and has not increased equally in every Region. It has increased substantially in one or two Regions, but in other Regions less.

Therefore, based on such an unequal increase, we should now see whether the composition of Council corresponds to the number of countries in every Region.

However, I take into account that this was an information document, and we should now proceed as is foreseen. Perhaps at the next Council, FAO could provide us with an additional document for a decision on how we should tackle this problem in the future.

CHAIRMAN

This is exactly my reading of the document on the discussion which took place. The document was for information, the Item was for discussion, you had information, we had discussions.

We can pass to the next Item.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

I am intrigued by your interpretation, because it is not my reading, having sat here as well.

While I am certainly grateful to the representative of the European Union in noting that the South-West Pacific Region has considerable under-representation, simply in terms of numbers, I think the Council interventions by most of the Regions suggested that we do not have a basis for considering anything here.

I am happy, if somebody wishes, to start this process rolling. I do not find, however, that that is anything to do with the Council suggesting that there be any sort of working party set-up with the Council's blessing, or whatever. I am quite happy for any Member to informally float around its ideas. I think that perhaps is how I would read it, that all of us would be very interested to consider, but it is not something that actually reflects a Council blessing. I feel we simply came to the point that there is no possibility of a decision at this stage, so that maybe it is simply a misunderstanding, Mr Chairman, between us.

I would suggest that this simply be in the Report that no decision was taken and that is it. I feel uncomfortable if there is any suggestion that the Council is formally encouraging anything. I think that is, at this stage, even beyond what we or I read many of the other interventions to actually entail.

CHAIRMAN

I do not see many differences between your position and my position.

The only question is that I see the possibility, in the final Report of the meeting, to raise the point and to describe the discussion that took place today, on the wave of that, considering the possibility of informal contacts to prepare for the next meeting of the Council. It is not a decision that the Council has to take. It is just a common understanding that would appear in the final Report that, due to the complexity of the issue, and the fact that the majority tonight are against deciding on that, the question has to be postponed. - to be postponed suitably, advantageously and constructively. It is just to suggest that once the position is clearer, some people of goodwill could meet informally without any decision by the Council, any mandate from the Council, to discuss and prepare the issue for the next occasion.

I do not see many differences in what you are saying and what I am reporting.

If you wish to go on, we can discuss.

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

Let us simply look at the Drafting Committee draft and we can sort through from there. That is fine.

14. Report of the Sixty-eighth Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (September 1998) (CL 115/5)**14. Rapport de la soixante-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (septembre 1998) (CL 115/5)****14. Informe del 68º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (septiembre de 1998) (CL 115/5)****CHAIRMAN**

I think that we have decided to pass to the next Item on the Agenda.

Item 14 is the report of the Sixty-eighth Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. The document is CL 115/5.

The Council will recall that paragraphs 4 to 12 of this report were already dealt with this morning, under Item 10.1, Savings and Efficiencies in Governance.

May I ask the Chairman of the CCLM if he wishes to make any introductory remarks on the rest of the report.

Moussa Bocar LY (Vice-Président, Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques)

Monsieur le Président, vous l'avez dit, le point "Economies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance" a déjà été examiné ce matin; je voudrais donc examiner les autres points.

Le deuxième point "Révision de la présentation de l'opinion du Commissaire aux comptes": il s'agissait simplement pour le CQCJ de vérifier que l'amendement proposé par le Comité financier, au paragraphe 5 de l'annexe au règlement financier visant à modifier la présentation de l'opinion du Commissaire aux comptes, était rédigé sous une forme juridiquement appropriée et était cohérent avec les Textes fondamentaux de l'Organisation. Ceci étant le cas, le Comité a recommandé que l'amendement en question soit approuvé par le Conseil à sa 115ème session actuelle et transmis à la Conférence à sa 30ème session en novembre prochain pour adoption.

Concernant le point "Dispositions prises pour l'examen des placements de fonds de réserve de la FAO", amendement à l'Article 9.1 du Règlement financier, le Comité financier avait déjà approuvé la proposition selon laquelle le Comité des placements de la FAO et le Comité consultatif pour les placements de la FAO assument désormais les fonctions de supervision des placements et des avoirs des fonds de réserve de la FAO, précédemment délégués au Comité des placements des Nations Unies. En conséquence, le Comité financier avait à sa dernière session, comme on l'a vu, approuvé les amendements pour tenir compte de ce qui précède. Le CQCJ, après discussion, a approuvé la recommandation du Comité financier selon laquelle l'amendement proposé devrait être entériné actuellement par le Conseil puis transmis à la 30ème session de la Conférence. Le Comité a eu à recevoir des assurances de la part du Secrétariat par rapport à la pratique aux Nations Unies: les Membres du Comité des placements des Nations Unies sont nommés par le Secrétaire général sur une liste d'experts fournis par des Cabinets compétents de renommée internationale. Les experts et consultants désignés par le Directeur général de la FAO parmi des personnes extérieures à l'Organisation, possédant une expérience approfondie du secteur financier, sont rémunérés également selon la pratique après appel d'offre: meilleurs prix, meilleurs services.

Concernant la question de la confirmation formelle de la Convention de Vienne sur le droit des traités entre États et Organisations internationales, ou entre Organisations internationales, Résolution 52/153 de l'Assemblée générale, le Comité l'a examinée à la lumière de la Résolution précitée de l'Assemblée générale, en date du 15 décembre 1997, sur la "Décennie des Nations Unies pour le droit international". La Résolution de l'Assemblée générale du 15 décembre 1997 encourage les États à envisager à ratifier à bref délai la Convention de Vienne sur le droit des traités entre États et Organisations internationales ou entre Organisations internationales. La Résolution encourage également les Organisations internationales qui ont signé la Convention à déposer un acte de confirmation formelle, et les autres Organisations internationales qui sont habilitées à le faire à adhérer à la Convention sans tarder.

Le CQCJ, en examinant cette question, a été informé que la Convention, bien qu'elle ait été signée par les Nations Unies et par huit institutions spécialisées, n'a été formellement confirmée par aucune de ces Organisations. De plus, le Comité a pris note, avec surprise du reste, du fait que la Résolution 52/153 de l'Assemblée générale n'autorisait point le Secrétaire général des Nations Unies lui-même à confirmer la Convention au titre de l'ONU. Enfin, le Comité a relevé qu'à la date du 5 août 1998, vingt-quatre États seulement avaient déposé des instruments de ratification ou d'adhésion à cette Convention. Par conséquent, conformément aux dispositions pertinentes de l'Article 85 de la Convention, prévoyant qu'elle entrerait en vigueur après ratification ou adhésion par trente-cinq États, elle n'est pas encore entrée en vigueur. Le dépôt, en effet, d'un instrument par une Organisation internationale n'a pas d'effet sur son entrée en vigueur.

Pour la FAO, il convient de rappeler que la question avait été examinée par le Conseil à sa 91ème session en juin 1987, sur la base d'un rapport du CQCJ. Le Conseil était convenu avec le CQCJ qu'il serait souhaitable que la Convention puisse éventuellement s'appliquer au traité conclu par la

FAO, et en conséquence, il avait autorisé le Directeur général à prendre les dispositions nécessaires pour sa signature au nom de la FAO, ce qui a été fait le 29 juin 1987. Cependant, le Conseil avait également noté, à l'époque, qu'il serait prématuré que la FAO dépose un instrument de confirmation formelle, étant donné que la Convention n'entraîne en vigueur qu'après sa ratification ou adhésion par trente-cinq états, comme rappelé. Compte tenu de tout ce qui précède, le CQCJ a réitéré ses conclusions d'avril 1987 sur cette question et recommandé de suivre la situation de la Convention, et lorsque celle-ci sera entrée en vigueur et qu'un instrument de confirmation formelle aura été déposé au nom des Nations Unies, d'inscrire la question de sa confirmation formelle par la FAO à l'ordre du jour de la Conférence pour les dispositions nécessaires. Voilà pour ce point.

Enfin, le Conseil voudra peut-être être informé que sur sa demande, le Secrétariat a informé le Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques de l'état de la Convention propre à assurer l'application de la procédure de consentement préalable en connaissance de cause, dans le cas de certains produits chimiques et pesticides dangereux qui font l'objet du commerce international. Suite à la Conférence diplomatique de Rotterdam (Pays-Bas), les 10 et 11 septembre 1998, quarante-vingt pays ont signé l'acte final, et ce qui constitue un fait unique, soixante-deux pays plus la Communauté Européenne ont signé cette Convention.

Enfin, sur la demande du Comité, le Conseiller juridique a informé le CQCJ des faits récents et des propositions concernant la mise en application de l'engagement 7.4 du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation sur la clarification du contenu du droit à la nourriture, en perspective de la célébration le 10 décembre prochain du 50ème anniversaire de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme. Je crois que Madame Killingsworth, l'autre jour, a rendu compte oralement de la deuxième Consultation d'experts, tenue ici même à Rome, les 18 et 19 novembre derniers, sur initiative du Haut commissaire aux droits de l'homme avec participation de la FAO et d'éminents experts. Je suis à la disposition du Conseil.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

Following what my colleague from South Africa said earlier, I cannot but intervene very shortly just to commend the members of the CCLM, through its Vice-Chairman, on the work that it has done and reported to us in this Report. It is information that facilitates our understanding of the legal processes in this Organization in relation to proposed possible changes in Governance, and the legality of certain recommendations, some of which have come from Finance Committee and then the comment on the question of Right to Food, the meeting that took place in FAO recently. This is valuable information for us and we would like to commend them on the work they have done.

Ms Vonda Kimble DELAWIE (United States of America)

The United States welcomed the statement of FAO's Legal Counsel at the Sixty-eighth Session of the CCLM to the effect that primary responsibility for clarifying the content of rights related to food lies with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We agree that the mandate belongs to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and believe that FAO's involvement in this issue should therefore be limited.

Moussa Bocar LY (Vice-Président, Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques)

Je remercie le Conseil pour son approbation silencieuse et le représentant du Groupe africain pour cet appui très fraternel. Je crois que l'Objectif 7.4 constitue un Objectif du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, et je crois que la rédaction de cet Objectif est assez claire, que le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale sera saisi du rapport de la deuxième Consultation et que ce sera l'occasion de voir dans quelle mesure les recommandations de cette deuxième Consultation rejoignent en fait une participation des organisations internationales, sur initiative du Haut commissaire aux droits de l'homme.

15. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters, including:**15. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques, dont:****15. Otros asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos, en particular:****15.1 Date for Nominations to the Office of Director-General (CL 115/6)****15.1 Date de présentation des candidatures au poste de Directeur général (CL 115/6)****15.1 Fecha para la propuesta de candidaturas al cargo de Director General (CL 115/6)****CHAIRMAN**

If you agree we can go to Item 15, Other Constitutional and Legal Matters. As for the date for Nomination to the office of Director-General, document CL 115/6, gives the background to the subject. It suggests that the Council set a deadline by which nominations for the post of Director-General should reach the Secretary-General at 12.00 hours on Thursday, 8 April 1999 and that 29 April be set as the date by which such nominations are circulated to all FAO Members. May we take it that the dates suggested are acceptable or are there any counter proposals?.

If there are no interventions, we take it that the proposed dates are approved.

*It was so decided**Il en est ainsi décidé**Así se acuerda**The meeting rose at 17.50**La séance est levée à 17 h 50**Se levanta la sesión a las 17.50 horas*

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
26 November 1998

**The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

CHAIRMAN

Before we proceed with today's agenda, I will give the floor to Assistant Director-General Carsalade who will give us some explanatory information on the Maastricht Conference.

Henri CARSALADE (Sous-Directeur général, Département du développement durable)

Très brièvement, le Secrétariat a souhaité apporter une précision au sujet de la réponse qui a été donnée hier au délégué du Canada concernant le point 11 de l'ordre du jour, au sujet de la Conférence conjointe FAO/Pays-Bas sur les caractères multifonctionnels de l'agriculture et des terres. Nous voudrions souligner qu'il est clair qu'il appartiendra à votre Conseil, en juin prochain, à l'occasion de l'examen du rapport d'avancement que le Secrétariat vous présentera sur la préparation de cette Conférence, qui se tient en septembre, de recommander à la Conférence de la FAO de novembre 1999 le traitement le mieux approprié de ses résultats. Je crois que c'était tout ce que je voulais préciser.

Lawrence Kezimbira Miyingo, Vice-Chairman of the Council, took the Chair.

Lawrence Kezimbira Miyingo, Vice-Président du Conseil, assume la présidence.

Ocupa la presidencia Lawrence Kezimbira Miyingo, Vicepresidente del Consejo.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP

III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM

III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA

7. World Food Programme

7. Programme alimentaire mondial

7. Programa Mundial de Alimentos

7.1 Second Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board (CL 115/14)

7.1 Deuxième rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM (CL 115/14)

7.1 Segundo Informe Anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA (CL 115/14)

A. Namanga NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme)

On behalf of the Executive Director, I am pleased to present the Report of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for 1998 on its work during 1997.

The present Report, document CL 115/14, is submitted to the Council for comments and approval. As was the case for the 1996 Annual Report, the Report responds to the combined efforts of the United Nations Fund Programmes to adopt a common format for reporting to ECOSOC. The Executive Boards are jointly looking into matters to make these reports more concise, to the point and analytical. In its recent Resolution 1998/27, ECOSOC requested that in the future reports by the Executive Boards seek to identify specific problems, opportunities and areas in which the Council could provide for cross-sectional coordination under the overall guidance on a systemwide basis, with special emphasis on issues arising from the reform programmes of the Secretary-General, the triennial policy review and follow-up to Conferences. WFP will, therefore, again next year be seeking to readjust its reporting format around these general parameters.

This report on the activities of the WFP Executive Board in 1997 covers issues of governance, policy, resource and operational matters. I would like to highlight several efforts by WFP during the period which is reviewed by the Report.

During 1997, 53 million people received food assistance from the World Food Programme. In development we had food-for-work and human development programmes contributing to building household food security and to increasing the self-reliance of populations: some 24 million people benefited from development projects assisted by the World Food Programme. WFP also provided humanitarian relief to 29 million people in countries affected by manmade conflicts or natural disasters, such as Afghanistan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, the Great Lakes Region, Central Africa and many other countries.

WFP worldwide endeavours to make life better for poor and hungry people have been made possible by the dedication of its staff, but humanitarian aid has a high cost. In 1997, seven WFP staff members lost their lives while trying to save those of others, and I am sorry to say that in 1998 so far eight WFP staff members have lost their lives in the course of duty.

The revised WFP General Regulations were adopted by the FAO Conference in November 1997 by Resolution 11/97 of 17 November 1997 and by the General Assembly in December of that same year. Provisions which were clearly outdated or superseded were removed, and WFP now has a basic document which reflects the decisions of the Executive Board and spells out the responsibilities and functions which WFP is called upon to discharge in its mission to reach and assist the world's hungry poor. The Board also approved and revised the Financial Regulations of the Programme, which entered into force on 1 January 1998.

Policy decisions of vital concern to WFP were made. In examining the Executive Director's Annual Report, the Board stressed the need to maintain an adequate level of resources for development, the importance of inter-agency collaboration, especially at the field level, and the importance of targeting. The Board welcomed WFP's emphasis on the role of women in WFP-supported activities and noted with satisfaction that in 1997 the Programme had met its target in that over 50 percent of development food aid was delivered to least developed countries, and 93 percent went to activities in Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries.

In 1997 also, WFP continued to implement the recommendations of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, including approval of new measures for WFP to support national food assistance programmes as a follow-up to the World Food Summit. These measures are expected, among others, to facilitate local purchases and triangular transactions.

The Board also endorsed a new approach to modernization which will better protect local markets and ensure cost-effectiveness, and approved measures aimed at enhancing WFP's programming in the poorest countries through more innovative uses of development food aid and improved collaboration with other UN Agencies, in particular with other Rome-based Agencies such as FAO and IFAD, and bilateral donors and NGOs.

The Executive Board noted positive changes in the Secretariat approach to evaluation reports, including the new emphasis on a more people-centred, participatory approach encompassing gender concerns, including women's increased participation at all levels of WFP programme design and delivery.

The Board expressed its satisfaction with the further reform and revitalization measures by WFP, such as decentralization, delegation of authority, the Programme's participation in the Inter-agency Standing Committee, the revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between WFP and UNHCR and the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding with UNICEF.

Other noteworthy achievements included the Board's endorsement of the WFP Strategic and Financial Plan for 1998 and the year 2000 and the adoption of a WFP Pledge Target for 1999-2000 amounting to 2.1 million tonnes.

On the operational side, during 1997 the Board approved nine country strategy outlines, eight country programmes, seven development projects assisting 1.3 million people and six protracted relief operations in support of 2.9 million displaced and war-affected persons.

The Executive Board also organized a mission to China during the year. Eight Members of the Board, accompanied by WFP staff, visited several development projects in that country and concluded that food aid in China was well targeted to the poorest beneficiaries, that the activities visited were sustainable, had a positive environmental impact and could be replicable. WFP and IFAD were encouraged to continue to implement projects jointly and to strive to enhance their cooperation with FAO and with as many United Nations partners as possible. In view of the success of this visit, the Board requested the Secretariat to include further visits in its Programme of Work for 1998. Two such visits have since taken place this year, to Ethiopia and to Guatemala and Nicaragua.

I hereby submit this Report of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for the consideration of the Council and approval.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Nos alegra mucho ver a usted conduciendo nuestros trabajos. En breve, quisiera solicitar el uso de la palabra para ofrecérsela a la distinguida delegada de El Salvador que se dirigirá a este Consejo en su calidad de Presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva del Programa Mundial de Alimentos.

Sra. María E. JIMÉNEZ de MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador)

Quiero agradecer al delegado de Chile el haberle solicitado concederme el uso de la palabra. Quisiera en primer lugar intervenir como delegación de El Salvador. Quiero agradecer al Sr. Ngongi la presentación del Informe que acabamos de escuchar.

Deseo reiterar ante este Consejo el reconocimiento y agradecimiento de Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador al Programa Mundial de Alimentos por la forma oportuna, inmediata y eficiente con que nos ha ayudado a raíz de la tragedia que ha afectado a los países de Centroamérica por el paso del Huracán Mitch. El PMA, como ya indicó el Ministro de Agricultura de Honduras el lunes pasado, puso a disposición de forma inmediata los alimentos que se encontraban en los países donantes para atender las necesidades más urgentes de las poblaciones más afectadas. El PMA, como también indicó el Ministro de Agricultura de Honduras, estará presente en estos países a corto, mediano y largo plazo.

Me encontraba en Nicaragua al momento de esta tragedia y pude comprobar la forma con que el PMA cumple con su labor, pude comprobar además, la dedicación y el amor, porque de esa forma tengo que llamarlo, en que los funcionarios del Programa Mundial de Alimentos atienden sus funciones. De lo anterior, mi delegación estaba firmemente convencida y ahora puede estarlo aún más. Es por ello, que he solicitado el uso de la palabra para que, en mi calidad de Presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva del Programa Mundial de Alimentos, informara al Consejo que el día de ayer por la mañana en la Sede del Programa Mundial de Alimentos se llevó a cabo una significativa y conmovedora ceremonia en la cual se rindió homenaje a los funcionarios del PMA que han perdido sus vidas al servicio de dicha Organización pero sobre todo en el cumplimiento de su deber de llevar alivio y esperanza a las poblaciones más necesitadas de la tierra.

Con su permiso quisiera solicitar que este Consejo se uniera a ese merecido tributo haciendo un minuto de silencio por esas vidas sacrificadas en aras de un mundo mejor.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to request Council if that is agreeable, the suggestion put to us by the distinguished delegate of El Salvador that we observe a one-minute silence in honour and recognition of the WFP staff who died in the course of duty. If this is agreeable then we will do it at the end of the item after the discussion.

Sra. María de los Ángeles ARRIOLA AGUIRRE (México)

Queremos sumarnos a lo dicho por El Salvador y hacer una petición adicional, no sólo por los funcionarios del PMA que fallecieron lamentablemente durante el cumplimiento de su trabajo sino también, guardemos ese minuto de silencio en honor de todas las víctimas del Huracán Mitch.

CHAIRMAN

That suggestion also is put before Council and I do not know whether there is any dissenting voice to that. Unless there is a dissenting voice we will include the suggestion put by the delegation of Mexico so that we observe the one-minute silence for all those mentioned by the two delegations.

LI ZHENG DONG (China) (Original language Chinese)

The delegation of China has carefully read the document concerning WFP's Annual Report on the activities in 1997. The Report is concise, clear and quite comprehensive.

We are of the view that work done by WFP in 1997 is satisfactory. In 1997, WFP completed the Revision of the General Rules and Regulations, which have also been approved by the UN General Assembly and Conference of FAO, hence facilitating WFP in carrying out its responsibilities and functions under the new situation.

Furthermore, in 1997, the Executive Board of WFP reviewed some important policy matters, such as multilateralism of WFP, resources and long-term financing, activity priorities mostly concerning monitorization of food aid and WFP's cooperation with other UN Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations. Such work is conducive to the improvement of WFP's activities.

I would now like to give our general views on the multilateralism of FAO and the priorities of its activities.

As an UN Agency, the multilateralism of WFP should be fully reflected in its food aid activities. However, in recent years, there is a continuous increase of diverted resources, which not only weakens the multilateral nature of WFP, but also affects the universal nature of WFP's regional activities. This, in our view, is not conducive to the improvement of WFP's work efficiency. We hope this issue will draw the attention of various countries. We also hope that WFP's Executive Board will continue to have discussions and dialogues on this issue.

As for the priority of WFP's activities, we believe food aid can play a unique role in the alleviation of poverty and hunger. In this respect, WFP can make its due contributions to achieve the greater goal set by the World Food Summit.

WFP's activities over the years have shown that food aid can also play an important role in emergency relief, but it is also an important instrument for economic development. When food aid is used in development, the capacity of the poor for self-reliance can be enhanced, and it can also prevent emergencies. This is a further contribution as far as humanitarian assistance is concerned.

We are very concerned about the decline of resources for development. We hope that WFP's activities will take care both of relief and development.

Ms Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Thank you, Mr Ngongi, for your concise, but informative, Report.

The US delegation commended and approved the Annual Report that was presented to the WFP Board at the most recent session in October, and provided suggestions for additional analysis of constraints and description of achievements in future reports.

The US has consistently stressed the targeting of food aid resources to the poorest and most food-insecure countries.

The US joined in Board in urging WFP to continue to play an active role in the UN Reform process, which WFP has supported quite strongly all along.

The US delegation is supportive of WFP's efforts to enhance the rigour of its internal technical reviews of annual documentation submissions. The Board agreed that WFP's Bureau should examine standardizing data presentation in Board documents, in an effort to improve all overall quality of reporting -- I note that this was mentioned by Mr Ngongi in his presentation.

Finally, I would like to add that we note the importance to all the WFP programmes, on both emergency and development, of the proposed new model on resources and long-term financing. This was an effort which one of our Mission Members led, ably assisted by Canada, and we are looking forward to approval by the WFP Board of the Resources and Long-term Financing Policy at the January 1999 Session.

T.J. KELLY (United Kingdom)

I ask that the floor be given to Austria to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Ms Hedwig H. WÖGERBAUER (Observer for Austria)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, but first of all, I would like to thank Mr Ngongi for his informative Report.

As far as the sessions of the Executive Board are concerned, we should like to express our appreciation for the efforts made to conduct the meetings in a businesslike manner and to control, limit and adopt a common format for documentation.

The brevity, speed, efficiency and effectiveness of the sessions of the Executive Board should, nevertheless, be fully developed in order to enhance dialogue and exchanges between delegations. We therefore encourage and support the attempts which will be made in this direction.

We attach great importance to enhancing, coordination, cooperation and the development of institutional and operational synergies between WFP and other UN Agencies. In this context, we would particularly stress the need for WFP to participate fully in the process of enhanced coordination between the Rome-based Agencies. This obviously includes field operations, where cooperation and coordination could be enhanced, not only with other international organizations, but also with bilateral donors and NGOs.

Sra. María de los Ángeles ARRIOLA AGUIRRE (México)

Primero que nada queremos agradecer al Director Ejecutivo Adjunto del PMA por el Informe tan conciso que nos presentó sobre los resultados del período anual de sesiones de la Junta. Asimismo quisiéramos hacer notar, ya que fue a raíz de una propuesta que hizo el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe durante tal período de sesiones, que durante la tratativa de los asuntos de política se manifestó el interés de analizar diversos temas que presentan algunos problemas dentro del PMA. Uno de ellos, y al que la gran mayoría de los países manifestaron su interés, fue el tema de la ayuda alimentaria al desarrollo. Hay países que consideran que el PMA debería delegarlo; consideramos esto totalmente erróneo. En este sentido, a petición de diversos países, se llevó a cabo una primera etapa de la Consulta internacional sobre ayuda alimentaria y el desarrollo los días 23 y 24 de octubre pasados.

Nosotros quisiéramos pedir a la Secretaría del PMA que elabore un Informe por escrito reflejando el resultado de los debates y las ponencias efectuadas durante esa primera etapa de la Consulta, y que lo presente a las diferentes delegaciones con suficiente antelación al segundo período de la Consulta que tendrá lugar en enero próximo. Este Informe será de suma utilidad para preparar las posiciones de cada país ya que la segunda ronda de la Consulta es donde precisamente se tratarán las posiciones de carácter político de cada país y se discutirá este tema con el fin de alcanzar resultados que lleven finalmente a la toma de decisiones sobre el papel futuro que jugará el PMA en materia de desarrollo.

Asimismo estimamos conveniente que como continuación de este ejercicio, cuando termine la Consulta sobre el desarrollo, se diera lugar a una nueva Consulta en la que se analicen, entre otros temas, como lo señalara la delegación de China, el carácter multilateral de la ayuda alimentaria, para revertir la actual tendencia que preocupa a la mayoría de los Países Miembros del Programa y, entre ellos, a un importante número de países donantes.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

En primer lugar nos unimos a las palabras de la representación de El Salvador, muy oportunas y humanas en este reconocimiento póstumo a los funcionarios del PMA caídos en sus nobles funciones de trabajo, las cuales proponemos se recojan en nuestros documentos, así como agradecerle y solicitarle al Sr. Ngongi las haga llegar a la Sra. Bertini y a los funcionarios y trabajadores del PMA. Asimismo lo planteado por la representación de El Salvador, el

reconocimiento expresado al PMA por la forma rápida y eficaz de su ayuda a nuestros hermanos centroamericanos en su reciente tragedia.

Cuba ha manifestado muy claramente su posición sobre la importancia del carácter multilateral del Programa Mundial de Alimentos; ha defendido siempre su universalidad, su ayuda incondicionada, el respeto de los textos básicos del Programa y el importante equilibrio entre la ayuda de emergencia y la ayuda al desarrollo. Por supuesto que mi país defiende la utilidad de ambas ayudas ya que las dos son necesarias. Hemos sido, sin embargo, muy persistentes en defender y rechazar con argumentos sólidos y contundentes los criterios tendientes a reducir o a hacer desaparecer la ayuda alimentaria al desarrollo para convertir el PMA en un Programa sólo para operaciones de emergencia. El carácter multilateral del Programa va a dar la oportunidad por la representatividad de su Junta Ejecutiva de analizar cada situación con transparencia y profundidad dentro de una equilibrada correlación de criterios entre países desarrollados y en desarrollo; esto sin duda ofrece una garantía para los objetivos propuestos.

Cada Región tiene sus propias características y necesidades. Las respetamos pero en el entendido que también el conjunto de países comprenda las de América Latina y el Caribe. A pesar de las contribuciones del PMA, los niveles de pobreza humana, malnutrición y subdesarrollo se han incrementado a límites insospechados debido al atraso secular, las crisis económicas, el deterioro de las relaciones económicas internacionales, la deuda externa y los efectos de los desastres naturales. En nuestra Región, a pesar de ser rica en recursos naturales, se acentúa la pobreza y como consecuencia la pobreza engendra hambre. Todos estos factores son complejos y no se pueden analizar en un marco estrecho enfocando aspectos aislados y cifras frías sin concatenar la realidad de que existe en cada lugar.

El Programa presenta un informe a esta reunión bastante breve que por supuesto no abarca todo el conjunto de tareas en las cuales estuvo volcado durante 1997. Aunque podemos asegurar que en estos momentos o, para ser más concretos, durante 1998, ha desarrollado tareas muy importantes en favor de países menos adelantados y con déficit de alimentos. El PMA continúa perfeccionando internamente sus métodos de trabajo, ha tomado medidas para aumentar su eficiencia, ha adoptado nuevos métodos para revitalizar el programa en su conjunto pero lamentablemente el Programa se debate en una disyuntiva, es decir cada día los recursos disminuyen y en la misma medida crece la preocupación por cumplir los nobles objetivos por los que fue creado.

Cuba en el PMA ha defendido con vehemencia la factibilidad de los proyectos de desarrollo. Hoy lo han hablado muchas delegaciones. Consideramos el derecho al desarrollo como un derecho humano fundamental. De allí nuestro apoyo para que la ayuda al desarrollo se ubique dentro de las prioridades fundamentales del sistema de las Naciones Unidas y nuestros llamados a que se aseguren los recursos financieros necesarios para estas actividades.

Permítame hacer algunas reflexiones sobre los proyectos en desarrollo. No se puede pensar que un proyecto pueda desarrollar a un país pero sí a una Región en la que los beneficiarios directos son fundamentalmente mujeres, ancianos y niños. Si bien es cierto que para lograr los objetivos propuestos en estos proyectos es necesario la participación y el compromiso de los gobiernos involucrados, es más cierto aún que para alcanzar el éxito de los mismos se necesita de la cooperación y colaboración internacional. Nuestros países solos no lo podrían realizar. Un proyecto de desarrollo en una zona tiene un impacto social, pues moviliza toda la población, cambia el paisaje, aumenta la productividad y aún más la esperanza en un futuro mejor, todo se ve con una perspectiva distinta.

Estos proyectos de desarrollo han cimentado el prestigio y autoridad con que cuenta el PMA en el ámbito internacional. He tenido el privilegio de formar parte de la delegación del PMA que visitó en 1997 los proyectos de desarrollo en China. Allí pudimos comprobar la efectividad de los mismos, su buena orientación y administración, como bien refleja el documento. Esta modalidad se extendió este año a Etiopía y a la Región centroamericana. Creo que con estas actividades *in situ* se avanza y perfeccionan las directrices, constatándose su utilidad. Esta iniciativa la hemos catalogado en la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA como muy positiva y le damos las gracias a los colegas

y hermanos de China por ser los pioneros en esta modalidad, enseñándonos a todos la conveniencia y lo útil que para nuestros países resulta este tipo de asistencia y ayuda.

Antes de finalizar quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecer al PMA la ayuda que durante estos años ha dado a mi país a través de los proyectos de desarrollo que han potenciado importantes regiones de Cuba, así como la ayuda de emergencia que en momentos difíciles nos han brindado.

Concretamente este año hicimos un llamado de emergencia por los daños provocados por la sequía en las cinco provincias orientales del país. La respuesta del PMA fue rápida y sin duda durante estos meses esta ayuda alimentaria llegará a las poblaciones más necesitadas y niños escolares, mujeres embarazadas, ancianos, etc. De igual modo la acción rápida del PMA ha estado presente para los hermanos centroamericanos.

Como colofón de lo expresado, queremos hacer referencia a la carta enviada recientemente por el Presidente del Consejo de Estado y de Ministros de la República de Cuba, Fidel Castro, a la Sra. Bertini, Directora Ejecutiva del Programa Mundial de Alimentos en ocasión del 35° aniversario del Programa y cito lo dicho por el Presidente Fidel Castro: "Es un hecho que el PMA es hoy día uno de los organismos más importantes del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Lo que empezó en forma experimental para colocar excedentes alimentarios se ha convertido en un poderoso instrumento para alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria y la cooperación al desarrollo. Su experiencia en el área de las emergencias y de recuperación de recursos naturales degradados es de un alto valor y debe ser aprovechado al máximo por todos los países, sean donantes o beneficiarios. Es oportuno dejar constancia de nuestro reconocimiento al eficiente y dinámico trabajo del personal de la secretaría del PMA en la sede y en el campo y a usted, Directora Ejecutiva, que exhibe resultados positivos también en su empeño meritorio de confiarle a las mujeres un importante papel en la actividad del Programa. En nombre del Gobierno y del pueblo de Cuba quisiera manifestarle nuestro apoyo y reiterarle nuestro más elevado sentimiento de simpatía al Programa que tan dignamente dirige, por la magnífica labor que realiza en favor de las personas más necesitadas en los países en desarrollo".

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, first of all I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the WFP Secretariat for providing us with a comprehensive Second Annual Report of the Executive Board to ECOSOC and the FAO Council on its activities in 1997.

Secondly, my delegation welcomes all activities that have been conducted by WFP during the year 1997 in assisting the needy countries, especially those who suffered from various man-made and natural disasters -- about 33 million people according to the Report.

Thirdly, concerning policy issues, the Indonesian delegation is happy to note that the Board has highlighted some very significant issues, as stated very clearly in paragraph 16 of the Report.

We are also strongly supportive of the steps taken by the Board under Other Policy Issues such as: WFP support to countries in establishing and managing national food assistance programmes; policies on the use of WFP food aid in relief and development activities; measures to enhance WFP's programmes in the poorest countries; reaching mothers and children at critical times of their lives.

Fourthly, on behalf of the Government of Indonesia, I would like to express our appreciation and thanks for the assistance provided by WFP to our people affected by the recent long-term droughts and forest fires.

Finally, the Indonesian delegation, as a Member of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme, welcomes and endorses the said Report and requests the FAO Council to approve it.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

On behalf of the Africa Group, let me just say it is good to see you in the Chair. We would also like to thank Mr Ngongi for the very complete but concise report that he gave us this morning and

for the useful document that we have in front of us, reflecting WFP activities in 1997, which we would like to endorse.

WFP activities are particularly important for our Region, as you know, because we, unfortunately, are still the main beneficiaries of WFP assistance. We look forward to the day when that will not have to be the case.

We would like to emphasize the value of both WFP programmes, Relief Aid and Food Aid for Rehabilitation and Development. We feel these programmes are complementary to each other and also complement the work done by other Agencies, such as FAO. We would like to congratulate WFP on the initiative they took to re-examine, to review the importance and the role of food aid in development, conducted only a few weeks ago.

We would like to recognize the efforts made by WFP to further improve the implementation of these Programmes. Here we refer, in general terms, to the purchasing dimension, delivery and targeting. As far as purchasing is concerned, we welcome the progress made by WFP in trying, as far as possible, to purchase the items that they need locally and to structure the food aid package in the most appropriate way to meet the needs and the traditions of the target groups which they are dealing with. We would like to encourage them to pursue their efforts in this direction.

As far as delivery is concerned, I think enough has been said about the quick response time that is characteristic of WFP, and we would like to congratulate them on this.

Targeting, in the discussion we had in that Seminar that was held -- and there is illusion to it in the Report we have in front of us as well -- is terribly important in reaching the needy and the most vulnerable, as has been adequately explained, particularly by the delegate from Cuba. We would just like to support what was said in that respect. The more targeted that WFP can be, the more effective it will be.

As was mentioned earlier by the Representative of the United States, we are also looking forward to the finalization of the Resource Long-term Financing Policy. We also believe that this will be useful to WFP in improving the implementation of its Programmes.

In this regard we would deplore the decline in resources available to the Organization. We feel that the recent crises and the current failure, as illustrated in our discussions at FAO, to reduce the absolute number of needy and poor in the world and surely underscore the need for an organization such as WFP.

Finally, we would also like to pay tribute to WFP Members who lost their lives in the course of duty. We would endorse what was suggested by Cuba, that the names of these people be included in our Report. We would also like to endorse what Mexico suggested, that the tribute that we are going to pay would, of course, include the victims of all natural catastrophes that have affected so many countries in the recent past.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I would like first to thank Mr Ngongi for his Report which was, in effect, concise, to the point and analytical.

I would also like to stress the importance of this meeting, particularly for those countries which do not sit on the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. I recommend that this meeting here, should not be only a formality but more a way of discussing matters because it is a kind of Appeal Court for countries which are not Members of the Executive Committee.

My authorities and I are both great admirers of World Food Programme for its activities, for its lack of excessive bureaucracy, and for its dynamism and dedication.

Mr Ngongi referred to, and the Chairman of the Executive Committee repeated, the remembrance of the people who died on duty. I know that yesterday was a very moving ceremony for the World Food Programme, one that I was unfortunately unable to attend, but in which I was fully

sympathetic and morally present. I certainly support the idea of having a Minute of Silence to recall the victims of duty.

I had the privilege to visit China on a tour that the World Food Programme organized. I hope that FAO will organize the same kind of travel programmes as they are the ideal contact with the local reality and the means of testing how each Organization works and how the coordination among organizations is working. I am afraid that when I was in Peking I went to pay a visit to the FAO Representation, and I had to spend three-quarters of an hour by car, not in the rush hour, to go from one office to the other. I could not say that the impression I got was the kind of idyllic collaboration that sometimes we are told exists among the organizations. It is certainly a pity because there were very interesting, important and fruitful programmes going on in the field between World Food Programme and IFAD, but FAO was addressing its activities elsewhere.

I certainly fully support what the Austrian Presidency of the European Union and Member States just said on the need for better coordination and collaboration among the Organizations in Rome. I just raised the issue in the last Finance Committee that we have three Organizations and three different computer systems. I do not want to say whose fault that is, but the fact of the matter is that the three Organizations each have different computer networks. I understand that their needs are different, by it is not the sort of synergy, economy and fruitful collaboration and cooperation that we would like to see.

Therefore, I am also glad to hear Mr Ngongi repeating the reference to collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies. I must say that in the document I was prepared to read something more about this inter-agency collaboration because there are many paragraphs in which I was expecting to read about the words of FAO or *vice versa*, but I hope in the future the contacts between the three Organizations will increase.

I would not like to repeat myself in referring to the Alliance for Agricultural Development that I expressed the other day, but here in FAO we are discussing the Strategic Framework for 2000-2015, and in World Food Programme they are discussing the Strategy for Food Aid for Development, which is certainly a fascinating issue. We support that because, I think, you cannot distinguish between emergency and development: it is a continuum. You have to prevent emergencies and you have to correct the consequences of emergencies. Therefore, we certainly support that approach.

IFAD is also considering its Strategic Outlook. I wonder why the three Organizations cannot sit around the same table and discuss the strategic approach to the problems which are facing all three Organizations and all the Member Nations. We have to aim to spend the best of our money to reach people more in need. Therefore, I would wish that the Strategy could be approached together, and with a common view of the problems and the perspective of the common work.

I think that Pedro Medrano, in one of the last Executive Boards, made a reference to a need for reviewing the structures and aims of the World Food Programme. I think he was speaking on behalf of Latin American countries. I think that such an approach would be helpful because there are some systems that could be improved. However, I repeat, it is not a criticism of an Organization that I deeply admire. It is just an invitation for them to collaborate more closely and with a common Strategic Outlook for the future.

Mrs Ruth OKWELE (Uganda)

Mr Chairman, the Uganda delegation congratulates you upon chairing this Session.

The delegation supports South Africa in the presentation they have made and would like to thank the Deputy-Executive Director of World Food Programme for a Report well presented.

We would like to express our sympathy for those staff members who lost their lives while carrying out their duty.

The delegation of Uganda thanks the Deputy-Executive Director of World Food Programme for the activities of relief and development which have been given to disaster-stricken areas without favour and the gender-sensitiveness of the Organization.

We welcome the idea of integrated agricultural projects in order to help alleviate poverty and hunger. The World Food Programme has the unique chance of interacting with the poorest of the poor and we, therefore, join China in supporting this activity. We also join Italy in encouraging the World Food Programme to have joint programmes with IFAD in order to bring about sustainable poverty alleviation.

Mohammed Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

Mr Chairman, during the past few days we have benefited a lot from your interventions from the floor, and I am pleased to see you on the chair of the Council today. We welcome you to the chair.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat for preparing a very nice Report and Dr Ngongi, Deputy Executive Director of WFP, for his concise and analytical introduction.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been hosting the largest refugee population for the last decade. Although a very small proportion of the refugees live in camps and receive some international assistance, the majority of them are living a normal life with other Iranians all over the country. WFP's role in helping the refugees in camps, however, has been very important and has been very well managed. I would like to commend WFP for this excellent management of this issue.

As a Member of the Executive Board of WFP, I would like to praise WFP's recent efforts to adjust to the changing world and to increase its activities in development assistance which, no doubt, in the long-run will lead to decreased emergency needs. The Conference, which was held by WFP in this regard, was a high-quality performance.

My delegation would like to see further cooperation between WFP and other Rome-based UN Agencies, as was emphasized by other speakers.

My delegation endorses the Report, document CL 115/14, and recommends its approval by the Council.

My delegation joins other delegations to extend its deep sympathy to WFP and families of WFP staff who lost their lives in line of their sacred duty, and support the proposal of Cuba to include their names in the Report.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

Australia endorses the report of the WFP Executive Board and recommends its acceptance by Council.

Australia is pleased with the substantial progress made by WFP in 1997 in the areas of improved governance, policy issues, resource and financial planning, and operational matters. One significant issue, however, still awaits finalization.

The report on the Review of WFP's Resource and Long-term Financing, which has been undertaken by a Working Group, is due to be considered by the Executive Board at its First Session in January 1999. Australia regards this Report as critical to the future resourcing of WFP, and we would certainly not wish any further deferral by the Board.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I also congratulate Mr Ngongi for this concise Second Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board.

I have brief comments to make on this Agenda Item. First of all, I hope that WFP will further enhance its own positive and beneficial role in close cooperation with the other international organizations by harmonizing these assistance projects with the economic and social development strategies of the recipient countries.

I understand the collaboration between FAO, WFP and IFAD is good through all levels, as explained by the Deputy Director-General, Mr Harcharik, the other day, and expressed in this document. To develop this cooperation, I would like to recommend that WFP consider the Italian suggestion, that is, the Alliance for Agricultural Development of FAO, WFP and IFAD, commenting on the partnerships of the Strategy Framework 2000-2015 of FAO.

Secondly, as far as the humanitarian emergency operations are concerned, we are of the view that the International Committee needs to continue to take interest in and provide assistance to it under WFP's initiatives.

My delegation hopes that WFP will take into account the balance of resource allocations in emergency operations and development of programmes, which was discussed in depth during the last Executive Board meeting.

Finally, I would like to commend WFP for its on-going reform and decentralization process, and for its efforts to increase financial accountability. We expect that WFP will no doubt continue efforts to streamline and reform itself for enhanced cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its field and development activities through resource and long-term financial policies to be revised.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Ma délégation a eu déjà à vous féliciter, mais vous voir aujourd'hui présider les travaux de notre Conseil m'offre une nouvelle occasion d'exprimer combien notre délégation et l'Afrique tout entière ont souvent apprécié le rôle dynamique de votre pays au sein de cette Organisation, ainsi que votre participation personnelle, à l'image de la contribution combien significative que vous avez personnellement apportée lors du dernier Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Certes, je n'ai pas pu, à cause d'autres obligations, assister à l'introduction de M. Ngongi, un grand ami de longue date, dont j'ai pu souvent apprécier les qualités. Je ne doute pas que sa contribution ait été significative, parce que cela a toujours été dans la tradition de son action, que nous avons pu souvent constater lors de notre participation aux travaux du Conseil d'administration du PAM.

Avant de commencer, je voudrais également, à la suite des orateurs qui m'ont précédé, rendre un vibrant hommage aux fonctionnaires du PAM et à leurs familles, qui ont été victimes, souvent, de leur noble mission, parce qu'il s'agit là de véritables soldats de la paix qui, sans armes, ont toujours bravé toutes les difficultés et tous les risques pour contribuer à soulager les populations qui souffrent. Aussi sommes-nous d'avis qu'un hommage très singulier doit être apporté dans le rapport de notre Conseil à ces hommes et à ces femmes qui ont toujours sacrifié leur vie.

Etant membre du Conseil d'administration, nous n'aurons pas à trop développer ce thème sur le document CL 115/14, d'autant plus que mon collègue de l'Afrique du Sud a fait une déclaration pertinente au nom du Groupe africain, déclaration qui rejoint totalement nos préoccupations.

Cela dit, je voudrais simplement, en m'inspirant du rapport, souligner encore quelques faits importants qui méritent, avec l'adoption et la transmission de ce document au Conseil économique et social, qu'on les souligne. D'abord, au paragraphe 14, nous insistons pour que, lors de la nomination du Commissaire aux comptes, il soit largement tenu compte des possibilités que peuvent offrir les pays en développement, et notamment, pourquoi pas, de l'Afrique, la plus grande bénéficiaire des actions du PAM. Nous pensons également qu'il faut que le Directeur exécutif soit encouragé à organiser ce fameux et important débat sur la question de l'augmentation des contributions à emploi spécifique, parce que nous jugeons que l'aide alimentaire est certainement un moyen très important pour non seulement venir en aide de manière urgente à des populations qui souffrent, mais également pour accompagner des actions de développement. D'où notre appui très ferme au paragraphe 17, où nous estimons qu'une part assez importante doit être accordée aux programmes de développement, en donnant la priorité, naturellement, aux pays les moins avancés.

Nous pensons également que le rôle des femmes dans les activités du PAM doit être davantage souligné et encouragé, de même que des efforts de décentralisation.

Le paragraphe 21 mentionne des actions que nous avons depuis toujours appuyées. Il s'agit des opérations triangulaires. Cela rejoint la politique de monétisation, que certains pays essayent de limiter, c'est vrai; il s'agit de contrôler cette politique. Mais nous estimons que, pour éviter que l'aide alimentaire ne porte préjudice aux habitudes de consommation et dérègle même la vie de certaines populations en les entraînant dans une situation infernale de dépendance alimentaire, on devrait décourager le plus possible la vente de vivres qui ne sont pas adaptés dans ces pays et encourager l'achat de vivres produits localement. Nous tenons à souligner ces faits, parce qu'ils nous paraissent très importants, et à rendre un hommage particulier au Directeur exécutif, Mme Bertini, à M. Ngongi, son adjoint, et à l'ensemble du personnel, qui font un travail extrêmement important, dans la mesure où les séries d'évaluations régulières faites dans les différents pays permettent de se rendre compte de l'efficacité et de l'efficacé de ces programmes.

Je n'hésiterai pas à indiquer que, dans le cas spécifique de mon pays, des projets comme les cantines scolaires et les vivres-contre-travail qui ont fait récemment l'objet d'une évaluation du PAM, pour ne citer qu'eux, ont pu prouver la grande efficacité de ces programmes, et j'encourage les pays donateurs, ainsi que les pays bénéficiaires, à accorder davantage d'importance aux programmes du PAM pour aider au développement des pays concernés.

Enfin, j'ajouterai simplement, à titre de reconnaissance, en tant que membre d'un pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, et notamment de la zone sahélienne qui connaît quelques troubles très graves, et un grand besoin d'aide alimentaire, que nous saluons à nouveau l'action combien importante et déterminante du PAM, et espérons que cette action sera davantage soutenue et accompagnée pour atteindre les objectifs que nous souhaitons tous.

Pour conclure, nous souhaitons que le Conseil adopte sans aucune difficulté et avec tous les encouragements possibles le rapport du Conseil d'administration pour sa transmission au Conseil économique et social.

Ms Rollande LEDUC (Canada)

I would like to thank the Deputy Executive Director for his presentation.

I would mention that Canada supports the adoption of this Report.

We wish to commend WFP for the impressive achievements obtained since its launch into its re-engineering. We reiterate our support for the policies and guidelines adopted.

Canada expresses again the need for WFP to develop a simple, but reliable, indicator that will demonstrate that food aid for development and for relief has a positive and sustainable effect on the beneficiary.

We would also like to pay tribute to people from WFP who lost their lives while serving others.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Quisiéramos en esta oportunidad agradecer la presentación y preparación del Informe que tenemos ante nuestra vista y, también, quisiéramos aprovechar esta ocasión para referirnos a esta enorme tragedia ocurrida en nuestros pueblos hermanos de Centro América. Creemos que esta tragedia debe servirnos, debe servirle a este Consejo, a los integrantes de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA, como instancia de reflexión profunda. Las lamentables y numerosas víctimas, cuyas cifras definitivas nunca las vamos a conocer por la fuerza destructiva que tuvo el Huracán Mitch, el cual literalmente hizo desaparecer poblaciones completas. Las cuantiosas pérdidas de recursos naturales, que como hemos escuchado en el desarrollo de nuestras deliberaciones en las palabras del Señor Ministro de Agricultura de Honduras, nos debe servir también como el preámbulo adecuado para que este Consejo pueda hacer o dar inicio a un profundo proceso de reflexión.

En primer lugar, la delegación de Chile estima que esto debe servirnos y debe servirnos a todos, y especialmente a aquellos que de repente tienen dudas sobre la importancia del significado de la labor del PMA en cuanto a la ayuda para el desarrollo.

En segundo término, nos parece que es necesario realizar un análisis agucioso de lo que son las efectivas y oportunas acciones que realiza el PMA para combatir la pobreza y el subdesarrollo. En este contexto, la comunidad internacional podría morigerar, disminuir en alguna medida los daños futuros de este tipo de desastres naturales. Permítame preguntar: ¿cuál es la relación costo-eficacia de las acciones que ya se habían realizado en Centro América en frente de los ingentes recursos financieros de todo tipo que serán necesarios para reconstruir las comunidades? Por cierto no vamos a reponer las vidas humanas. La infraestructura destruida, los recursos naturales inexistentes y, por cierto la futura dependencia alimentaria que tendrán que soportar nuestros pueblos hermanos de Centro América quizás por 20 años más. ¿No será acaso más apropiado realizar acciones oportunas que nos permitan prevenir, por medio de los proyectos de desarrollo del PMA, este tipo de catástrofes? Creemos que el PMA tiene un claro mandato, y éste se sitúa en un perfecto equilibrio, en un perfecto balance que debemos fortalecer; entre las ayudas alimentarias y las ayudas para las emergencias alimentarias, y por ciento entre las acciones que se pueden emprender para el desarrollo.

Agradecemos el proceso consulta internacional emprendido por el PMA y que creemos es muy interesante y nos puede servir, precisamente para dar respuesta a las preguntas que la delegación de Chile ha hecho. Apoyamos dicho proceso, pero al mismo tiempo hacemos la misma apreciación que hizo la delegación de México en el sentido de profundizar este proceso, nos debe servir para que el PMA tenga oportunidades de desarrollar asociaciones estratégicas con otros organismos internacionales y pueda combatir desde el comienzo los daños futuros que pueden existir.

Al igual que las demás delegaciones, lamentamos la penosa pérdida de vidas humanas no sólo en Centro América sino que también en otros lugares en que han ocurrido desastres naturales o emergencias o muertes por migraciones. Quisiera también destacar la lamentable pérdida de los funcionarios del PMA que han entregado sus vidas en procura de un mundo mejor para cada ser humano.

Henri DJOMBO (Congo, République du)

Je voudrais ajouter à tout ce qui a été dit en bien dans l'appréciation du brillant rapport que vous avez présenté le fait que les catastrophes naturelles se produisent parfois de manière invisible. Le phénomène des réfugiés, donc des personnes déplacées, qui sont installés dans des zones rurales à faible population, apporte de nouveaux malheurs, malheureusement, qui sont encore mal identifiés. C'est le cas de mon pays, la République du Congo, qui a reçu un exode massif de réfugiés en provenance du Rwanda à la suite des événements politiques qui se sont produits dans l'ex-Zaïre. Ces réfugiés viennent par milliers, par dizaines de milliers sur des terres occupées par quelques centaines de personnes ou quelques milliers de personnes. Faute de disposer d'assez d'aliments, ils se précipitent sur les quelques réserves alimentaires disponibles pour les populations locales, et celles-ci finissent par mourir de faim, parce que toutes leurs récoltes sont consommées par les réfugiés. Il sera certainement nécessaire qu'une évaluation puisse se faire dans ce cas pour apporter une assistance aux populations locales à la suite du phénomène des réfugiés.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to congratulate you and also address our congratulations and thanks to Mr Ngongi for his Report.

during the last few years, Sudan has regularly attended the Meetings of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. Despite our presence as Observers we have, nonetheless, received full information of the activities carried out by the Programme to deal with the consequences of disasters and catastrophes that led to many deaths and victims. We have during the past period, within the framework of a meeting held on 20 November last, received information on the way in which the Programme deals with the disasters that have struck Central America. Over a short period of time, the Programme was able to mobilize sizeable amounts of assistance to cope with the results of the natural disasters.

I would like to recall what the Programme does in my country, the activities carried out there to provide assistance to refugees, and people who are being resettled, as well displaced persons and the victims of war. Ten weeks ago, the Programme received a mission of high-level representatives of the Sudanese Government and the Rebels to see whether it was possible to reach a ceasefire and to allow WFP to carry out its activities as efficiently as possible. The parties involved may be able to reach an acceptable formula which -- God willing, and if the intentions are good, and if there is no external intervention into the affairs of my country -- will make it possible for such assistance to come in whether we are from the North, South, East or West. We, in our country, are capable of resolving our own problems. After this phase to which I attach great importance, I am certain that good results will be achieved.

I thank Mr Ngongi and the whole family of WFP, which is working so well.

Ermond HARTMANS (Observer for Caritas Internationalis)

I would like to make two very small comments.

My first one is that Caritas wishes to express its esteem and admiration for the wonderful works of charity WFP is carrying on - sometimes under very difficult conditions, with all the inherent dangers to halt the life of its staff. The information given by the Deputy Executive Director that forty-four staff members were killed in the course of duty speaks for itself.

Secondly, Caritas would also like to say how very happy we are with the close working relationship and assistance our Organization is getting, in carrying out its activities around the world for the alleviation of hunger and poverty for the poorest of the poor. It is an eloquent example of effective collaboration between an International and a Non-Governmental Organization.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to thank all the delegations from Council Members, to Observer Nations and to Organizations, for having contributed to this very important Item on our Agenda. Can we now observe the one-minute silence.

One minute of silence

Une minute de silence

Un minuto de silencio

CHAIRMAN

May their souls rest in eternal peace.

Let me now take this opportunity, distinguished delegates, to invite Mr Ngongi to answer comments, requests and other submissions made by the distinguished delegates during the debate of the Agenda Item presently under consideration.

A. Namaga NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme)

First of all let me express the appreciation, not only on my behalf but also from the Executive Director and the entire staff of the World Food Programme, for this solemn recognition that has been given to sacrifices that have been made by staff of the Programme, and also of course to the many victims around the world of many disasters. This is very much appreciated.

Secondly, I wish to express appreciation on behalf of the Executive Director, the staff of the Programme and I would also say on behalf of the Board -- because I am presenting the Report of the Board -- for the praises which have been made by the Council on the work of the Executive Board of the Programme for 1997, which was so effectively chaired by the distinguished Ambassador Dominici. Of course, the staff of the Programme does the work but under the continued guidance of all the Member Nations.

Let me assure the Council that for future reports, all suggestions for improvement will be considered in line with the suggestions made by ECOSOC as to how they can become even more useful to the Council. Of course, we should not try to change them every year because then it

would become difficult to compare them from one year to the other. However, we should strive to make them much more analytical and decision-oriented.

There are many issues which have been raised, but I have tried to put them into groups rather than going from delegation to delegation, which would be a little repetitive.

On the issue of collaboration and coordination, which has often been raised, I think that is very useful. Let every Member of the Council be assured that we are trying our level best -- probably not as fast as everybody would like to see -- to enhance the collaboration between FAO, IFAD and WFP here at Headquarters and in the field. I am sure that the Deputy Director-General of FAO has already given a reply to certain questions. However, I can only assure you that those who have been in Rome for many years would clearly say that the collaboration today, at least at the official level here in Rome, has vastly improved, compared to what it was only a few years ago. Mr Harcharik and, the Vice-President of IFAD and I, meet on a regular basis. We meet every four to six weeks, not only as a formality but to discuss concrete issues of collaboration. We meet in rotation from one Organization to the other, also in order to show to the staff of our own Organizations that we take collaboration seriously. Otherwise, we could meet in a meeting room where nobody sees us and could pretend it is for collaboration purposes.

In the field the collaboration is true and effective. It is not uniform in all countries because it also depends on the Host Governments and their abilities to help put all the Organizations together to work on joint programmes, and not every country will have the same facilities. Therefore, I would just say that the collaboration is, indeed, quite close and effective. I think there will soon be a little document coming out to show the Member Nations the level of collaboration between the Organizations. That will be also be updated on a regular basis, possibly once or twice a year, in order to keep the Member Nations informed on the level of collaboration.

It should not be forgotten that collaboration is not only in Rome-based Agencies. WFP, in particular, works very closely with UNHCR because of the refugee part of our work. We also work very closely with UNICEF because of the health and nutrition part of our work. Therefore, this collaboration is not only in the Rome-based Agencies, but also within the United Nations System. Moreover, if we were not working with NGOs, we would not be able to carry out our emergency work.

Our emergency work is heavily reliant on our work with the NGO community. I think that it should be said in that light. I do not wish to dwell too much on the collaboration issue but only assure you that we really take it seriously. We have heard you, and I think all the Organizations in Rome have heard the Member Nations repeat this same message, not only in FAO but also in the Executive Board of the World Food Programme and the Governing Council of IFAD. I think we have all heard you, and we take it seriously.

If I can add that today as a proposal on the Strategic Analysis. Of course, every opportunity should be used to have joint strategic sessions to try to evaluate what we can do together in the future. FAO could probably, logically look ahead 20 to 25 years from now. The World Food Programme has a much shorter horizon. I mean food aid issues are of a much shorter horizon than overall agricultural development. I think we should look at the Organizations within the contexts of their mandates, and the work that they have to do. Therefore, although we will benefit from such a longer-term perspective, it is not realistic for the World Food Programme to have a 20-year perspective on, let me say, food aid and food aid issues. That discussion might be useful, but not really of practical use to WFP immediately.

The World Food Summit and the World Food Summit Plan of Action already provided a broad framework which probably gives us ample opportunity to be able to contribute to alleviating hunger and poverty around the world. We are committed to do that, and we produce regular Reports to our Executive Board on that matter.

It was an unfortunate coincidence that Hurricane Mitch struck at a time when we had an Executive Board Mission visiting the Region. I believe that for the first time the Executive Board Members had an opportunity to see WFP's response to emergencies, and the strengths and

weaknesses of the Programme. Rather than have WFP staff members make all kinds of presentations, Board Members who were in Central America at the time should state at the next Board Meeting from the Member State's point of view, what they see as the problems. What I would say is that one area which we have stressed over and over again to the Secretariat is the value of development resources. If there were no development resources available, it would be difficult to have such a rapid response to the effects of Hurricane Mitch. It would be difficult to be able to buy food, move it half way around the world, and bring it to a place where you have problems. I think that is something which can probably be highlighted in any Report.

Of course I share the concerns of the Members of the Council on the declining resources for development. That, of course, is a very major problem for WFP and for the Executive Board of the Programme, in that development resources have declined considerably. I would say that over the last two years, however, they have stabilized. We hope that this stabilization is a prelude to an increase in resources. However, the increase of resources does not depend on the Secretariat. We can only appeal to the Member Nations and the donors to see the relevance of WFP's development work and be able to support it with resources. It does not only depend on appeals. It also depends on the judgement of the Member Nations, on the donors, and on the value, quality and impact of the development programmes of WFP. We have been doing our level best to try to improve the targeting, the indicators, as was suggested by the distinguished delegate of Canada, to show that World Food Programmes development resources are useful. Additionally, our evaluation reports, which had also been pointed out by the distinguished delegate of Senegal, provide a vehicle for lessons learnt so that they can be integrated in the future programmes and hopefully enhance the quality of those programmes and therefore, serve as a justification for further assistance and provision of resources from the Donor Community.

The division of resources for development, I know, is a very sore issue, but this is a matter that has been decided by the Executive Board which has set parameters around which the World Food Programme has to work. It has to give ninety percent of its resource to Low-Income Food-Deficit countries, and at least fifty percent to the Least Developed Countries. Only last year, in 1997, were we able to reach the fifty percent quota for the Least Developed Countries. What is fifty percent of a much lower level of developmental resources compared to what we were doing previously? We hope, therefore, that these resources will increase in volume.

The balance between development and emergency was also raised. It is not really a balance, which is determined by WFP. The balance has been totally out of gear because of the upsurge of many emergencies around the world. In the past, WFP was more of a development organization. It was 70 to 75 percent development, 20 to 30 percent emergency. Today, it is 30 percent development, 70 percent humanitarian assistance. This is because of the whole international climate change. There have been a series of man-made disasters, and recently also a series of natural disasters. The donors have responded generously to the humanitarian problems that have, of course, eschewed very much the compilation of resources for development for emergency. Of course, when we compare this year where there has been an extraordinary generous response to the humanitarian crisis, probably we should have been more geared towards emergencies, but is not as a direct decision of the WFP Secretariat or the WFP Executive Board. It is as a response to the problems which are occurring around the world. But we would appeal that we should have more development resources.

Several delegations raised concerns about the resources and long-term financing of the Programme. These are discussions which have been taking place for more than the better half of the year and have not been put to bed. We also hope that they will be settled at the first Executive Board Meeting in 1999, and will be put on firmer footing.

The concerns that were also raised on the multilateral nature of the Programme go directly to the resourcing and long-term financing model, adopted for the Programme, which created a multilateral financial source and bilateral group of activities. Many donors have chosen to put resources through the directed multilateral window, which is still multilateral, but is directed. But of course, that limits the flexibility of the Programme to be able to allocate those resources

because they are located to specific countries or to specific projects. Of course that is a matter which is in the ambit of the Member Nations not the Secretariat. We hope that these are issues that will be discussed by the Executive Board when it meets on the long-term resourcing and finance question.

On operational matters there have been points raised on the purchases which have been affected by the Programme. I think that is one of the most successful elements of the work of the Programme in recent years, in that we have been able to put in place the mechanisms which have permitted us to purchase about US\$300 million-worth of food in a year, and about sixty percent of that from developing countries.

Mr Chairman, I am pleased to say that your country Uganda has been a source of major WFP purchases for several years, just as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Thailand and some other countries around the world. Clearly that has shown that food aid is not only surplus-driven, it is out of need. Therefore, it is not just that donor countries are willing to give out surpluses, but they are willing to give out cash, to buy food and to meet the real needs which are being expressed by people. We are grateful to the Governments which have been able to help us in our purchasing activities in their countries, including the Government of Uganda.

One area of course, which has also been raised, is not only for WFP, I guess it is for the whole United Nations System, and that is the question of Reform. The Reform of WFP has taken quite a few years. I think that all of us are beginning to see some benefits of that Reform. It is a much lighter Secretariat, with much lighter and less bureaucratic structures. But it is not all smooth, of course. There are still some hitches in certain new systems in the field. We have to have better coordination; and better communication with the field, not only by telephone, but by computers and the rest. We also have to have trained managers who are able to take such responsibilities for decentralization. It is one thing to decentralize, and another to have the people who are able to use decentralized authority. I think more and more, our management training programmes are beginning to create the cadre of people who are able to implement this decentralized authority. However, if anybody made an evaluation today they would not find that it is one hundred percent successful because it also depends on the capacities of the countries from one area or one Region. We are working, of course, to improve these capacities.

WFP, being a hybrid Organization is also linked to the Reform of the UN System, linked in with the UNDP which is for humanitarian assistance. We are working very closely with all those agencies in the other groups of work performed in the United Nations in New York for the improvement of the overall system, including the UN House concept, which is going to be implemented in the field offices. This, I hope in the future will solve Ambassador Fontana-Giusti's problem when he visits UNDP. We will have a UN House in China where we can put all of our Agencies together. It is difficult because many Host Countries just do not have the facilities to be able to house all the UN Organizations together. In many countries, the World Food Programme is particularly big, especially the emergency-prone countries where you can have upwards of one hundred staff members. It is difficult to put our staff members plus all the other staff members of the other Agencies within the same building. This would be very difficult. Of course where we have essentially development, especially in the Latin American and Caribbean Countries, we are mostly co-located with UNDP, FAO, UNICEF or some other Organizations on the same premises. Where we have very big Representations or where the Governments do not have the same capacity, of course we all have separate premises.

There was a question, which was raised, I think, by the distinguished delegate of the Republic of Congo, on the problems caused by refugees, especially for the host populations. That is, of course, a long and drawn out issue which is being discussed between Host Governments, UNHCR and ourselves. In many cases, we have been able to have programmes which address at least some of the basic needs of host populations within the immediate area of the refugee population. Of course it is a little difficult once the margins are widened too broadly, on where you have too many of the host country nationals. Therefore, it will probably also distort the food and agricultural situation in the country, especially where you have a major refugee influx. Clearly

we have to do more to be able to counteract some of the negative effects of refugee populations in Host Countries. It is not only a matter of reducing the food availability, but also the environmental damage that is done in many of the countries, for example, in the chopping down of trees for firewood, which needs to be corrected. That is something which broadly concerns more than WFP, and it has to be addressed between WFP, UNHCR, UNDP and FAO, to try to have programmes that tackle the environmental aspects while simultaneously tackling the food part of the problems.

I am sure it would not be satisfactory if I did not touch a little bit on the special needs of Latin America and the Caribbean. I see the Ambassador of Cuba directly in front of me. Clearly I have travelled a little in Latin America so I have a slight advantage. There is obviously a lot of poverty in the area which needs to be and can be addressed with food aid. I myself saw at least in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Cuba, Haiti and in many of the countries, the kind of real work that we are doing with food aid in addressing those issues. In countries which are slightly better off than the Least Developed Countries, of course, we expect the Government to also contribute and they do, but maybe they can contribute a little more food resources to be able to enhance WFP programmes in those countries. I have not raised that problem only with regards to Latin American and Caribbean countries, but for many of the non-Least-Developed-Countries, so that we could expand the number of beneficiaries benefitting from such programmes. Those problems are clearly understood, and we hope that we will be able to work with you and other Governments to try to enhance the programmes in those countries, by using national resources and other bilateral resources directed to them.

One issue that was raised by the distinguished delegate of Mexico is on the Status of the Consultation which took place on 23 and 24 October. First of all I should say that the meeting was a great success from the Secretariat's point of view. I hope the Members who also participated in that Meeting found it to be very successful. In particular, the inspiring statement made by the First Lady of El Salvador was very welcome, and I think that it set the stage for us to have a good Consultation.

While the Consultation was being organized, it was clearly understood that this first one would be more broad and informal, and that people would speak from their personal experiences of the use of food aid for development, rather than a formally-structured governmental meeting producing a formal Report. Therefore, the Secretariat did not plan to have a Report produced by this Consultation. We were supposed to take notes and advice from all the Statements that were made to help us to prepare the first draft of what was seen by that Meeting to be the role of food aid in development or WFP's role in food aid for development. This will be tabled in the second round of the Consultation which, I think, will take place on 15 February 1999. That will therefore be the first trigger of the formal meetings, from which we will produce a formal Report which will be presented to the next meeting that will probably take place at the end of March or in early April. From the formal Report of this second meeting, WFP will prepare a formal document for the Executive Board for May. I think that was more or less the scenario that was envisaged. I hope you kept your own notes, and we can share notes, of course, on what took place on the Agenda for discussion. But we are not planning to issue a formal Report for that first Consultation.

Mr Chairman, I am sure I have forgotten some of the points which were raised - I skipped them or glossed over them briefly. I think these are more or less the major issues that were raised and which I have covered. I hope that if I have not covered all of them, maybe some delegates could refresh my memory, so that I could address them.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I am very glad to hear what I heard, especially in this new mood of collaboration and coordination.

I have two points to raise. One is on the common Strategic Approach. Mr Ngongi answered that World Food Programme has a much shorter horizon than FAO, but that in some way contradicts our conviction that World Food Programme should extend its responsibility also to development.

Development has a classical long-term strategic approach, so I really wonder how you can reconcile these two items. If you have only emergency, I agree that you do not have a strategic, but a tactical approach. But if you have just development, then it becomes a strategic issue, and there is nothing better than to have ongoing discussion among Organizations.

Secondly, you have just spoken of increased meetings among the three Organizations at different levels. Could I repeat my question on how, when and if, the issue of information technology for the three Organizations has been discussed?

A. Namanga NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme)

First of all on the Strategic Approach, I should point out that WFP was the first Organization to produce what was called a Strategic and Financial Plan in the United Nations System. First we produced the plan for two years. Then we found that two years was too short, so we made it for four years and the Executive Board agreed that the four-year preframework was more or less the appropriate timing for WFP's kind of activities, including development. In these situations, although we may have a twenty-year development programme to do something like plant one million hectares of forest in the country, food aid is much more a short-term or medium-term resource than financial resources or technical assistance. Technical assistance is much more long-term. Financial resources also can be looked on a long-term basis, but food aid as a contribution-in-kind has a much more short-term perspective than discussions on strategic issues of technical and financial assistance. I think that was the framework in which it was discussed.

WFP was really the first Organization to have a Strategic and Financial Plan, and that has now been adopted by many Organizations outside the UN System. We are slightly different from the others, and I am sure that a country which could be food-deficient today, in a period of ten years could probably fall from that category. You can see that every year when a list is given of what FAO produces -- actually the list of the Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries -- one country drops off or another country is added so we have to adjust our strategies for those countries accordingly. We have to take some countries off the priority list, but we have to add other countries to it. It is difficult to have exactly the same set of countries.

However, on the broad issues of agricultural development, even countries which are quite advanced in agriculture, for example China, India or some other countries, still require in the long-term, discussion on agricultural development dealing with technical or financial assistance. So I did not say that by having a shorter timeframe development assistance would not be considered in the strategies, but in terms of the actual nature of our resource, which is food, and which is much more confined in time than cash or technical assistance. That was the framework in mind.

On the coordination of information technology and computer system, I do not know how and when IFAD developed its own information system, but they were in the process of developing it without any direct consultation or discussions with WFP. How much I cannot say. When FAO started the development of Oracle, WFP participated in meetings of the team developing the Oracle system there. We participated and attended meetings. In analysing the Oracle system, WFP participants in a meeting did not find that it would address the work of WFP.

Maybe by being in the same food and agriculture area, there is a little bit of misunderstanding in the minds of people. We do not do exactly the same work. WFP is more into logistics and commodity handling and management. Therefore, you need systems which respond to commodity handling and reporting from a thousand different offices located in little spots around the world. It is slightly different from an Organization which is not that decentralized -- but even if it is decentralized is working from a capital base -- which controls country programmes but mostly deals with technical assistance rather than material transfer.

Our closest partners in the UN System in terms of the nature of work, would be UNHCR and UNICEF. Those will be the kinds of Organizations which also deal with material transfers and logistics. They also have found that the closest system which may meet their needs is actually the system that WFP has selected, the SAP, which is the base which was developed from a logistics

point of view, and therefore more appropriately serves the needs of a logistics type of agency. IFAD, on the other hand, started with Peoplesoft, which is more human resources management-oriented.

We would love, of course, to have the best human resources management system, but priority has to be given to operations, and that is what we do. That is why we opted for a system which was developed from the operations side, rather than from the financial accounting or people management side. We are, therefore, making adaptations to the SAP, working with UNICEF which already has the financial side of SAP to also get it. We are working with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) which already has the people management side of SAP, to help us develop the people management side of SAP. I think that by working with the other UN Organizations which have experience in SAP, we will be able to address those issues. It is not that we do not want to work with FAO, it is just that we have found that the systems respond differently to the activities that we perform.

Sra. María de los Ángeles ARRIOLA AGUIRRE (México)

Agradezco la respuesta del Sr. Ngongi a nuestra pregunta. Efectivamente coincidimos con él en que fue muy satisfactorio el resultado de la primera etapa de la Consulta sobre desarrollo, nada más que yo no sé si hubo un problema de traducción dado que no recibí completa su respuesta. De todas maneras un breve Informe que capte las principales posiciones o ideas que surgieron de este primer debate, a pesar de su carácter informal, será muy enriquecedor para aquellos que vengan de nuestras capitales a la negociación de la segunda etapa, para que cuenten con un documento marco de referencia.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to really thank Mr Ngongi for his replies to the questions. The Report that has been tabled is before Council. I am sure, before I ask Council to approve this Report, you will allow me to stress that the World Food Programme is a global organization that touches all of us in many of our countries and we commend the work that it has done. I must say that its work is becoming more and more important, as we note especially during this particular Council that many natural disasters have also come to confront us. We approach World Food Programme whenever we are struck by such disasters.

It is noteworthy to see that seventy percent of the work that World Food Programme is doing, according to Mr Ngongi, has now become of a relief and humanitarian nature, and that only thirty percent is devoted to development. This, of course, is going to require on more resources because relief does not at all, I think, regenerate sustainability as quickly as aid that is given to have development until a nation, or whichever area is assisted, eventually ceases to require that particular assistance. Once again, I would like to thank you very much for the intervention and counsel.

May I now request Council that, if there is no objection or dissenting voice, we go ahead and approve the Report tabled before us this morning. Since I do not see any flag up, I think Council has agreed and approved the Report of the World Food Programme, and we can move to the next Item.

7.2 Election of Six Members to the WFP Executive Board (CL 115/15; CL 115/15-Sup. 1)

7.2 Election de six membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM (CL 115/15; CL 115/15-Sup. 1)

7.2 Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA (CL 115/15; CL 115/15-Sup. 1)

CHAIRMAN

We now move to Sub-item 7.2, Election of Six Members to the World Food Programme Executive Board. The main documents that are under discussion are CL 115/15 and CL 115/15-Sup.1. Before proceeding to the election, I suggest we look at document CL 115/15-Sup.1 referring to the arrangements made by the Member Nations in List D. As indicated, Switzerland which was elected by the FAO Council for a term of office until

31 December 1999, has agreed to stand down from the World Food Programme Executive Board. Council is invited to take note of the resignation of Switzerland and is requested to agree that Spain occupy the seat thus vacated for the remainder of the term of office. May I know if there are any objections from Members of Council, first of all for the voluntary resignation of Switzerland and the eventual taking over of the vacant position by Spain so as to keep the position occupied until 31 December 1999? If there are no objections, then I will take it that Council agrees that Spain is elected a Member of the World Food Programme Executive Board until 31 December 1999 in place of Switzerland.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

I would now like to come to the election of the six Members for the period 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2001. I would like at this juncture to request the Secretary-General to go ahead and explain the proceedings that will lead to the election. Before I do that, I note the return of the Chairman to the Council room, and I would like to take this opportunity to relinquish the Chair to the Chairman and end by thanking you very much by having put confidence in me to be effective in the chair this morning. I thank Council for cooperating during the time I have been in the Chair.

Sjarifudin Baharsjah, Independent Chairman of the Council, took the Chair

Sjarifudin Baharsjah, Président indépendant du Conseil, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia Sjarifudin Baharsjah, Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much Mr Miyingo. We will proceed with the election of six Members to the WFP Executive Board. I will proceed by asking the Secretary-General to take the floor.

EL SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO

Querría llamar la atención del Consejo a la Orden de Día para el día de hoy, documento CL 115/OD/4 en la página 2 se encuentra la lista de puestos que hay que cubrir y de candidatos. Para la Lista A, hay dos puestos a cubrir y dos candidatos que son Lesotho y Sudán. Para la Lista B, hay un solo puesto a cubrir y un candidato que es China. Para la Lista C, hay un puesto a cubrir y un candidato que es Cuba. Para la Lista D, hay dos puestos a cubrir y dos candidatos que son Canadá y Alemania.

CHAIRMAN

You will note that in all Lists, the number of candidates is the same as the vacancies to be filled. Accordingly, I would like to submit that, in accordance with Rule XII, paragraph 9(a) of the General Rules of the Organization, the Council appoint these Member Nations to the WFP Executive Board by clear general consent. Do I have the agreement of the Council? Yes, we have appointed six candidates for the WFP Executive Board.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

Still on the same subject, I would like to congratulate Spain and all the other Members elected.

As you can understand from my previous intervention, we are attaching more and more importance to the World Food Programme and would like to see greater involvement in its institutional activities. We do not consider the present system to be completely satisfactory, and we are looking for improvements within the system.

I referred before to the Chilean proposal. There are others floating around, and I think that we shall consider them in future months.

CHAIRMAN

I am sure that all of us join Italy in congratulating the six countries elected to the Executive Board of WFP.

Javier PIERNAVIEJA NIEMBRO (Observador de España)

Quisiera hacer una breve declaración sobre la elección de España a la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA. España por primera vez en los treinta y cinco años de pertenencia al Programa Mundial de Alimentos, estará presente en la Junta Ejecutiva. Por tanto permítame, Señor Presidente, que manifieste nuestro agradecimiento a los miembros del Consejo que han elegido a España y a los miembros de la Lista D que han permitido presentar nuestra candidatura. Participaremos en las tareas de la Junta Ejecutiva con la mejor voluntad de contribuir a los objetivos del Programa Mundial de Alimentos.

VI. OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)**VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES (suite)****VI. OTROS ASUNTOS (continuación)****19. Appointment of an Alternate Chairman of the Appeals Committee (CL 115/17)****19. Nomination d'un président suppléant du Comité de recours (CL 115/17)****19. Nombramiento de un Presidente suplente del Comité de Apelaciones (CL 115/17)****CHAIRMAN**

I now turn to Item 19, Appointment of two Alternate Chairmen of the Appeals Committee. The Council is requested to consider the appointment of two alternate Chairmen of the Appeals Committee, in accordance with Staff Regulation 301.111 which provides that alternative Chairmen serve when the Chairman is unavailable. Document CL 115/17 outlines the present status of the chairmanship.

I would also like to remind you that in 1983, the Council appointed as Chairman of the Appeals Committee His Excellency Jay K. Atal, former Ambassador of India to Italy.

The Council has noted, with regret, that Ambassador Carlos di Mottola Balestra passed away last February, and you will certainly remember his recent important responsibilities in other organizations and our Organization. He served as first Alternate Chairman of the Appeals Committee for fifteen years.

Ambassador Juan Cassiers, appointed as second Alternate Chairman in 1996, has completed his assignment to the Holy See, and has now resigned from his Alternate Chairmanship of the Appeals Committee.

I would like to ask the Members of the Council if they have any nominations for the two vacant posts of Alternate Chairmen of the Appeals Committee.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Ce Comité est certainement d'une importance tout à fait particulière, parce qu'il a toujours bénéficié des services d'éminentes personnalités, comme vous venez de le rappeler, et c'est d'ailleurs l'occasion, une fois de plus, de rendre un nouvel hommage à notre regretté et distingué collègue, l'Ambassadeur Carlos Di Mottola Balestra, qui, encore une fois, bien qu'ayant discrètement et dignement choisi de nous laisser un grand vide, continuera de faire planer sa personnalité dans les différentes salles de cette Organisation. Nous voulons donc lui rendre l'hommage qu'il a particulièrement rendu à ce Comité, de même nous réjouir des services éminents et de qualité fournis par l'Ambassadeur Juan Cassiers qui a dû terminer sa mission après avoir également bien servi ce Comité.

Après cela, j'ai le plaisir et le grand honneur de vous soumettre deux candidatures, en espérant, compte tenu de la dimension de la personnalité des personnes à proposer, qu'ils seront élus sans difficulté par acclamation par le Conseil. Il s'agit d'abord comme premier Président suppléant, de son Excellence, Monsieur Siméon Ake. Siméon Ake est un grand personnage, qui est connu en

Afrique et sur la scène internationale, parce qu'outre les grandes responsabilités qu'il a accomplies au niveau de son pays, ce docteur en droit public fut un éminent Ministre des Affaires étrangères de son pays en même temps qu'il a eu à présider le Conseil économique et social. Aujourd'hui, cet homme, d'une grande valeur, assure les fonctions d'Ambassadeur extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire de son pays auprès de Sa Sainteté, le Pape Jean-Paul II.

Deuxième candidat, non moins qualifié et important, il s'agit de son Excellence, Monsieur Filipe H. Paolillo, Ambassadeur d'Uruguay, qui est accrédité également auprès du Saint-Siège depuis 1996. Spécialiste du droit des sciences sociales, il a représenté son pays naturellement dans différentes conférences internationales, a été Représentant permanent de son pays aux Nations Unies de 1987 à 1990, et de 1991 à 1994, il a été Secrétaire exécutif adjoint de la Commission pour l'indemnisation du Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies. Très certainement, nous avons là deux candidats d'une qualité évidente, compte tenu de leur expérience et de leur connaissance du système onusien, nous sommes sûrs qu'ils sauront, avec toute la compétence, servir aussi dignement et efficacement que leur prédécesseur à ce Comité.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

En nombre de la Región de América Latina y el Caribe apoyamos la propuesta que acaba de realizar el distinguido Embajador de Senegal.

Ms Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

I concur with the delegate of Cuba in seconding those nominations. They are excellent choices.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

Sra. Adriana LISSIDINI (Uruguay)

Seré extremadamente breve, en nombre de mi país y en particular del Embajador Felipe Paolillo, queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento por este nombramiento que mucho nos honra.

17. Procedure for Selecting Host Countries for the World Forestry Congress (CL 115/16; CL 115/16-Corr. 1)

17. Procédure de sélection des pays hôtes des Congrès forestiers mondiaux (CL 115/16; CL 115/16-Corr. 1)

17. Procedimiento para la selección de países anfitriones de los Congresos Forestales Mundiales (CL 115/16; CL 115/16-Corr. 1)

CHAIRMAN

We are ahead of our schedule, and I propose that we take up the Items previously scheduled for our afternoon session, which are Items 17, 16 and 20. If there are no objections I would like to push on and we will discuss Item 17.

Agenda Item 17 deals with Procedure for Selecting Host Countries for the World Forestry Congress, and the documents are CL 115/16 and CL 115/16-Corr.1.

Those documents indicate the proposed changes to the selection procedure and Mr Luis Santiago Botero, Coordinator of the Forest Programme Coordination and Information Unit of the Forestry Department, will now introduce the changes proposed by the Secretariat to the Council guidelines. I should like now to ask Mr Botero to introduce this item.

Luis Santiago BOTERO (del Personal de la FAO)

Deseo presentar el documento CL 115/16 junto con el documento CL 115/16-Corr. 1 que pone a consideración del Consejo la aprobación de directrices revisadas y actualizadas sobre la función y la organización de los congresos forestales mundiales y el procedimiento para la selección de países anfitriones. Estas directrices reemplazarían a aquéllas adoptadas por el Consejo hace veinticuatro años tomando en cuenta la experiencia obtenida en la Organización de los últimos cuatro Congresos, contribuyendo a resolver algunas inconsistencias existentes en las directrices vigentes y clarificando el procedimiento para la selección de Países Anfitriones y el papel de la FAO en la organización de estos eventos. Los cambios propuestos se han indicado en el documento, colocando en bastardilla el texto nuevo propuesto y tachando el texto cuya eliminación o sustitución se propone.

Las modificaciones propuestas en la primera sección: "Las Directrices de Política General para la Organización de Congresos Forestales Mundiales" toman en cuenta el hecho de que hay un interés creciente en los temas abordados por los congresos que va más allá de la profesión y de la instituciones forestales. En el acápite 1 de esa sección se enfatiza el objetivo principal de los congresos. En el acápite 2 se aclara que éste no es un foro intergubernamental sino un foro abierto a toda persona o grupo interesado por los bosques y las actividades forestales. En el acápite 4 se indica el carácter normativo y técnico no vinculante de las deliberaciones del Congreso.

La segunda sección: "Disposiciones que deberán incluirse en el Reglamento de un Congreso Forestal Mundial" se señala en el acápite 1 quien puede participar en los Congresos y las clases de contribución a las deliberaciones. La Secretaría propone se elimine el: "listado de categorías de participantes", que crea el problema de acreditación, contrario a una participación libre de todos los interesados. Igualmente en el acápite 2 se recomienda suprimir la referencia a delegaciones de los países no tratándose de un foro intergubernamental.

La tercera sección sobre: "Procedimientos para la Selección del País Anfitrión" es nueva en su totalidad. Esta indica como el Comité de Montes, con cuatro años de antelación a la fecha del Congreso, haría un examen de las propuestas presentadas por los países interesados para así dar sus recomendaciones al Consejo como se evaluarán las propuestas que se someten al Consejo para su decisión y los acuerdos que la FAO deberá concertar con el país seleccionado por el Consejo para la organización del mismo.

La última sección define la función de la FAO en su calidad de copatrocinador. Esta sección, que también es nueva, propone el establecimiento de un comité asesor para cada Congreso, así como un grupo de acción en el Departamento de Montes que colaboraría con este Comité y prestaría el apoyo requerido por el Secretario General Adjunto del Congreso designado por la FAO para trabajar con su homólogo en el País Anfitrión y con el comité organizador del congreso. Se define también el papel de los secretarios técnicos adjuntos, los acuerdos para la prestación de servicios de la FAO y el seguimiento que la Organización deba dar a los resultados del congreso.

Las directrices políticas revisadas que adopte el Consejo serían enviadas a los países que expresen interés en organizar cada Congreso junto con directrices técnicas preparadas por el Departamento de Montes, las cuales recojen la experiencia obtenida en la organización de los últimos Congresos. El Comité de Montes en marzo de 1999 hará un examen de las propuestas de los países interesados para transmitir sus recomendaciones al Consejo en su próxima sesión en junio de 1999, para decisión por parte del Consejo sobre el país que será el próximo anfitrión del Congreso Forestal Mundial.

Friedo SIELEMANN (Germany)

May I ask that the floor be given to the delegation of Austria to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Ms Hedwig W. GERBAUER (Observer for Austria)

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to remark that the modifications suggested for holding World Forestry Congresses and for selection of Host Countries are, in principle, appropriate and should be approved. Regarding the Policy Guidelines for the Organization of the World Forestry Congresses, the following comments should help to improve the World Forestry Congress approach to contents and organization.

Referring to paragraph 1, the proposed preparation of an overview of the state of forests and forestry should not lead to a new reporting system of scientific, technical and political developments in the Forestry sector because this task is already taken care of by FAO. We consider that the procedure that has been applied up to now for dealing with the topics covered by the Congress is sufficient, for example, to adopt and publish subsequently a summarizing final paper as a major document of forestry policy recommendations.

The specific aspect of raising general awareness of forestry problems among the various sectors of public opinion can be generally approved. However, we are a little worried that the complexity of the final paper could conflict with this intention. The user-friendliness of the final paper, with regard to the different target groups, therefore must be discussed further.

As to a wider mandate for the Congress proposed in paragraph 2, we believe that the role of the World Forestry Congress as a global forum for forestry questions should be generally strengthened. This became evident also through the high interest in the Eleventh World Forestry Congress held in Antalya in 1997.

As to paragraphs 2 and 3, we feel that the intended broad involvement of the widest range of interest groups is most appropriate in line with the UNCED Agreement of Rio in 1992, calling for the widest possible participation. In this way, a broad exchange of experience of forestry problems and their solutions could be ensured.

This wide technical scope is, however, also a weakness of the World Forestry Congress, because many issues raised cannot be properly covered. An elimination of the topics by the appropriate choice of the Congress scene should be considered. This should also result in a more focused discussion and enable the meeting to be kept shorter.

The suggested procedure for selecting the Host Country is considered by us to be reasonable and should be supported. A strong participation of FAO in the organization and holding of the World Forestry Congress would very likely produce a major positive impetus.

SHI LIN (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation only wishes to make a few remarks on this Item. First, ever since the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, Forestry has ceased to be regarded as a narrow and secluded sector but rather a sector of vital importance with far-reaching impact on the global population environment and development. It is becoming a focus of attention of the international community, which attaches great importance to it. Due to the inherited three major functions of forestry, namely economic, social and ecological functions -- which touch up on all aspects of the society and also due to the differences in the levels of development and natural geographical conditions of various countries -- it is very difficult to form a unified global model with which to solve the problems of forests of all countries. We, therefore, agree to the proposal to expand the purpose of World Forest Congresses to make them suit better the larger situation of development in the world. We, at the same time, believe that the Congress should be a forum in nature, and its conclusions should be advisory and constructive.

Secondly, World Forestry Congresses are a great gathering of the global foresters, a place where the foresters of all countries discuss issues concerning all aspects of forestry and exchange their views and experience. Therefore, the participants of the Congresses must observe the purpose of the Congresses, study and discuss items relating to forestry, prevent and avoid getting into issues irrelevant to the subject of forestry.

Thirdly, World Forestry Congresses are co-sponsored by FAO and its Members, the UN Organization and Specialized Agencies and Members of IAEA. Therefore, matters concerning the Conference itself, such as the participants, organizational arrangements, etc. must be addressed in accordance with the UN practice.

Fourth, as defined by its purpose, the World Forest Congress is a Congress of forum nature and its functions are advisory. Therefore, the Congress, in principal, does not produce binding conclusions. When disputes arise over certain matters we suggest to use, to the extent as possible, consensus as a way of solving them.

Fifth, the selection of Host Countries should be made in accordance with the UN practice. Since being a UN specialized Agency, FAO should play the role as inter-governmental organization, especially under the present circumstances where global inter-governmental Specialized Agencies on forestry do not exist yet. FAO should play the role that other international organizations cannot play. We hope that FAO will strengthen cooperation with the Governments of the selected Host Countries to ensure the smooth running of future Congresses.

Ms Rollande LEDUC (Canada)

Building upon the announcement made in 1997 in Antalya, Turkey, we wish to reiterate Canada's interest to host the Twelfth World Forestry Congress in 2003. To this end, Canada will be submitting its proposal, in 1999, to host it. We would be honoured to welcome the international forest community to the historic Quebec City, the birthplace of the FAO and the centre of forest activities with concentration of educational and research institutions.

As for document CL 115/16, we will be providing the Secretariat with text which contains our proposed editorial changes.

Henri DJOMBO (Congo, République du)

La délégation de la République du Congo apprécie très positivement les propositions qui ont été faites, tendant à porter des innovations quant à la sélection des Pays hôtes des Congrès forestiers mondiaux et aussi tendant à enlever tout ce qu'il y avait comme confusion dans le texte initial. La délégation congolaise voudrait simplement, par rapport à cette proposition, soutenir l'idée selon laquelle la FAO, qui doit jouer un rôle leader en matière de foresterie mondiale, puisse prendre effectivement en charge, elle, le rapport concernant l'état des forêts à l'occasion de ce grand forum pour ne pas laisser cette tâche à d'autres organisations qui seraient moins compétentes ou qui seraient conduites par d'autres motivations.

Par ailleurs, au point 2, "Principes régissant l'organisation des Congrès forestiers mondiaux", je voudrais apporter juste une modification de forme, à la troisième ligne, pour dire que le Congrès "est" considéré comme la réunion de tous les pays du monde et non "devrait être". C'est un fait qu'il faut affirmer, et il ne faut pas utiliser le conditionnel. Il faudrait donc dire que le Congrès "est considéré" comme la réunion de tous les pays du monde et un certain sens de la propriété "doit" prévaloir, pas "devrait", sinon c'est comme si d'avance nous acceptions qu'il n'y ait pas de réalisation, que cela ne se passe pas comme il est souhaité. Par ailleurs, nous apprécions que les Résolutions, les Recommandations du Congrès aient un caractère tout à fait consultatif et ne pourraient être exécutoires que par les organisations et les pays concernés qui voudraient bien appliquer ce Règlement.

S'agissant des dispositions à inclure dans le Règlement intérieur des Congrès forestiers mondiaux, au point 1, je pense qu'à la deuxième ligne, on devrait dire "de pays qui sont Membres de l'Organisation des Nations Unies", et supprimer "de la FAO", puisqu'elle est déjà une Organisation spécialisée des Nations Unies; on ne peut pas commencer par un sous-ensemble.

En ce qui concerne les procédures permettant de choisir le Pays hôte, au point 3, la délégation congolaise voudrait amender la proposition qui est faite en demandant que l'on indique l'ordre de la rotation afin d'éviter une multiplication inutile de candidatures de pays qui souhaitent accueillir le Congrès pour ne permettre qu'aux pays de la Région retenue de faire des offres. Cela permettrait effectivement de respecter l'équité qui est proposée ici : nous aurons opté pour cinq

Régions, et chaque Région pourra savoir à peu près à quel moment elle accueillera le Congrès. Uniquement les Pays membres de cette Région pourront faire des propositions et l'on évitera ainsi le désordre de propositions de toutes les Régions. Voilà ce que la délégation congolaise tenait à apporter comme contribution.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

The contents of the procedure for selecting Host Countries for the World Forestry Congress are broadly supported by Australia. However, in order to better reflect the role of the Congress, Australia proposes the following amendment to the Policy Guideline Contents.

First, finish the second sentence of Principle 2 after the words "whole world". Then, place the rest of the sentence with the following separate sentence: "The process of preparing for the meeting should seek to engage all constituencies of the forestry sector and the various geographic Regions in the world".

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

The United States supports the revised procedures proposed by FAO. We look forward to the discussions regarding the Host Country, which will be discussed in March 1999 during COFO.

During the last World Forestry Congress, United States made a tentative bid to host the next one but we have decided not to pursue this bid and, will be supporting Canada instead.

Mohamed Said Mohamed ALI HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

Mr Chairman, I would like to thank you and congratulate you and the Deputy-Director General for the efforts made. I would also like to express my satisfaction in seeing someone from our Region holding this post. We all know Mr Harcharik, who addressed a letter of congratulations to the Minister in my country and used very courteous words. We were very touched by this letter, when our countryman was appointed to the post. The Minister of State was the Director-General of the body interested with forestry issues.

I would like to know what criterion will be used in selecting host countries. Sudan has tropical forests, and we believe we could host a Congress. We would be very happy to if Sudan was selected. We would do this in collaboration with FAO.

Hirofumi KUGITA (Japan)

We appreciate the efforts which have been made by the Secretariat to prepare the document CL 115/16.

Generally speaking, we have no objection to the amended principles and provisions proposed in the document but we would like to make one minor comment. Although the Congress is not an intergovernmental meeting, we are of the view that it would be desirable for high-level participants, from each Government, to be provided with as many opportunities as possible, to get together and exchange their views. This was the case in the Eleventh World Forestry Congress in Antalya, Turkey, where an Informal Meeting at a Ministerial level was also held, as a side event.

In order to ensure the participation of high-level officials in the future meeting, I would be happy if FAO considers to send an invitation to some countries, as necessary.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I have a brief comment. My delegation welcomes the Secretariat's proposals but would like to mention that the proposed Comprehensive Guidelines should not bring about other unnecessary side effects, including the organization of the bureaucratic aspects of the Congress.

LEGAL COUNSEL

There was just one point raised by the distinguished delegate of Congo on which I would like to comment. He had indicated that in the provisions to be included in the Rules of Procedure of the World Forestry Congress we could delete the words "that are Members of FAO", I think, on the grounds that the Membership of FAO is already comprised in that of the United Nations. I should

point out that there is, of course, a difference in the Membership of FAO and the United Nations and, indeed, there are some Members of FAO which are not Members of the United Nations.

It is true, of course, that FAO is a Specialized Agency and, therefore, is covered in the further reference to "any of the Specialized Agencies", but I would have thought that in view of the prominent position that FAO plays in organizing the World Forestry Congress, it is perhaps, appropriate to refer first to "Members of FAO".

Hosny EL-LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department) (Original language Arabic)

I have a very short comment only because most of the comments are supportive, positive and we will consider them.

For some of the amendments, I would appreciate a written text to amend our document.

Most of the comments are related to the contents and proceedings of the Congress, and I think they will improve future Congresses.

We are certainly trying to avoid bureaucracy in this. This is an international Congress. It is the largest gathering of foresters in the world, and other professions related to forestry, and we are trying to avoid bureaucratic overtones.

With regard to the point raised by Mr. Ali Harbi from Sudan -- I would like to thank you very much for the comment you did make, very courteous words -- with regard to the nation chosen as the Host Country for the Congress.

The criteria are presented in summary form in the document as follows: Is the country ready to host the Congress? Is the country in question ready to assume responsibility for the Organization there of? Then you have the question of the financial side of the matter. Is a developing country prepared to host the Congress under the conditions set forth? Is the country, for example, prepared to receive all developing countries because, this is offered to all developing countries?

CHAIRMAN

The policy guidelines for the organization of World Forestry Congress, as contained in Annex 1 of document CL 115/16 and CL 115/16-Corr. 1 are adopted by the Council.

They will guide the Committee on Forestry, in considering the submissions of countries interested in hosting the Twelfth World Forestry Congress and in making its recommendations to the Council.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

With that we conclude our discussions on this Item and we can pass now to the next Item, which is Item 16, Date and Place of the Hundredth and Sixteenth Session of the Council.

16. Date and Place of the Hundred and Sixteenth Session of the Council (CL 115/ INF/15)

16. Date et lieu de la cent seizième session du Conseil (CL 115/INF/15)

16. Fecha y lugar del 116º período de sesiones del Consejo (CL 115/INF/15)

CHAIRMAN

Does the Council approve the dates 14 to 19 June, as set out in document CL 115/INF/15?

If there are no objections, then we agree our next Session will convene here at FAO Headquarters from 14 to 19 June 1999.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

20. Any Other Matters (cont'd)**20. Autres questions (suite)****20. Otros asuntos (continuación)****Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)**

Permítame hacer un uso breve de la palabra pero no para referirme a los documentos que podrían haber quedado pendientes por examinar sino para tener la oportunidad de hacer un gesto de camaradería en este Consejo, puesto que para él, nuestro querido amigo y colega, el distinguido representante de Australia Andrew Pearson este es su último Consejo. En nombre de la delegación de Chile quisiera destacar la extraordinaria labor y habilidad con los cuales se ha siempre destacado, sin olvidar, su aporte, sus conocimientos y su habilidad diplomática.

El mejor ejemplo de lo anterior ha sido el relevante papel que jugó en el proceso de negociación de los documentos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación como miembro del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Quienes tuvimos oportunidad, en ese histórico evento, de verle presidir un grupo de trabajo de tal complejidad y sensibilidad política, tuvimos también ocasión de asistir al gran rol que le tocó desempeñar y que influyó de manera decisiva en el resultado de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. Deseamos al distinguido representante de Australia toda clase de éxitos profesional y familiares en su próximo retorno a su país.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Queremos unirnos a este reconocimiento, que consideramos muy merecido, a nuestro colega Andrew Pearson por su gran calidad profesional que realmente estuvo fuera de cualquier cuestionamiento, su gran seriedad y también a la amistad que brindó a todos sus colegas y, solicitamos que en el informe de este Consejo se haga en esta parte, una referencia a este reconocimiento.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I share, of course, everything that has been said. I will just add some personal feelings of sympathy and wish Mr Pearson all the best in his new post and the very brilliant career that he deserves.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I would like to confirm what Mr de Haen told us the other day, that he would provide the supplementary document on the State of Food and Agriculture. Can we receive it this week? Or when can we have it?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

I assume that the distinguished delegate is referring to the document that will serve as background to the presentation that will be held tomorrow. Is that it?

The document will be circulated this afternoon.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I would simply like to also add, on behalf of the Secretariat, our congratulations and thanks also to our colleague Andrew Pearson who, as you have pointed out, will be leaving us.

Andrew and I came to Rome about the same time, I believe, so in many respects we learned together. I can tell you that, on a personal basis, I have enjoyed very much working with Andrew and I have also enjoyed his insistence on often asking the difficult questions. I think that sometimes those difficult questions are the ones that really help us move forward and become better.

So, on behalf of myself personally, Andrew, and the Secretariat, many thanks for your very constructive way of helping improve this Organization.

But, I should remind you, Andrew, that you have not yet finished, because you are a member of the Drafting Committee, and we still have sessions this afternoon and tomorrow, when we look forward to your continued constructive assistance.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

I simply wanted to thank my good friend from Chile and my other colleagues who are raising to our attention the imminent departure of Andrew who has, indeed, been a true friend in the two years that I have been here on behalf of the North American Region.

We certainly want to add our words of regret on Andrew's departure. He is someone who has worked tirelessly on behalf of both his country and of his Region. Others have mentioned the long hours that he puts in on our behalf in the work of the Council and all of the Committees. They represent, I am sure, a considerable sacrifice on his part and also on the part of his wife Helen and his family. We express sincere gratitude to Andrew for the work that he has done, and I certainly endorse the suggestion that our Report recognize that gratitude.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

I would like to join in with my other colleagues in paying compliments to Mr Pearson. I have one distinction to make. I have been exposed to all the attributes which have been commended by my colleagues in just one evening of the Drafting Committee, and I hope that I will continue to learn from him during the remaining session.

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplauso

Andrew Keith PEARSON (Australia)

If I may exercise my Right of Reply, I would just like to thank all my colleagues, the Secretariat and interpreters, messengers and everybody else who has had to put up with me for the last four years. It has been an extraordinarily enriching experience, and it is one I will look back on with great fondness. I certainly intend to try, where possible, to maintain contacts with colleagues and with the Organization.

I thank the Organization, in particular, for the opportunity to work with them on pursuing objectives which I think are hugely important to us all.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

You will excuse me for exercising some of the characteristics that Mr Pearson demonstrated in the past, but I did have my flag up, and you obviously did not notice it. I did not do this perhaps as early as I should have because I did not want to start a snowball but, when I saw that there were contributions coming from all around. I certainly want to, on behalf of the Africa Group and South Africa, just add to those compliments. The only words that I would like to say is that I think that Mr Pearson characterizes inputs by working with his mind, his heart and his guts and, to any Australian, that should be a compliment.

Gebrehiwot REDAI (Observer for Ethiopia)

It is unfortunate to be an Observer. I wish I had come earlier to pay my compliments to my friend Andrew, whom I have had the privilege of working with on several occasions, particularly in the Programme Committee. Andrew has been very stimulating and encouraging all the time, and I wish him all the best through the rest of his career.

The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h

Se levanta la sesión a las 13 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifteenth Session Cent quinzième session 115º período de sesiones
Rome, 23 – 28 November 1998 Rome, 23 – 28 novembre 1998 Roma, 23 – 28 de noviembre de 1998
EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
28 November 1998

**The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 9.45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

CHAIRMAN

I would like to call the Council to order. However, in order to give us all time to carefully read the Draft Report, I would like to adjourn and then start again at 10.15. So the Session is adjourned and we will then start again after reading the Report.

The meeting was suspended from 9.45 to 10.30 hours

La séance est suspendue de 9 h 45 à 10 h 30

Se suspende la sesión de las 9.45 horas a las 10.30 horas

CHAIRMAN

I am sure that all delegates have before them all parts of the Draft Report and I have read them carefully. Before we take up the Adoption of the Report, I would like to call on Mr Harcharik, Deputy Director-General to take the floor.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I know that we are anxious to get started and certainly also anxious to complete our work expeditiously. However, there was one item that I need to clarify. The Canadian delegation raised the issue of Women in Development and Gender Mainstreaming earlier in the week, and requested some information from the Secretariat, so I do owe a response to the Council on this.

Again, in particular, the question dealt with Gender Mainstreaming and what actions the Organization was taking to ensure this was happening. First, I think we should remind everyone that we do have an FAO Plan of Action for Women in Development and Gender Mainstreaming that deals with the period 1996 through 2001, which was approved by the Conference in November 1995. We are aggressively trying to implement that Plan of Action. It was developed through a very participatory process in the Organization that involved all of our Departments and Divisions. We have charged each of our Department Heads, the ADGs, with the responsibility of ensuring implementation within their respective Departments, and that includes developing appropriate budget proposals. We also have an inter-departmental mechanism to monitor and to stimulate additional progress on this. It is the Inter-Departmental Committee on Women in Development, which is chaired by the Director of Women and Population Division. It contains members from each of our Departments and, as I said, they are looking at the institutional mechanisms for monitoring progress and guiding our work on this.

There are many specific activities that I could report to you on, but I am sure that you are not looking for a catalogue of progress at this point in time. Let me mention one thing, however, which I think is particularly useful. We created, on the occasion of 1998 World Food Day, a multi-media CD-Rom bringing together for the first time in a compact format, a very comprehensive library of information about our normative and operational activities related to Women in Development, especially as it relates to agriculture.

Finally, I think I should also repeat what Mr Wade said earlier in the week and that is that we do have an institution-wide review in progress on this issue right now, and we anticipate making a presentation on this to the Programme Committee in 1999.

In sum, I think most of these issues are being addressed through the Plan of Action. We are monitoring implementation of that Plan, and we will be providing to the Programme Committee more information on this.

The Canadian delegation also requested statistical information which, I understand, has already been provided to them directly. Of course, this is an important issue that we would be willing to follow up with Canada or any other delegation on a private basis.

CHAIRMAN

Now we will start by asking the Chairman of the Drafting Committee to introduce the Draft Report.

Pedro PINTO DA SILVA (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

We have worked to produce a document which we hope will satisfy the membership. The negotiations were some times hard. I would not venture to say that the hardest negotiations were on the hardest points. At the same time, we would all feel happy for an adoption *en bloc*. It is my obligation to ask the membership to look at these documents carefully, and only ask for such adoption if, in fact, they are wholly satisfied with the document as it is. If not, I am sure that we owe it to the countries that we represent to stay here for as long as it takes to produce a document that does satisfy us.

CHAIRMAN

I think we should underline Mr da Silva's call for the way we are going to adopt the Report.

I propose that we take separately each part of the Report item by item, part by part, starting with Part I, CL 115/REP/1. These are Procedural Items.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

I may have missed something you said, but I do not know if your introduction now prevents us from approving this Report *en bloc*. We would like to propose on behalf of the Africa Group that this Report could be approved *en bloc*. If this meets with the agreement of the other regions.

Carl-Josef WEIERS (Germany)

From the OECD point of view we can follow this suggestion from South Africa.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Pido que se le dé la palabra al representante de Ecuador como Presidente del GRULAC.

Miguel CARBO (Observador de Ecuador)

El Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe también está de acuerdo que el documento se apruebe *en bloc*.

Mohamed Abd El Hamid KHALIFA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the G77 Group, we support the previous approvals to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

With apologies to all Members of the Council, I do feel that the Secretariat has a responsibility to clarify and respond to two items in the Report, which I think are a bit confusing.

If I may, I would call your attention to document CL 115/REP/11 and, in particular, paragraph number 12 which deals with Headquarters Accommodation.

Again, let me apologize for raising this because I think everyone here knows that this is an on-going issue, but I feel that I must explain that the sentence that is written here implies that the Organization is not reacting. It says "Several Members noted that they would appreciate receiving reaction ...". I would like to assure Members of the Council that the Secretariat in implementing its responsibilities under the Headquarters Agreement is, in fact, maintaining very close contact with the Host Government on this issue.

I would leave it to the Council as to whether or not you would like to insert a statement or a sentence to the effect that we are indeed maintaining close contact with the Host Government on this issue.

If I could refer you to CL 115/REP/12 which deals with the discussion that we had on the World Food Programme. In particular, paragraph 3, mentions as you can read: "Some Members raised the idea of conceiving an "Alliance for Agricultural Development"...". I would simply like to explain that the Secretariat, of course, would be interested to follow up on any guidance that we receive from the Council. This particular concept, however, is not very well elaborated. We would hope that if the Council expects us to do anything in particular on this that some proposal be sent

through the Programme Committee or other Technical Committees of the Council so that we would have something very specific to react to.

I would again leave it to the Council as to whether or not you would like us to propose a short statement suggesting this.

I would suggest the following for your consideration: "This concept, however, having not been defined nor discussed by the Programme and Finance Committees or other Technical Committees of the Council, would require to be put through the normal process of decision-making of the Governing Bodies".

I realize that this is not a Council recommendation and that only some Members raised it, but again, if it is an important concept that goes into the Council Report and if you are expecting the Organization to follow up in any particular way, then it seems to me appropriate that you suggest that we put this idea through the technical committees of the Organization.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I also have some small points to make on the paragraph related to the debate on World Food Programme, because I believe that some of the ideas that have been raised have not been fully reflected there. However, for consensus sake, I would agree to approve the document *en bloc* and then make those declarations in the Verbatim Record of the Organization. I think you can thus say that the Report was complemented by what has been reported in the Verbatim Record. Therefore, I will stress my discontent with a few elements on this chapter in the Verbatim Record, thereby avoiding a long debate because if we start opening one issue we will open all the rest.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Je pense que la préoccupation du Secrétariat est certainement très légitime. La réflexion faite, en réalité, a seulement le danger, comme l'a souligné mon collègue de l'Italie, d'ouvrir les débats, mais il reste entendu que, pour beaucoup de délégations, la question des locaux du siège de ces organisations est certainement importante, mais ces pays, dont le mien, sont d'avis que cette question doit rester, comme le veulent les accords du Siège, une affaire, en priorité, qui concerne les dites organisations et les pays-hôtes. Je crois que la difficulté de cette phrase ou de ce paragraphe, dont j'aurais même vraiment souhaité la disparition pour ne pas ouvrir un débat, c'est qu'en réalité, cela n'apporte pas grand chose à la question, parce qu'on ne peut pas changer les choses, surtout en matière de droit international.

Donc, objectivement, j'aurais préféré, si le Secrétariat, après ces précisions, comprend les choses telles quelles, qu'on continue sur la proposition d'adopter le rapport en bloc, étant entendu que nous avons cette compréhension des choses: c'est une question qui reste entre ce Secrétariat et le pays-hôte. Nous, nous ne pouvons certainement que demander à être informés, mais on ne peut pas transgresser les accords du Siège qui lie les pays et ces organisations.

Carl-Josef WEIERS (Germany)

May I ask for the Austrian delegation to speak?

Ernst ZIMMERL (Observer for Austria)

My delegation, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, requested information from the Host Country and the Secretariat on the question of Headquarters Accommodation.

The Host Country and the Secretariat both replied. The sentence as it reads now gives the impression that the membership had not been given any information. That I have to recognize. In order to make it short, I have drafted a sentence to read out. "On the request of several Members, the Host Country and the Secretariat provided information on the question of Headquarters Accommodation of FAO, IFAD and WFP". That would be my proposal.

Ms Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Frankly, nothing that the Secretariat has just said, nothing in those two changes that were proposed, changes in a material way what is likely to happen or the Organization's options. But in deciding to raise this now, you have opened the proverbial "Pandora's Box". I suggest that given the fact that what you are suggesting will not change in a material way what in fact is going to happen, that you withdraw your suggestions and we accept the Italian delegate's suggestion which was to accept the Report *en bloc*.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (India)

On behalf of the Asia Group, we would also like to move for an *en bloc* adoption of the Report. We would support, with respect to the Headquarters Accommodation, the suggestion made by Senegal that it is the Organizations and Host Country that should sort out the issue.

Lime Ivone ALVES DIAS DA GRAÇA (Gabon)

C'est seulement pour approuver la proposition faite par la Représentante des Etats-Unis.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Sólo para pedir que se otorgue la palabra al representante de Ecuador en su calidad de Presidente del GRULAC.

Miguel CARBO (Observador de Ecuador)

A nuestra Región también preocupa el intento de cambiar la redacción y determinados párrafos. Como dijo la delegada de Estados Unidos, podríamos estar abriendo una caja de Pandora. Consideramos que todos los grupos regionales han hecho sacrificios para llegar a un consenso. Y si nos ponemos a particularizar determinados párrafos vamos a tener problemas en el futuro. Por lo tanto, consideramos también que el tema de los locales de la FAO y el PMA está enmarcado en el Convenio de Sedes y es un problema que tiene que resolver la Secretaría con el Gobierno Sede. Por lo tanto, apoyamos la propuesta realizada por el representante de Senegal.

Lawrence Kezimbira MIYINGO (Uganda)

I also fully support the suggestion made by Senegal on this particular paragraph of this document.

ADOPTION OF REPORT**ADOPTION DU RAPPORT****APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME****CHAIRMAN**

I offer the Draft Reports to the Council for *en bloc* adoption, and the Secretariat has agreed on the format proposed by Italy that the two items will be covered under the Verbatim Record.

DRAFT REPORT, PARTS I-XIII (CL 115/REP/1; CL 115/REP/2-Rev.1; CL 115/REP/3; CL 115/REP/4; CL 115/REP/5; CL 115/REP/6; CL 115/REP/7; CL 115/REP/8; CL 115/REP/9; CL 115/REP/10; CL 115/REP/11; CL 115/REP/12; CL 115/REP/13)

PROJET DE RAPPORT – PARTIES I-XIII (CL 115/REP/1; CL 115/REP/2-Rev.1; CL 115/REP/3; CL 115/REP/4; CL 115/REP/5; CL 115/REP/6; CL 115/REP/7; CL 115/REP/8; CL 115/REP/9; CL 115/REP/10; CL 115/REP/11; CL 115/REP/12; CL 115/REP/13)

PROYECTO DE INFORME, PARTES I-XIII (CL 115/REP/1-Rev.1; CL 115/REP/2-Rev.1; CL 115/REP/3; CL 115/REP/4; CL 115/REP/5; CL 115/REP/6; CL 115/REP/7; CL 115/REP/8; CL 115/REP/9; CL 115/REP/10; CL 115/REP/11; CL 115/REP/12; CL 115/REP/13)

CHAIRMAN

Do we have any objections to adopting the Reports *en bloc*? I see none. The Reports are adopted.

Draft Reports, Parts I – XIII, approved
Les projets de rapport partie I – XIII, sont approuvés
Los proyectos de informe, Parte I – XIII, son aprobados

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRMAN

We have adopted the Reports of the Council and I wish to thank the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Mr Pinto da Silva, and the members of the Committee for their hours of work. This effectively brings to an end the substantive work of the Council. I wish to thank each one of you for your cooperation, which has enabled us to reach this satisfactory conclusion. Before I close this last meeting of the Session, does anyone wish to speak?

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

As I said, I was not completely satisfied with Item 7 in document CL 115/REP/12 but I am glad that a consensus was reached and I want to congratulate the Drafting Committee for their hard work.

I would like also to put in the verbatim record some points just raised. I think that the report on the World Food Programme Item does not reflect completely the discussion we had. I think that I stressed the importance of the need for substantive discussions in the FAO Council on World Food Programme programmes and activities. We also would like to say that, in the last point of paragraph 2, when you talk about World Food Programme efforts towards collaboration and operational synergies with the rest of the UN System, including the Rome-based Agencies, I think you are saying something contrary to common sense because, as a matter of fact, you have to consider beginning from the Rome-based Agencies. It is difficult to conceive that FAO can develop collaboration with the galaxy of the United Nations without beginning from the Rome-based Agencies. So, instead of putting "including" I would certainly have preferred "beginning from", but it is so evident that I did not want to open the debate on that. However, I would like these two points to be clearly reflected in the Verbatim Records.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Nous sommes également très satisfaits de l'esprit de consensus qui a permis d'adopter rapidement ce Rapport. Il est vrai qu'une œuvre humaine n'est jamais parfaite, c'est pourquoi nous comprenons que tout le monde ne puisse être satisfait. C'est à l'image des articles qui ont été soulevés par le Secrétariat et sur lesquels nous tenons à ce que l'on mentionne l'entendement que nous avons de ces paragraphes. S'agissant maintenant du paragraphe 3 du document CL 115/REP/12 concernant l' "Alliance pour le développement agricole", nous estimons également que, même si la question a du mérite, il est certain que cette notion ou ce concept mérite d'être approfondi par les organes techniques compétents avant qu'on ne puisse engager un organe comme le Conseil dans cette voie.

Pour terminer nous tenons à souligner, à l'instar du débat concernant l'équilibre entre les langues, que le principe de signaler des modifications pour aligner les textes français sur l'anglais est accepté par le Secrétariat. Nous avons constaté beaucoup de disparités entre les traductions: par exemple pour la pêche, quand on parle de la surpêche en français alors qu'en anglais on parle de mesures qui devraient empêcher cette situation. Il faut donc que le principe soit rappelé ici, comme nous étions d'accord, afin de traiter les langues de la même manière.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Solamente para pedir una vez más que se otorgue la palabra al representante de Ecuador quien desea hacer una declaración a nombre del GRULAC.

Miguel CARBO (Observador de Ecuador)

Solamente quiero solicitar que conste en actas la propuesta del GRULAC por la cual el problema de las oficinas entre la FAO y los organismos de las Naciones Unidas en Roma sea manejado entre el País Sede y la Organización en el marco del Acuerdo de Sede.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I would like to confirm my understanding of the meaning of paragraph 2 of Part VII of the Draft Report where it says "In supporting the convening together with the Government of Netherlands, of the Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land, ... the Council was advised ... etc.". I interpret that as meaning that the Council did, in fact, support the convening of the Conference. It is just the passive voice which is used that makes it a little doubtful, but I think that the intention was clearly that the Council supported the convening of the Conference.

Mohammed Said M. Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

At this very crucial moment indeed in the life and work of Council, on behalf of the G77 I would like, Mr Chairman, to congratulate you most sincerely. We would also like to compliment the Secretariat on the work they have been engaged in over recent days and the excellent way in which this session of Council was organized. I would also like to express my thanks to the Ambassador of Portugal, Chairman of the Drafting Committee, for the work he has carried out in the last few days and also my colleagues in the G77, and we look forward to seeing you at the next Council.

Carl-Josef WEIERS (Germany)

On behalf of the OECD countries, I would like to join with Mr Harbi and wholeheartedly thank everybody for the success of this Council.

Denis CANGY (Mauritius)

My delegation is talking on behalf of the Small-Islands Development States to thank the Drafting Committee for its work to put down on record in the Verbatims our request for the Director-General to study the possibility, with regard to the Special Ministerial Conference mentioned in Part IV, paragraph 3, of holding this Special Conference on Small-Islands Developing States between the meeting of the Council and the Conference in order to avoid our Ministers coming perhaps two or three times to Rome next year. Since this has been proposed by various delegates, as this Conference may take more than one day -- possibly two days -- we request that FAO study the possibility of scheduling it between the Council and Conference, anyway at the time of the Conference next year.

CHAIRMAN

There are nine Members whose term of office will expire at the end of this year. I take this opportunity to thank them wholeheartedly for their cooperation. These Members are: Algeria, Congo, Ghana, Ireland, Lebanon, Mauritius, Portugal, Romania and Uruguay. May I also remind you that the Council will convene its 116th Session from 14 to 19 June 1999 here in Rome.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to take the floor. I just wanted again to express my appreciation to all the delegations here present for the excellent work that has been done during this Session. We have been able to finish our work on time. The Organization, through the Secretariat and the staff, will as usual do its utmost to implement the decisions that have been

taken by the Council. I would like therefore to wish all of you who have flown from so far away to return safely home and to your families.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 11.10 hours

La séance est levée à 11 h 10

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.10 horas